

WheatBread presents

1998: A Year

1998 was a year to remember, but perhaps most memorably, it was also a year to forget. The ever-helpful *WheatBread* editors would like to remind you of the year that was, with the hope that we can all learn something from our flawed history. Without further introduction, these are, in our estimation at least, the year's ten biggest stories.



Jessica Grindstaff

The debate for the Presidential special election, October 1997. (L-R) Damaris Gomez, Josh Duksin, and Rob Clark.

Excessive Spending

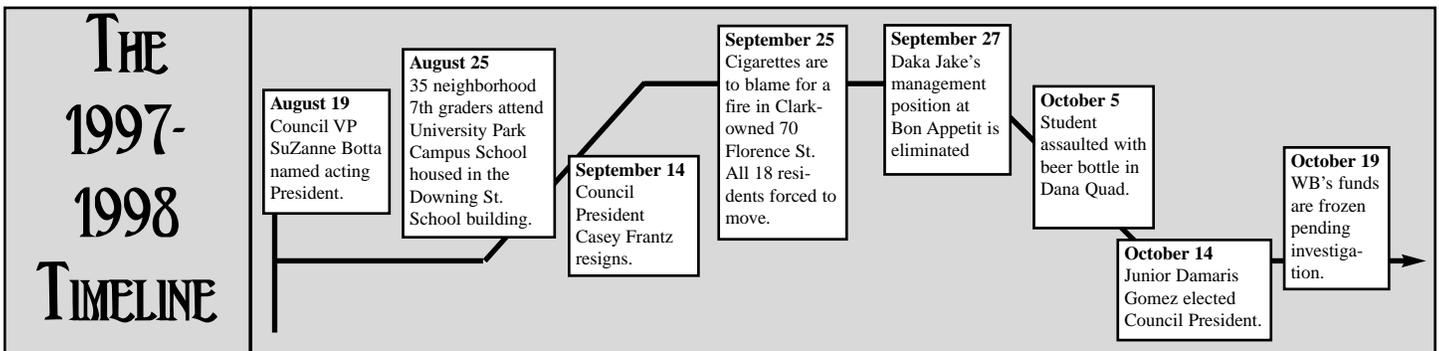
Ironically enough for a year that began with Linda Connors rallying to punish groups that overspent last year, Connors' advisees in Student Council may have been this year's guiltiest overspending offenders. Council spent over \$20,000 from the already-depleted Cumulative Surplus account this year. The Cumulative Surplus fund, which is an ongoing account that covers overspending by student organizations, has not traditionally been used by Student Council as a source for allocations. This year, \$11,000 from this fund has been spent on lighting and sound equipment for Grind Central, and \$10,000 was given to the Clark Bars to record a CD (incidentally, the Counterpoints was also given \$1300 to record a similar-quality CD using University recording facilities).

Botta's resignation

On April 5, SuZanne Botta resigned from her position as Student Council Vice President after it had become apparent that she had spent Student Council money without ever receiving the approval of— or even informing— any of the general members of Council.

Botta spent \$2200 from the Special Projects account to bring speaker Marlon Smith to Clark on March 29 to speak about *leadership*. President Damaris Gomez and Treasurer Bob Sweet were also the subject of impeachment proceedings, but Gomez was acquitted after the Judiciary Committee found that she had no knowledge of the expense, and Sweet was placed on probation for signing the purchase order.

As a side note, Assistant Dean of Students Linda Brown Connors also signed the purchase order, was involved in the planning of the event, and used the University Center Activities Board fund to repay the \$2200 of unauthorized spending. In a quote in the April 9 *Scarlet* article reporting the incident, Botta defended her actions by stating that, "My understanding, and this is where my ignorance came in, was that the Special Projects fund was a UC account for other expenditures which was Linda's discre-



tionary account.” What could have lead Botta to think that the (Student Council) Special Projects account was used at Linda’s discretion is still a mystery.

StudCo Turmoil and Turnover

In what is surely a Clark University record, the 1997-98 academic year saw 5 different Student Council Presidents (Frantz, Botta, Gomez, Nadeau, Gomez again, and Ostendorff), and 6 changes in Treasurer (Moran, Gomez, Coulombe, Sweet, Nadeau, Ostendorff, and Sweet again). There were 3 impeachments and at least 11 resignations (including Judiciary members and liaisons). Bob Sweet was elected twice, and impeached before his second term began. Current Vice President Bethany Nadeau was the mark of consistency, not only serving out her full term as Secretary, but at one point serving as the entire acting E-board. According to Secretary Debi Skinner, Council also missed quorum at least 8 times.

Oh, how we all long for the consistency of the Condon administration...

