



English classes make a difference

by Jenny Rogers
staff writer

Marilyn Knight's English 101 and 102 classes had a different type of essay question on their final exams in December. Students could choose a book review, or a chance to give a lonely foster child a Christmas to remember.

Knight got the idea to sponsor a local needy child for Christmas from her daughter's elementary school, and had implemented it for five years at Clemson University, where she formerly taught.

Knight's four classes worked with her hometown agency, the Spartanburg Department of Social Services, to collect money and Christmas gifts.

This time, however, Knight chose to sponsor a teenager. "Little kids are easy to find sponsors for," she said. Teenagers are too often not considered as "appealing" as small children, although they have equal need of help.

The classes chose 16-year-old Ricky, who suffered a rocky childhood. "He's a really good boy," said Knight, "and very active in his church."

The classes voluntarily brought gifts and money to fill Ricky's Christmas list.

"His (list) was just so modest," said Knight. "He didn't ask for anything huge. He wanted a walkman, some sneakers, and an electronic game."

As the gifts poured in, Knight said it "renewed her faith in students." The classes bought clothing, a walkman, tennis shoes, a Gameboy and extra game, a homemade Christmas stocking, batteries, candy, and more.

To finish off the package, the final exam essay question asked students to recount their favorite Christmas memories and add a personal note to Ricky if they wanted to. The essays were then given to Ricky to keep.

Knight was surprised and pleased with the results. "This is probably the most successful Christmas foster program I've ever done," she said. "I'm sure we had 10 times as much fun as he did."

Knight hopes to do another foster child project in the spring, but plans are not yet finalized.

Mustian attends gubernatorial inauguration

by Jenny Rogers
staff writer

SGA President Michael Mustian attended the inauguration of North Carolina's newly elected governor, Jim Hunt, on Jan. 20, according to the GWU Office of Public Relations.

The N.C. Association of Independent Colleges and Universities encouraged 70 students to take part in the celebration. In fact, meeting those students was what Mustian enjoyed the most.

"The most beneficial part was meeting with other SGA presidents," he said. He took the opportunity to discuss plans for an intercollegiate Student Government Association conference in the spring.

Mustian first met Hunt when he visited the campus last year at the dedication of Washburn Hall.

"I was impressed with his many years of commitment to education," said Mustian. "He shared with me his experience as student body president while attending N.C. State University."

Although the inauguration was too fast-paced for Mustian to speak to the governor, he had the opportunity to attend the assembly of student body presidents Friday, and the inauguration and parade Saturday. He was seated on the platform behind Hunt with the other students.

The theme "Education is Our Future -- It's Everything," set the tone for all inaugural events.

Mustian enjoyed the chance to join other students in the festivities. It was great, he said, to "help each other out as we strive to make North Carolina educationally better."

Students volunteer at homeless shelter

by Matthew Elliot
contributing writer

Americans in their late teens and early 20s have gained a reputation for being totally self-centered and caring about no one else but themselves. Apathy is one of the major traits of members of Generation X, as this age group has come to be known today. But at least one group of students at GWU is trying to change that perception.

Every Tuesday, several students from Gardner-Webb spend the evening at the Cleveland County Homeless Shelter. They serve meals to the residents there. After dinner, they spend time with the families in the shelter. "We just give them someone to talk to. We spend time with their children. We read to them or help them with their homework," said Chera Spicer, a student involved in this volunteer effort.

The number of students participating differs from week to week. The fewest GWU students who have attended were two. The most were nine. But Spicer hopes that number will increase.

The students meet each Tuesday in front of the DCC at 5:45 p.m. From there, they drive to the homeless shelter and go to work. Spicer encourages other GWU students to get involved. "We would love to have more students involved. All you have to do is meet us at 5:45. Transportation is taken care of, and we normally return to the school at about 8:00 p.m.," commented Spicer.

"Really, we are just there to encourage them. A lot of them are feeling down because they have to live in a shelter. Hopefully, we get a chance to share Jesus with them also," said Spicer.

In addition to serving food and helping with homework, the group at times has provided entertainment. Carl Cartee, a GWU alumnus, recently accompanied the group and played music for the residents.

"God has just blessed us with so much that we need to share it with others. And this is a good way to do that," concluded Spicer.

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