

# letters

## BUILDINGS AND BOND ISSUES

Dear Editor,

The University of Maine has been chronically underfunded, more in faculty and support staff salaries and library, equipment, and faculty development funds than floor space. So, given the declining birth rate, any building program should be carefully scrutinized.

At USM, a classroom-office building is proposed. Curiously, that building is not the much-needed performing arts center that would serve USM's two distinguished undergraduate programs, Music and Theater, which became USM's top priority once the Portland chemistry wing was built a decade ago; now it appears to have been third priority, after a Portland student union and the classroom building on the current bond issue.

The building proposed is the more curious when, despite all of the conversions of classrooms to offices, day utilization of classroom space in Gorham is still only 46% and in Portland only 71.6%, meaning that three-eighths of USM's present classroom space is now unused during the day.

A second matter of USM accountability prompts my concern regarding real need for the proposed building. The student body has supposedly doubled since the 1970-71 merger (3800 to 9000). But while full-time faculty membership is up only 10% and support staff about 16%, the administration, which was to shrink

enced member of the House Education Committee she has worked hard to insure that a sound educational system is available to students at all levels. She is tough minded and an independent legislator who seeks only to represent her constituents to the best of her ability and she has earned the respect of her colleagues in both parties because of this. In a recent conversation she stated: "The people are what is important, in my estimation." We need representatives who possess this attitude, an attitude which is rare these days. Even her opponent admits that he would have a tough time doing a better job that Ada Brown has already done.

So I urge you, take the opportunity to vote for representation as it should be: for the people. Vote for Ada Brown, she is the ear that will always listen to you and the voice that will always speak for you.

Sincerely,  
Dana G. Deering  
Gorham Citizen

# letters

## VOICE IN THE WILDERNESS

Dear Editor,

WMPG's letterhead has, for the past few years, carried the image of a musical note yelling into a microphone. This is a symbol which has, in the past

panded so that the term "rock" can now be used to define many different forms of music--punk, new wave, psychedelia, glitter, heavy metal, funk, Elvis-style, Beatles-style, acid, etc.--which have greatly different sounds but the same roots. These different styles account for a large part of today's musical scene; one radio station, WTOS, has committed its entire format to playing all of these forms of rock, which has proved to be very successful for them.

Unfortunately, one is not able to pick up WTOS in 95% of the Portland/Gorham listening area; this is the point at which the problems begin. As the school radio station, WMPG has an obligation to serve the interests of its student body first; since students are almost totally products of the rock era and have tastes which range widely among the styles mentioned, it would seem as though WMPG would best serve its university by programming a format which would give a wide majority, but not necessarily all, of its airtime to alternative rock 'n' roll. See-

ing that it is also a Portland area station, it should serve that community by playing music which isn't heard on other stations--jazz, folk, bluegrass, reggae and others.

Ernie Freeberg, however, has taken the attitude that WMPG serves the community first and

station director/advisor Ernie Freeberg, but (to quote one of Freeberg's famous lines), "That is not the case." Don says his letter was printed in a fragmented manner which omitted many key points he feels should have been printed. And I wonder what connection or influence Freeberg has on the *Free Press* which gives him the opportunity to read and respond to letters to the editor prior to publication!

I was a disc jockey at WMPG from January of 1982 through my graduation last May. Elected assistant manager for the '82-'83 school year and appointed news director for '83-'84, I have witnessed many changes at the station: the upgrade from 10 to 50 watts, the appearance of many truly dedicated volunteers and the appointment of Ernie Freeberg as a paid station director. Although I doubt Freeberg's "experience" at a Vermont college radio station and later MPBN supplied him with the necessary skills to run a radio station, he did help us get WMPG out of an administrative slump and bad image problem when placed in charge in the fall of 1983. Ernie Freeberg was a big help in his early days of office. But the occasional *Free Press* articles concerning WMPG and Freeberg have not told the whole story. This letter's purpose is to relate only a few little-known facts about WMPG and Ernie Freeberg.