The continuing saga of Josh Duksin

Joshua P.J. Duksin has certainly avoided the sophomore slump, at least in the field of name recognition. When Duksin was interviewed in the December issue of *WheatBread*, the primary topic was his unsuccessful campaign for President in October (which followed his unsuccessful campaign for Treasurer in Spring of '97). Despite promises to run again, and rumors that he would be running for President in March '98, Duksin instead resurfaced as the host of CCN's (that's the Clark Cable Network, for those of you who forgot) most consistent (if not only) show since Marla Brodsky in '95. Duksin, who in the past has been charged with being homophobic, has used his television show as an opportunity to remain controversial. With a battle cry of "I'm not gay," Duksin has offended a number of students by showing spankings, trying on bras, having guests talk about drugs, and making comments that some (usually his prank callers) have interpreted as sexist. But it seems like Duksin's real crime is basically his money-flaunting, attention-grabbing, pyramid-scheming personality. Just what Clark needs— a cross between Ben Stein and Jerry Springer. At least there's something on TV again.

Frantz resigns

If only we knew then what we know now, things would have



Marina Zaydes

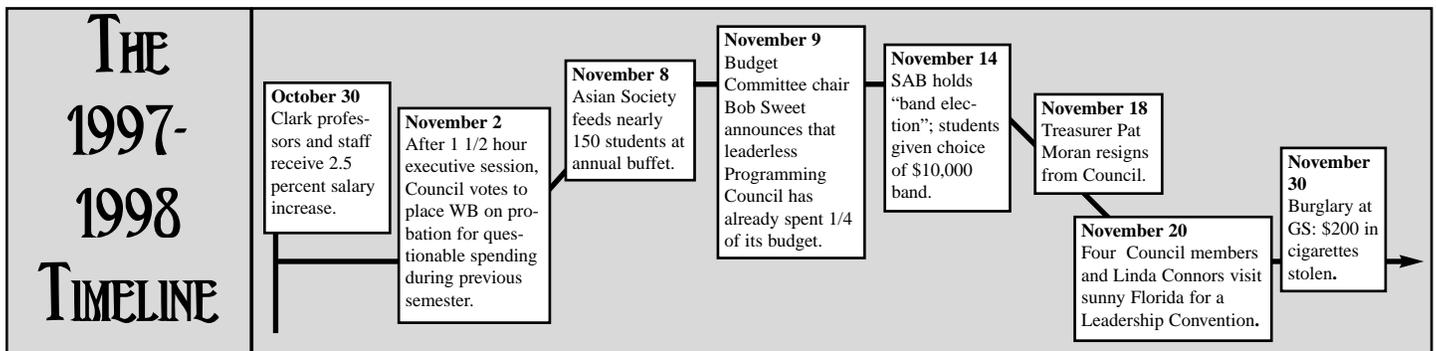
Geography of a Horse Dreamer in Atwood. (L-R): Mark Vanderzee, Michael LeBaron, and Mason Sand.

been a lot different. On August 19, just four weeks into his tenure as Student Council president (and only a week into the Fall semester), Casey Frantz told VP SuZanne Botta of his intentions to “step down” from the position. On Sept. 14 Frantz officially resigned during a closed Executive session. Despite campus-wide speculation of academic problems, Frantz refused comment and soon after withdrew from the university. Botta took over as acting President until Damaris Gomez was elected to the position.

Las problemas en Estabrook

The last year has not been the kindest one to the Department of Foreign Languages. In the fall, French professor Martine Voiret was denied tenure by President Traina after she was recommended tenure by the Committee on Personnel. Prof. Dorothy Kauffman told *The Scarlet* that this was the first time in the history of the University that such a decision has been overturned. Voiret has been working on reversing the decision, but has not overlooked considering positions at other schools.

Earlier this semester the German major, which has had only a handful of students in the department over the last few years, was eliminated. The two students who have already declared their German major will be allowed to complete the major. In addition, students will still have the option of self-designing a German major. The two professors, who are nearing retirement, will continue to teach introductory classes.



WheatBread's Tale of Woe: Yes, we have beat this one to death, but it's our magazine; so you could hardly expect us to be so humble as to not include our story on our list. The short version of the story goes something like this: A former member of this editorial board did something bad with our funds which the current members of the editorial board was ignorant of until we were questioned about it. Student Council voted for an emergency freezing of our funds, without any knowledge of the situation at all, except that their executive board told them it was a good idea; and they did all this before discussing the situation with us. We were put on probation, an investigation ensued, no current members of *WheatBread* could be shown to have any knowledge of what went on, a new charter was written up, and lo and behold: our funds were thawed no sooner than the end of the semester.

That's not all. There was confusion over who filed the official complaint against *WheatBread*. First, Linda Connors claimed to have filed it, but later it was shown that she didn't at all, rather it was Dean of Students Denise Darrigrand. Darrigrand, however, claims she may have written a letter, but didn't consider it a formal complaint. And the icing on the cake: Bylaw 113 of the Student Council Constitution states that all student organizations must be notified and allowed to discuss their situation before any punitive actions may be taken against them. We were not allowed to present our case neither in the executive session before votes were taken, (though Linda Connors, the supposed complainant, presented her case) nor before the "emergency freeze."

Was that the short version?

