

# Fish Rule Still Stinks

by Pete Eisenhauer

I always wanted a fish tank in my room. I seemed to remember a rule in the handbook, though: NO PETS. I wondered if fish were pets. I knew they couldn't be considered pets, because students have had fish in their rooms for years at our school. Just in case, though, I asked a couple of the local Residential Advisors last year, including Marty Wagner of Second New Dorm West. No objections were found. He simply said "No pets except fish." That was fine with me; all I had in mind was a small

ank, maybe two gallons tops. My birthday was coming up in July and I asked for a tank. I got one, a nice hexagonal job: 1.5 gallons, very small.

In the second week of my senior year, though, a problem arose. It seems fish had been against the rules since the beginning of this year. My R.A., Mike Gunzenhauser of Second New Dorm East, didn't tell me that the first day I got here. He knew then that I had it, because there were only two students on the hall when I moved in. Here are the things I was

told. Mike said he had considered the situation; and, since the tank was so small and I kept it so clean, he had talked to two other (unnamed) R.A.s in the building and they had decided that it would be okay. However the rule was voted on by the R.A.s in the second week, and I was asked to take them home by first extended. He accepted full responsibility for not having told me sooner, but he couldn't find a valid reason for the rule.

"You were told fish weren't allowed at the first dorm assistant handbook meet-remember hearing that said. The only reason he could find for the rule was the smell fish could have. I can think of plenty of things on my hall that smelled worse than my fish did.

Tamara Caspary, Dawn Marsh, and I arranged for a meeting with the Dean of Students, Peggy Smith, to discuss this new ruling. They had fish, too. The reasons I was given for the rule against fish: bad smell, breakage of the tank, the need for feeding and care over extended weekends, and something about water damage and leakage. During the meeting with the Dean, she slowly conceded that each one of these points was invalid.



WHICH ONE OF THESE IS NOT LIKE THE OTHERS?

CHARLES

There are already room inspections for bad smells; there are plenty of other bigger things you could have in your room and break; most fish can be overfed before extended and survive perfectly (especially my goldfish); and more water damage comes from birthday water wars than anything else possible. There were no reasons left.

Dean Smith had another reason, though. The Residential Life Staff didn't want to change the rule after the beginning of the year because then it wouldn't be consistent with the rule NO PETS. She seemed sympathetic to the situation, as did several other R.A.s; but

in two different Residential Life Staff meetings (you know, the ones on Monday afternoons) the fish issue was voted against unanimously. It was a rule without a reason; or, more accurately, it was a rule merely because it was a rule, a rule against pets with no exceptions.

I bought into their logic and took my fish home. After all, I really did want to see things be consistent this year. One rule without a reason wouldn't matter that much, and the R.A.s ing," stated Mike Walters, R.A. for Third New Dorm East. If that was true, I wonder why none of the other people at the meeting

## Privileges Granted?

by Danielle E. Bernard

Beginning October 1, seniors were finally able to receive privileges...as long as they met all the requirements.

With stage one privileges, a student can place off-campus calls after midnight. Hey, this is great in case you need to make an emergency call to Mom, but who else in their right mind would be up after twelve except an NCSSM student? But that's no matter, because stage one privileges also allow seniors to be outside their room after midnight...as long as they are in their dorm.

Second level privileges allow you to stay off campus until ten thirty on week-nights. As senior Myrlam Khoury said, "Being off campus until ten thirty is nice every now and again!" This stage also allows for two hour curfew extensions. This policy came just in time for some REM fans.

An added privilege is the ability to go on mall runs on Tuesday nights...that is if one can find ten people who want to go to a mall on a Tuesday.

Finally, let me not forget the all time great Blanket Overnight. Now, you no longer have to call home two days in advance to get permission to go home.

The final stage of privileges is Stage Three: van runs to movies on Thursday evenings. However, as senior Amanda McAdams pointed out, "If you wanted to go to the movies all that bad, all you have to do is get a van on Tuesday [to a mall with movie theaters] with Stage Two privileges." I might add that I can see her point.

Don't get me wrong. I like having privileges. I guess it's fair to say that, as far as privileges go, it's the thought that counts.

{Editors' Note: Seniors with privileges must notify the RA's on duty of their whereabouts after midnight if they will be leaving their rooms. Students without privileges must seek permission from the RA's on duty to be out of their rooms after midnight.}

## "Students, Show Responsibility!"

by Dean Nestvogel

Most students claim that the absentee policy is too harsh and should be changed. Teachers, however, believe that if the policy were lightened, students would take advantage of the policy by missing more classes. Thus, they would hurt themselves academically.

The absentee policy, as stated in the Student Handbook, allows for five discretionary absences per year. Unexcused absences call for student notification on first offense, parent notification on second offense and week-end suspension on third offense. This applies to the total number of absences in all classes. Although this is rather strict it is necessary for academic success and responsibility.

Students need to reflect on this thought for a moment. Of course, the absentee policy is far from perfect. Problems will arise when a student receives multiple absences for one error (such as sleeping through several classes). However, one must also accept a certain amount of responsibility. It is the responsibility of the student to at-

tend class conscientiously. The students also have the responsibility to clear up any misunderstandings with the principal's office concerning unjustified unexcused absences (for example, when a student receives an unexcused absence for a previously cleared discretionary absence).

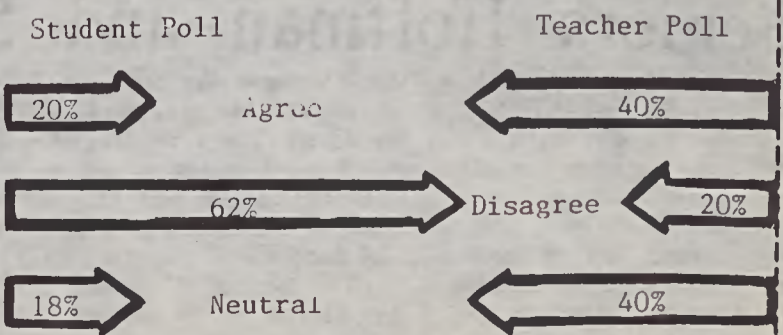
Changing the absentee policy so that students may receive more unexcused absences will only cause many students to take advantage of it. Imagine if students could receive five or six unexcused absences before having to go home. The students

would then take advantage of leftover unexcused absences to skip classes at the end of the year.

We students should accept the absentee policy and the responsibility that comes with it, though the policy is rather tough. Next time you receive an unexcused absence, think about if you deserve it before griping about how bad the absentee policy is. You might find that it does you good to accept some responsibility once in a while.

### Opinion Poll - Absentee Policy

The Absentee Policy is fair and should not be changed.



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