

OTTAWA CITIZEN AUG. 9/2002

# Environmental CZAR

the envi-  
of cur-  
said.  
s with  
direct  
air, wa-  
Neely  
chief

could have an impact on such areas as:

- Better building programs for public, private and residential homes so they could be energy efficient and ecologically friendly;
- The environmental aspects of farming;
- Mass transit;

- Planning and development;
  - Air and water quality.
- "Canadians have a terrible record when it comes to the environment," Mr. McNeely said, citing over-consumption of energy and "insufficient environmental awareness."

See CZAR on page F10

## Priest was hired because system failed, accuser says

### Saint Paul's University wasn't aware of sex abuse allegations

BY GARE JOYCE

Saint Paul's University and the Archdiocese of Ottawa should have known a priest hired to teach canon law had been accused of sexual misconduct, an alleged victim said yesterday.

Rev. John Huels, who had taught at Saint Paul's University since 1997, took medical leave of absence this week, citing severe depression, after Michael Bland, a former priest and now a psychologist in Chicago, accused him of sexual abuse in New Jersey more than 20 years ago.

"It dates back to incidents over a short period of time in New Jersey in the mid- or late '70s when I was 15 years old," Mr. Bland said.

Father Huels has not left the priesthood, but school officials

say he is considering it. According to Guy Levac, a spokesman with the archdiocese of Ottawa, Father Huels met with Archbishop Marcel Gervais in June and did not contest Mr. Bland's allegations.

Father Huels could not be reached for comment.

"It's the failure of the system and many individuals ... that this wasn't brought to the attention of school officials and the Archdiocese earlier," Mr. Bland said in an interview.

Mr. Bland first came forward with his allegations in 1994 when Father Huels was head of the Chicago-based religious order, the Servites. Mr. Bland was still a priest when he informed his superiors, though he did not go public nor tell police.

Father Huels stepped down from the Servites shortly afterward. Three years later he was hired at Saint Paul's University, a theological institute in Ottawa.

See PRIEST on page F4

cil meetings during that period and eight of 15 major committee meetings.

The access request only covered the expense period from Jan. 1 to June 14. As a result, there is no record of his spending from June 14 to the end of the exemption on July 15.

Mr. Little was hospitalized in mid-June with a gastrointestinal parasitic infection.

On his lawyer's advice, Mr. Little was hesitant to answer questions because of a Sept. 23 court case into a charge of election campaign overspending.

Mr. Little indicated he was not bedridden during much of that period and continued to work. The expenses during that period, other than the five he will repay, were for city business, he added.

"I wasn't off-duty ... I continued to come to the office when I was up to it and meet with people," Mr. Little said.

"I've got nothing to hide," he added.

The city council motion, moved by Bell-South Nepean Councillor Jan Harder and carried on June 26, said Mr. Little had provided medical documentation "of his inability to attend certain meetings of committee and council.

"Therefore be it resolved that the absence of Councillor Little from City Council is authorized for the period from April 9 to July 15," the motion said.

Ms. Harder was concerned about the bills during his sickness.

"I just find it odd that he could have those expenses when he was so ill," she said.

See LITTLE on page F4

# OFF-LINE



# Solea

Footwear that's Good for the Sole

943 Carling Ave. (at Sherwood Dr.)  
(613) 728-6905

Open 7 Days a Week  
Mon.-Wed. 9-6, Thurs.-Fri. 9-8  
Sat. 9-6, Sun. 12-5

Solea is the new footwear division of



...ncreased envisaged  
...er would have a  
...working relationship  
...the health department  
...ause of the health impli-  
...cations of environmental  
...olicy.

Dr. Robert Cushman, the city's chief medical officer of health, supports the idea of a senior environmental officer, but says it should be independent of all city departments, including his own.

For example, the environment officer and the health department could be at odds over insecticide spraying for disease-carrying insects, Dr. Cushman said. Health and environment sometimes have conflicting agendas.

"I'm not looking for business," Dr. Cushman said. "I'm already busy."

Baseline Councillor Rick Chiarelli said the idea is worth exploring.

The city tends to focus on projects, not their environmental impact, Mr. Chiarelli said. Environmental studies are done to minimize the effects of these projects, he added.

Mr. Chiarelli agreed with Dr. Cushman that the environmental post should be independent because of various city departments' competing interests.

"There is always a tug-of-war between environment and planning," Mr. Chiarelli said.

## Priest: Need transparency

Continued from page F1

Rector Dale Schlitt of Saint Paul's University said he had "no idea of any of this" when Father Huels joined the faculty.

Rev. Schlitt said the university "couldn't hire Father Huels today" if the allegations were known, given the controversies surrounding sexual abuse in the Catholic Church in the United States.

"I can't say what we would have done (in 1997) if we had known what we found out subsequently," Rev. Schlitt said.

"When (Father Huels) was hired, I was not informed either as Archbishop of the Archdiocese in which the university is located, or as (the university's) chancellor, of any inappropriate behaviour in his past," Archbishop Gervais said in a statement.

Mr. Bland, who works for the Archdiocese of Chicago's Victim Assistance Min-

istry, said he knew in 1997 Father Huels was seeking a position with the university, but "presumed it was the moral obligation of anyone in a supervisory capacity with the Servites and others who knew" to inform the school rector and the archbishop.

"For there to be trust in the church and its officials, transparency is necessary and truth-telling needs to be done at all levels," Mr. Bland said. "Whoever was in a supervisory capacity (with the Servites) was negligent if this information was not passed on."

"If the archbishop didn't know, whose duty was it to inform him? If the rector didn't know, whose duty was it to inform him?"

Mr. Bland wrote to the dean of canon law, Father Roch Page, in March, he said, to express "my concern and wonderment why (Father Huels) was teaching at Saint Paul's University."

All information in this report is confidential.

Ottawa

Where does John take Alice dancing every Tuesday evening?

Find out August 10

2nd Annual The Canadian Canoe & Kayak Festival

2<sup>e</sup> édition Le Festival canadien du canot & du kayak

ILE VICTORIA ISLAND  
AUG 9-11 AOUT  
www.canokayakfestival.org

2002

- Liquid Skills
- Flatwater Kayaking Demos & Clinics

On Saturday & Sunday  
Demos @ 11:45 a.m. & 3:45 p.m.  
\$10/hr for Clinics  
Intermediate Paddlers at 10 a.m. & 4 p.m.  
Beginners at 12 p.m.

Photo courtesy of Geol M. Burbridge  
Photo avec la gracieuse permission de Geol M. Burbridge

Ottawa EQUIPMENT CANADA OTTAWA CITY OF CANADA

...ntes d'...