

# Guilfordian

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## Hiring of spouses questioned

by Mark Gurley

The presence of fourteen married couples working either on the faculty or within the administration of Guilford College has recently given rise to a growing concern among several professors and employees. Worries about conflicts-of-interest, and even charges of nepotism, have been expressed by those dissatisfied with what they feel is a dangerous insensitivity to the issue on the part of the college. However, others refute these charges and stress the positive benefits which married couples bring to the school.

Beth Keiser, chairperson of the English department and wife of religion professor, Mel Keiser, sees a correlation between Guilford's Quaker heritage and its sensitivity to the needs of married employees.

"I think there is probably some connection between Guilford's history of leadership and service from married men and women, and the pattern of ministry in the Society of Friends which affirms the equality of the sexes. The Society of Friends has an astonishing record of travelling ministry from married women sup-

ported by their families," she said.

Keiser also pointed out another positive aspect of working with her husband. "Working together as a couple at Guilford has benefitted our family life as well as our professional life," she says.

Robert Williams, professor of economics, emphasizes another advantage of hiring couples. "Guilford is not a very well-known institution, and Guilford is not a very rich institution.

*"The only way nepotism can be justified at Guilford is to assume that the college is so corruption-ridden that nepotism contributes to institutional symmetry." -Louis Fike*

Therefore, if Guilford wants to maintain a first-rate faculty, it has to offer something more than money or prestige. If the school stops hiring couples, it gets rid of a card Guilford can play in attracting first rate faculty." Williams' wife, Charlotte Rosenthal, had worked at the college, but her position was recently terminated.

Other employees in the administration vigorously deny charges of nepotism and see no

conflicts-of-interest currently occurring. Bud Place, comptroller of the college, says that there is no policy of hiring spouses currently in effect. "There have been no positive steps by the college to hire a husband and wife team. Rather, Guilford has considered only the individual being interviewed for the job," says Place. He also asserted that the married status of couples did not affect their salaries. Place acknowledged that he was aware of the

hiring practices in effect only since he himself has been hired.

Ellen O'Brien, English professor and the spouse of religion professor, Joe Groves, stresses Guilford's support for married couples.

"Guilford was much more concerned with me as a whole person, as someone who has relationships. And people here were concerned with helping Joe and me find a comfortable situation which included recog-

nizing his need for some kind of professional outlet," she said.

O'Brien believes that the college is aware of the potential for abuse and will prevent such abuse from occurring. "As a Quaker community, we ought to be able to expect from our members the integrity to foresee and avoid these dangers," she concludes.

President Rogers strongly disclaims all charges of nepotism. "I do not think Guilford's hiring of couples should be deemed nepotism because nepotism implies misuse of power through illegal and covert employment of one's relatives under principles which override equal access and objective judgement about criteria and candidates for the position. I think that each member of the Guilford faculty is dedicated to operating professionally in such a way that their decisions would not accrue to the well-being of their spouse," he says.

However, Rogers agrees with Guilford's Provost, Bruce Stewart, that Guilford needs to examine the issue more thoroughly. Stewart believes that a balanced committee investigation would be appropriate.

"I think it would be useful for the Facility Affairs Committee to carefully examine both the positive and negative dimensions in the employment of spouses, and to delineate a policy that will help to maximize the positive and minimize the negative." He says that "the school should spell out what constitutes conflict-of-interest and the expectations it engenders when it occurs."

Attacks on the hiring of married couples at Guilford also resound in the faculty and administration.

Dr. William Burris, political science professor and former Academic Dean, commented on the issue. "In this matter, the very appearance of a conflict-of-interest should be avoided. Therefore, the earlier 'practice' of not hiring members of the same family should not have been abandoned." Dr. Burris did not wish to comment further.

One employee, who declined to be identified, asserted that intimate relationships in the faculty could possibly lead to "unholy alliances", resulting in block voting and "unwittingly continued on page 3

## The Quagmire Nuke Plant

### A glowing report

by O.L. Backer

The huge dome was even more ominous-looking from close up. I had been looking forward to my special invitation to visit Nuke Power Company's new Quagmire Nuclear Plant, as an excuse to avoid going back to Washington. Now that I was here, though, I felt a little like a holy roller who'd secretly had his hand in the church's cookie jar, and was now called up before the judgement seat.

The designated PR chief, a slick Madison Avenue clone named Tweadle, met us at the gate with a broad smile. "Reverend Backer!" he beamed. "I've heard so much about your sermons on the wondrous healing powers of plutonium. I want you to know how much we appreciate your spreading the truth among the ignorant.

"We think you'll enjoy your visit here, and really get caught up in Nuke Power's Quagmire."

"that's what I'm afraid of," muttered my acolyte, who was standing behind me and peering up nervously at the dome.

"Eh?" said Tweadle. "May I meet our other guests?"

"This is my acolyte, Ms. Green," I responded, stepping aside and rewarding her for her tact with a scowl. "And this is my newest convert, Abdul Khassan, formerly of the Palestine Liberation Organization."

Abdul spoke up. "my people could benefit greatly from plutonium. The materials from your plants could heal many parts of the Middle East. Like Israel." His grin was not pleasant.

Tweadle looked a bit nervous at this, but brightened as he led us through the gleaming halls of the plant. "I'm sure you'll want to see the control room. Our bright young engineers standing constant watch over the workings of Quagmire. Human hands and minds manipulating the power of the peaceful atom."

"Can we see the routes and schedules for transportation of your spent fuel rods?" asked Abdul.

Tweadle ignored him and ushered us into the control room. "Notice the screens displaying ongoing data on all functions of the plant," he said, continued on page 2



David Bromberg delighted a near capacity crowd in Dana Auditorium Saturday night with his picking and singing. Accompanying Bromberg were Gene Johnson on the mandolin and Jeff Wiser on the fiddle. Also appearing was the North Carolina group, Missouri Hoghead.

Photo by Randy Rosenthal