Freeberg may not totally "control" WMPG, but I feel his influence over all aspects of the station has grown to an astounding level...and the student senate and student communica-

Soon Don Connors and myself along with a few others in the old camp found ourselves greatly outnumbered by Ernie's new camp of recruits. Most executive board members appeared to be Freeberg "puppets," which never disagreed with the station director...after all, a good percentage of them (the new board members) got started in college radio and moved up so quickly largely due to Freeberg's influence. At the same time many qualified, experienced personnel from 1982 and before walked out the door, frustrated with Freeberg's new reign.

The spring of this year brought hope to Don Connors and I because we hoped Freeberg's "One year, one time" position would end and a general election for a new volunteer manager would occur. Many qualified personnel hoped they would get a shot at becoming station manager. That's when the news came that somehow the student senate "asked...(Ernie) to stay on," another year with a hefty \$7500 stipend.

Although I feel no personal antagonism or anger toward Freeberg, I feel new students are being denied access to their college radio station due to a station director (and executive board) who does not look at the students' wants or needs. Recently a non-student was given a Thursday night air show over Don Connors, who is a student and has been with WMPG for several years. This giving preference to non-students has got to stop. The problem is real. I'm sure an investigation of WMPG would reveal several other incidents of Freeberg's abuse of power. At a time when the stu-

bership is up only 10% and support staff about 16%, the administration, which was to shrink with the merger of two administrations and was deemed 15% too large after a 1972 accreditation report, is up 189% over 1972 — from 30% to 80% of faculty numbers. That accounts for a great deal of office and former classroom space and largely explains the present claimed building need.

This growth in USM administration is also about \$3 million more in salaries plus office costs, a serious accountability concern in itself.

I would hope that the building proposals on the other UM campuses are not so open to question.

As much as I would like to vote for the University bond issue, these facts concerning USM needs must be addressed satisfactorily before I can.

Yours sincerely,  
William H. Slavick  
Professor of English

#### VOTE FOR BROWN

Dear Editor,

As students of the University of Southern Maine you are also part of the community in which you live while you are attending school. If you live in Gorham, on-campus or off, you are residents of District 36 and therefore have an opportunity to vote in the district and to have a voice in plotting the course of its representation.

I urge you to carefully consider the record of State Representative Ada Brown who is up for reelection this year. As an experi-

image of a musical note yelling into a microphone. This is a symbol which has in the past been taken to be that of a voice in the wilderness, bravely waving the banner of alternative music. In recent years, however, things have changed at WMPG to the point where this same symbol has been construed by some to be that of a voice which is only yelling to drown out any cries of opposition. Such was the case last week, when Don Connors claimed that WMPG has become a haven for a few selfish souls who put their own likes and dislikes above all others.

With all due respect to Mr. Connors and any others who may or may not have been wronged at the hands of Ernie Freeberg, personal interests are not the main concern here; what is the main concern is whether or not WMPG has lived up to the claim made in the October 8 *Free Press*, namely that they are "in touch with the university they serve." This is something that they, as a student organization, are obligated to do before anything else. It is also something which they do not appear to be doing in good faith.

Consider: The mean age of students at USM has been given as being somewhere between 25 and 30 or 40. This means that all of these people were either born or brought up in the period when rock 'n' roll was in its formative stages, but was already winning the audience of billions it has today. There are very few people who can say that they have gone uninfluenced by rock music (consider the vast number of people who remember exactly where they were when Elvis or the Beatles were on the Ed Sullivan Show), and the stu-

Ernie Freeberg, however, has taken the attitude that WMPG serves the community first and USM second, and as such has aligned his format to please a very limited audience in Portland while ignoring the student body. This is in contrast with the fact that the students pay the activity fee without which WMPG could not operate; taking everything into consideration, one cannot avoid the conclusion that WMPG has misled the student body, the SCB which is supposed to oversee it, and the student senate which has final authority over them as to their intentions of fulfilling their claim.

What can we, as students, do to rectify this situation? Fight—fight the apathy which so many of us at USM fall victim to. The case is clear—it is our money which is being misused to not serve us. What to do?? Take pen in hand and write—the SCB, the student senate, who doesn't matter. Make it clear what you want to hear so they can do whatever is necessary to give it to you. If you do so, WMPG can once again be a voice in the wilderness; if not, it will continue to be a voice of disinterest.