MassPIRG and the Budget War of '98: This year's budget process was characterized by flatlined budgets and a budget committee whose hands were tied in budget hearings. However, at the center of it all was Clark's student branch of MassPIRG. As Council elections approached, MassPIRG became quickly visible in the halls of the University Center, petitioning students to put them on the ballot for: you guessed it, a budget increase. MassPIRG claimed that the four dollar per student stipend that they have been receiving since the '70s would not be enough to keep them on campus, and was therefore recommending an increase to seven dollars per student. The petition worked. They got on the ballot and won. However, the decision was later overturned by Judiciary Committee, after they decided that it was unconstitutional.

The final outcome which, strangely, no one seems to be talking about: MassPIRG will be receiving the same amount of money as before, only now they must go through student council anytime they want to spend money (i.e. fill out purchase orders like the rest of us).

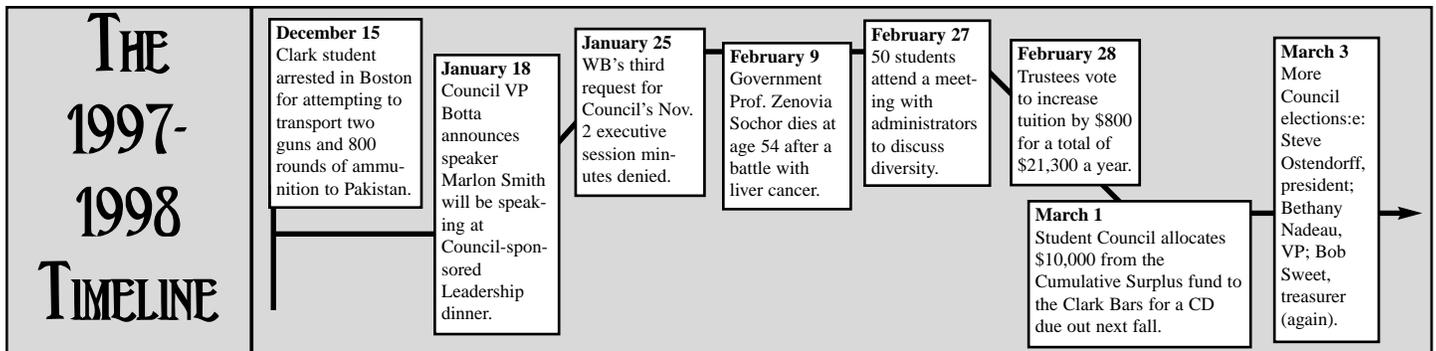


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John Linnell of They Might Be Giants, who played in the Kneller this April.

The upside of this result is that many people were confused as to where MassPIRG was spending all of their money, since most of their events are volunteer projects. Now MassPIRG's expenditures will be well documented. However, one question still goes unanswered: How is it that MassPIRG, who claimed they couldn't stay on campus without a larger budget, is now staying with the same budget as last year?

The Restructuring of Dana Commons: Dana Commons' usage over the past few years has been limited to random student organizations' office space, random theater rehearsal and performance space, and a place for dorm residents to wait out the occasional random bomb threat. That's all going to change relatively soon, thanks to a random surge of student interest in the building. There are a few proposals on the floor right now, and with any luck, some proposed changes will be completed by next fall. All the proposals are in agreement upon one thing, the second floor will be used as a new Student Center, complete with a room for pool and foosball tables, a separate lounge with large couches and a big-screen television, and another room which will most likely house ROC-U. The third room on the second floor is still up for debate, but it looks like it will be either made into a performance area, or a meeting room. The extra bonus of the Student Center: food. The mysterious Dana kitchen will finally be utilized, and students will assuredly be served more than just cake and coffee. The first floor's fate is still up in the air. One student group is proposing it be turned into a long-awaited multicultural center, another student group is proposing it be turned into a long-awaited multimedia center, and yet a third student group is proposing a not-so-long-awaited, but



perhaps necessary compromise between the two. Stay tuned.

What is most important about this issue, though, is not what will happen, but that the students are refuting the “Clark students are apathetic” stereotype. All proposals for the first floor have come directly from students, who have met several times, on their own, to discuss the restructuring of the building. The action of the students has supervised that of the administration’s, which means that the students are currently influencing major decisions concerning the university, and it can only be hoped that it will open the administration’s eyes to the fact that the students are able to brainstorm and create solutions for Clark.

Big Events = Big Fun

Big events have been a-plenty this April. SAB, PEC and SPOC have all worked overtime provide some of the biggest, last-minute events this campus has seen. After holding elections to choose a national touring act to come to Clark, SAB brought They Might Be Giants to the Kneller early in the month to the delight of about 350 fans—way below the expected turnout. Word has it that Third Eye Blind actually received the most votes by students, but booking complications kept them from coming. PEC showcased De La Soul in Atwood in mid-April. The show was almost sold-out, despite the \$5 ticket-price. SPOC closed out April with author Douglas Adams, the saga of which was chronicled in WB #13. What does this mean for next year? Hopefully more of the same. SPOC is already talking about getting famed author Kurt Vonnegut to speak on campus. •



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Gryphon and Pleiades' The Spice Boys: Just when you thought this year couldn't get any weirder.

A random student presents
Bon Appetit's
Year in Review
 (actual comment card found in the U.C.)