Sincerely,  
Chris Bickford

#### CALL FOR ELECTIONS

Dear Editor,

I am angered by the editing of Don Connors' letter in last week's *Free Press*, which Katherine Kreuter arranged into a regular news story. The editor may believe that one or two ex-WMPG members are trying to manipulate her into printing unfair and slanderous attacks on WMPG

astounding level...and the student senate and student communications board have let him run the station with nearly unlimited control. In last week's article, Freeberg stated that he "does not have a vote in choosing who is or who is not on the executive board." Since this is true, how could he ever achieve overwhelming influence on all departments? The answer, I believe, lies in the fact that when Freeberg was placed in charge of WMPG in the fall of 1983 he was given dictatorial powers to choose an executive board. From the old WMPG board he chose Joan Muldoon, Don Connors, and myself to head departments. Three individuals new to WMPG were appointed for the three remaining department heads; two had no radio experience and one was a non-student.

In my opinion, Freeberg believed then (and still does) that

would reveal several other incidents of Freeberg's abuse of power. At a time when the student senate is in a bitter budget battle due to over-allocating funds, shouldn't the students and senators reassess that \$7500 stipend Freeberg receives and call for a general election at WMPG?

Jeff Hale

#### PRO-WMPG

Dear Editor,

I am writing in response to the October 22 *Free Press* article and Don Connors' allegations that WMPG is a "controlled" radio station. If WMPG is "controlled" and I believe it is not, thank God the control is not in the hands of Don.

The political structure of WMPG is a democratic one, where the leaders of the organi-

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WMPG's leaders should be older and more "responsible" than the average 19-year-old campus student. As time passed and the station's image grew with the power increase, many new faces appeared at WMPG. Two opposing "camps" began to appear: the "old" camp, which believed college radio should broadcast a mixture of musical tastes but primarily progressive, alternative rock and new wave, and the "new" camp that believed that rock and new wave should be drastically reduced to make room for expanded jazz, blues and bluegrass formats as well as classical. Musical differences were not the only dividing argument.

zation are elected to their positions. Don has unsuccessfully run for station director, program director and, most recently, music director since May 1982. "Why haven't I been allowed to obtain the position that I deserve?" asks Don. It could have something to do with his abrasive personality and the fact that his attitude problem is so pronounced that he's not able to gather a majority of votes to win an elected position. The problem is Don's, not Ernie's.

Ernie Freeberg is a competent administrator who has enabled that station to grow from 10 to 50 watts. He was a motiva-

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ting force in the move from the closet space we occupied in the pub area to the new and improved facility in the student center. The station was beset with political backbiting and infighting, typical of student-run organizations, when Ernie stepped in. He has had a positive effect in recruiting individuals who have made [WMPG] the largest student-run organization, one that the university can be proud of.

WMPG has built a reputation as a listening alternative to the consultant-controlled airwaves. We are a recognizable sound force in the southern Maine market due to hard work on the part of the student volunteers and leaders at the station. We do not need counterproductive forces working to destroy what the student population of the station has built. If Don thinks he can do a better job than Ernie, he is sadly mistaken. He has proved it in print with his "cry baby" attitude.

WMPG needs a half-time paid professional to oversee the operation. There must be one person who is answerable to the Federal Communications Commission, the USM administration and the student senate which funds the operation. S/he must also act as a teacher and leader to the hundreds of non-experienced personnel that pass through that organization each year. The job cannot be handled competently by a

student, believe me—I've been the student station director of WMPG.

The future political and economic structure of the radio station is a topic of discussion in which all students and non-students are invited to participate. The first in a series of meetings to discuss this will be held in early November and you're invited to attend. If you'd like more information about the date and time, contact WMPG @ 780-5416. I hope to see you there.

Respectfully submitted,  
Joan Marie Muldoon  
Cape Elizabeth, Me.

## MORE ON WMPG

Dear Editor,

Don Connors' letter concerning Ernie Freeberg and other non-student control over programming at WMPG should give us all, as USM students, pause for thought. In the past, WMPG has given us special programming intended to serve USM students, which is rightly the aim of any campus radio station. In his attempts to improve WMPG's programming, however, Mr. Freeberg has sacrificed the station's control by USM students to a large degree.

A small elite of non-students with commercial interests in the areas of music in which they have been given airshifts have a

disproportionate amount of influence on WMPG's programming. Richard Julio, booking agent for Geno's, frequently features acts appearing at Geno's on his heavily promotional program, "Richie's Rare Record Roundup." Such activities smack of free advertising for Geno's, which is unfair given the fact that WMPG is a non-commercial radio station.

Joan Muldoon, in the Spring 1984 WMPG Program Guide, states that WMPG is an alternative to "consultant-controlled" radio stations. This is a farce, because Mr. Freeberg acts as a consultant controlling WMPG's programming. He has taken what used to be a student-controlled radio station, run for the benefit of USM students, and turned it into a second-rate imitation of MPBN, which Mr. Freeberg used to work for. In light of the fact that WMPG's programming emphasizes bluegrass, blues, classical and jazz programming, programming already available to USM students through MPBN, isn't it unfair to call WMPG a genuine listening alternative for the students at USM?

In order to gain outside revenues for the station through non-commercial grants from Portland businesses, WMPG has had to alter its programming to an audience wider than that of simply the USM community. WMPG has had to pander to the masses, rather than serve USM exclusively. This has meant that programming for USM students has suffered, while the programming preferences of Portland businessmen has been given first priority.

Giving control of WMPG

relate to student organizations?

Here is a perfect example: WMPG-FM, which claims that it "serves the university community." In my opinion, WMPG has been catering to only one part of the USM community—the Portland segment. WMPG's sole dedication to the Portland audience's projected tastes is apparent in the music mix they play. More attention is paid to "alternative" forms of music such as folk, jazz and bluegrass, even though there is no substantiated heavy market demand for these types of music. If there were, then WBLM would be playing Jean-Luc Ponty and the Holy Mogul Rounders instead of Twisted Sister and Prince.

How are the Portland audience's tastes defined? Well, "alternative" must mean non-rock, and one WMPG executive board member has spoken of rock as "having not much of an effect on modern music." Interestingly enough, the Gorham audience is for rock (come visit any of the dorms for an hour or two!), but their needs are sorely neglected because of WMPG's intense concentration on other types of music. Why is this so? The ironic part about this situation is that WMPG is located on the Gorham campus, but hardly attempts to accommodate the Gorham audience. Their wattage is theoretically spread out from "Brunswick to Kennebunkport;" yet I can receive WMPG well only on the Gorham campus.

WMPG shows absolutely no regard for the opinions and tastes of its audience whatsoever. It's obvious that the executive board is following the Orwell style of management: all men are created equal, but some men are more equal than others.

Sincerely,  
Betty LaChaussee

## TALKING ABOUT "TALKING WITH"

Dear Editor,

The Russell Square Players have put on some fine plays. I saw their presentations of "My Fair Lady" and "The Music Man," but this showing of "Talking With" forces me to write regarding upgrading education.

The gist of all this discussion in the media seems to be to better prepare secondary students for college-level work; and then there is the proposal for teacher pay increase, the merit system, discipline, etc.

I started to attend the drama program entitled "Talking With" at USM's Russell Hall Saturday night, October 20. My daughter, a USM student, was required to attend. We went to furnish her transportation. I say "started" because I, my wife and son (age fifteen) got up and walked out during the second presentation by Kathleen Potts. I understand the first monologue by Jude Bernal was also less than edifying. My own complete understanding

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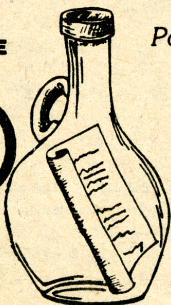
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back to the students should be the station's first priority. Student-run, pre-Freeberg administrations have given USM students special programming like trivia contests between fraternities and dorms here on campus live on the air, live broadcasts from the Portland campus, live coverage of USM sporting events, as well as live call-in student opinion programs. Under the Freeberg administration, WMPG has ceased to serve USM students with these programming innovations and has instead given Portland's music and business elites a disproportionate say over what WMPG puts on the air.

As a station licensed to the University of Maine and functioning as a student activity, WMPG has the responsibility to serve the University community as a programming service to its students. WMPG, in its current incarnation, has failed to live up to that responsibility.

Christopher Beckwith

### STILL MORE WMPG

Dear Editor,

Last year at about this time, I wrote a letter to the *Free Press* citing the causes of apathy towards student organizations here at USM. The following is an example of what happens when too much apathy is allowed to run rampant.

Granted, we know that apathy as an issue is old hat here at USM. (Heard from the Astronomy Club and the Bicycle Club lately?) There is another side to the apathy question which is presumed to be buried, but really isn't: the Portland vs. Gorham debate/feud. How does this feud

Don't bother to ask about WMPG's reception in Portland because it's very faint (at least it was in the Deering area where I lived last year.)

This split is further illustrated in WMPG's personnel management policy. The executive board which determines form of WMPG, has just about all of its members living in Portland. (A couple of exec. board staffers are even outside Portland proper suburbs such as on Peaks Island!) Yet the majority of ordinary staffers (DJs and the like) that live in Gorham are "compelled" to play music which is mostly in line with the projected Portland audience's tastes. In short, it is Portland people who are running WMPG, and not Gorham people. Ideally, there should be an equal mix of both Portland and Gorham people.

Perhaps the answer to Portland's dominance at WMPG can be summed up in this remark made by another executive board member at a recent meeting: "It's dangerous programming when (Gorham) DJs play music only to their friends in the dorms." Yes, but isn't it equally hazardous to play folk, bluegrass and jazz solely for the benefit of friends living in Portland?? That's a perfect example of the pot calling the kettle black and the frying pan standing up as witness!

One last thing. If WMPG prides itself for being an "alternative" radio station, then why are they resorting to the same tactics used by commercial stations? They have limited playlists based on pure assumptions; they try to appeal to potential listeners by stating "your" radio station (the personalization element), and last but not least,

was lessened by her so rapid-fire delivery. If this kind of college theater presentation is an example of what higher education today is all about, then teachers are grossly overpaid. It seems the programs which were handed to us should at least have shown the rating PG. We were very ashamed that we had persuaded our fifteen-year-old to go with us. Other patrons also did not stay for the whole program. The slut that Potts portrayed as exemplified by her obviously obscene language certainly is duplicated in any low class beer joint or house of prostitution. The language was not only offensive, but I wonder if educators and promoters of better education have any idea what the "top" is like in USM. Who sponsors and allows such a revolting, obscene performance? Are education promoters advocating the complete breakdown of genteelness, decency, common courtesy, kindness, clean talking and living? Is it to utterly defame and degrade American intelligence that moronic producers of such smutty trash are championed by the Governor of the State of Maine, the Maine State Education Committee and other erstwhile educators who ignorantly or innocently seek to pour more taxpayers' money into this lowest, most repulsive form of education? I say, if this be the fact, and there is no changing teachers of such rotten bent, cancel the whole education system and let the kids attend the bars and brothels of the state to get far better and more uplifting education at no cost to taxpayers.

A student can rise no higher than his teacher, unless, and I would hope in this particular case, he or she is more intelligent,

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WMPG

Dear Editor,

A rejoinder to the recent criticism of WMPG:

Aside from the simple fact that WMPG allots more air time to rock music than to all other genres combined, I would like to instance several other justifications for their present format.

Education being the keystone of a university, it follows that university organizations and activities should strive, first and foremost, to educate. Though some view education strictly as a "means to an end" proposition, I would rather define it as the dissemination of knowledge for the stimulation and development of the individual. We are here, presumably, for the acquisition of knowledge, which, like "new wine," will shatter (or at least challenge, clarify, and enlarge) the "old bottles" of our present ideas, assumptions, and opinions. An existentialist may do well to study idealism, but a native of France would profit little from French 101; similarly, a predominantly rock-oriented audience should respond positively to WMPG's non-rock programming, and welcome the opportunity to either restructure or reaffirm their musical tastes.

I once overheard a discussion, pertaining to our activity fee, in which a young man said something to the effect of, "We get

enough education in the classroom; that money should be used for entertainment." Rather than offering a legitimate criticism, this individual merely betrayed himself. Education does not preclude entertainment. The university's best courses, numerous lecture and film series, convocation programs, and performing arts productions all educate and entertain. (A possible exception here is this year's weekend film series, which seems frightfully void of any educational substance.) By airing alternative music (classical, jazz, folk, blues and reggae), WMPG endeavors to educate its audience in the musical entertainments of other ages and cultures. What more laudable (and entertaining) way to serve the university?

Finally, though rock be the mainstay of the student population, WMPG has a responsibility to the community as well. A university is neither self-supporting nor self-serving: it both depends on and benefits the larger community to which it belongs. Thus, a university must always attempt to satisfy the often disparate needs of the worlds within and without. With its varied programming, WMPG achieves exactly that, conscientiously serving both the university and its surrounding community.

Sincerely,  
Mark Bruhn

## "TALKING WITH"

Dear Editor,

Thank you for including my letter about "Talking With" in your October 29 issue of the *Free Press*, and your printing of the play's review by Carol Manchester was good editorial sense and taste.

Ms. Manchester's account was well written, causing me to wonder if my leaving the performance in the questionable beginning didn't cause me to miss some really worthwhile presentations further on in the program. However, it is my private opinion that if any of the actresses after the first two gave truly uplifting acts with clean speech and wholesomeness, then how considerate it would have been for the writer and director to segregate the two examples of realism.

I am sadly sure there are those who prefer the lowest class of entertainment, and dirty, bawdy language doesn't jar their seared consciences at all. Having arrived at this ocean-bottomed level in our democracy, they are entitled to it. Even the Holy Scriptures mention "the dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire." II Peter 2:22. Each to his own. I would consider it a gross imposition if the latter person were somehow forced to attend a fine, decent, respectable theatrical production.

I believe it was Daryl Zanuck, the financially successful movie producer who refused to produce educational movies to lift humanity, who was quoted by a person I once heard as saying, "Eighty-

five percent of moviegoers have the minds of 12-year-old morons. If I produced better educational pictures, I'd go bankrupt."

Why not let this low-charactered class enjoy their low-class choice all to themselves and not deceive respectable folk into attending what is to them offensive.

I lament that the higher caliber of student society and elsewhere are hoodwinked into attending and thus lending approval to such unmorality. Let "the dog (turn) to his own vomit . . . and the sow . . . to her wallowing in the mire." *All alone*.

Roger L. Holton

Dear Editor,

Narrowminded, self-serving crap is the way I would describe last week's letters complaining about WMPG. But before dismissing the letters altogether, I'll admit they raised two questions that deserve to be answered: First, does WMPG adequately serve the USM community, and second, who "controls" our student radio station?

WMPG is guided by a 12-member executive board which meets weekly. This all-student board consists of five department directors, their five assistants and a business manager. One non-student, Ernie Freeberg, sits on the board as a non-voting advisor. Primarily decisions affecting the station are made by the department directors but major policy decisions, like the program format, are decided by the board as a whole. No one person "controls" our cherished radio station; nor would any mortal be capable of it.

To ask if WMPG adequately serves the USM students is an unanswerable question. The university community contains such diversity that it is impossible to serve one group without slighting another. However, WMPG's programming acknowledges, as best it can, this diversity within the student body.

On a broader scale, as a federally licensed broadcaster, WMPG is required by law to assess the needs of the surrounding communities. And while serving the university community is the station's primary concern, it must cater to the Greater Portland community as well.

If questions remain for you, visit the station in the student center on the Gorham campus of USM.

Sincerely,  
Peter Twichell  
SCB

November 5, 1984

## STILL MORE WMPG

Dear Editor,

Fact: 52 hours or 54.7% of the weekly programming time on WMPG is devoted to rock 'n' roll. The remaining 45.3% includes news, special productions, reggae, jazz, folk, classical, etc. In short, all non-rock 'n' roll programming is responsible for less than half of WMPG's on-air time.

Fact: More than 60% of USM's students live off-campus. These people represent a diversity of interests. Many have families, jobs, belong to various organizations in the community, and their musical tastes vary from Musak to the Dead Kennedys and beyond. These students also supply more than 60% of the funds available to student organizations, including WMPG. Does it not seem fair that some of these varied interests be reflected in the programming at WMPG? In fact, it seems likely that WMPG has barely begun to provide for such a wide assortment of tastes.

WMPG is a changing and growing radio station. It is currently staffed by an energetic group (90% students) who are devoted to improving the quality of its programming and to responding to the needs of the *entire* university community. A few students are crying "sour grapes" because they are unwilling or unable to change and grow with the station.

It is time to stop this bruhaha and recognize that what is happening at WMPG is of benefit to all of us. No one is being pushed aside — quite the contrary; room has been made for many who were previously left out. We should be grateful for the leadership and foresight that has made this possible and realize that there is room for WMPG to be many things to many people.

Sincerely,  
Stephen Wilder

## ANOTHER ONE

Dear Editor,

You should point out to your readers that despite the cries of

a pathetic minority of WMPG past and present staff (Don Connors, Betty LaChaussee, Jeff Hale, et al.), over half of WMPG's on-air time is devoted to the rock 'n' roll they so disingenuously claim isn't being played. You might also mention that the other 50 or so members of the radio station staff and everyone else at USM connected with WMPG knows that what station manager Ernie Freeberg has brought to WMPG is intelligence, love of all kinds of music, and a talent for attracting and encouraging people with the same qualities.

Since Freeberg has been with WMPG it has grown from a promising radio station to the best one I know. It's unfortunate this continued conflict is wasting his and everyone else's valuable time.

Mike Higgins

## TYRANT OR SAVIOR

Dear Editor,

As someone who was a member of the executive board of WMPG last year, I am in a position to shed some light on the present quagmire which surrounds the station and to point out some of the more obvious exaggerations by Messers Connors, Bickford, Hale and Beckwith. I shall also rebut some of the statements made by Ms. Muldoon and Ms. LaChaussee.

The two very different Ernie Freebergs that readers of the *Free*

*Press* get from the letters of Oct. 29, Ernie the tyrant or Ernie the savior, are both inaccurate. Mr. Freeberg is a fair administrator who has done a reasonably good job in his position. He has done some things well and some things badly. This can be no more than expected in the type of a situation that he has been placed in. While Ernie does have faults in administration, and the way the USM Student Senate first selected him is absolutely deplorable, Ernie is infinitely preferable to any of the other candidates who wanted the job when he was first hired. This includes Mr. Connors, Mr. Hale and Ms. Muldoon.

The incessant complaint about Ernie's forsaking the students of USM (especially the Gorham students) is convenient, however [it] does not hold water. Just because the students pay to fund a part of the radio station does not give them the authority to make station policy. Would the editor of the *Free Press* yield control of the paper to a group of students who constantly whine that they pay to operate the paper and want to control what appears in it? Ernie's policy of trying to offer something that will appeal to as many people in the Portland area is the only sound one and fits in with the administration's concept of "communiversity." I must also point out that the people complaining about the forsaking of rock 'n' roll fail to tell you that rock 'n' roll is still played on WMPG, and it is featured prominently in the format of the station. All of that fuss is over

the amount of rock played at WMPG.

The use of non-students at the station, while desirable, is something which should be controlled to limit the number of non-student airshifts and no person who does not pay an activity fee should sit on the executive board. This would maintain ties with the public while maintaining solid student control over WMPG.

Ms. Muldoon's assertion that no student is capable of running WMPG is laughable. Most college stations, including stations with budgets and staffs dwarfing WMPG, are run by students with a faculty advisor. It is true that a number of student station managers had difficulty with the station (Ms. Muldoon included). However that is not sufficient reason to remove WMPG from student control.

I must point out that the student senate hired Mr. Freeberg and have not fulfilled their obligation in supervising him. Everything that Ernie has told them was accepted at face value. When I recall the grilling given to the upcoming editor of the *Free Press* last spring, I find this to be incomprehensible. Since Ernie is a senate employee and as such not under the jurisdiction of the SCB, the senate should establish an ad hoc committee to deal exclusively with WMPG while it is being run by a non-student, and at the end of his current term that control of the radio station be returned to a qualified student.

Sincerely,  
T. M. Crotty