

## Features

DO YOU KNOW WHO RUNS THE UNIVERSITY?

## Meet the board of trustees

Jennifer Menster  
Pilot design editor

If Neal Alexander walked on campus, chances are most Gardner-Webb students would not recognize him. In fact, some students reading this article right now have never heard the name.

But they should. Alexander is chairman of the board of trustees. He is responsible for the 36-member board, which sets policy for the university and has the ultimate say in school matters such as tuition increases, visitation hours and hiring presidents.

Alexander works at Duke Energy as the senior vice president of human resources and lives in Denver, N.C. He attended Gardner-Webb when it was a two-year program in the late 1950s and graduated from the university's GOAL program in 1984 with a bachelor of science in management. He first came on the board in 1990, and is serving his third term. This is Alexander's first time as chairman.

"I have a strong interest in Gardner-Webb," said Alexander. "I enjoy being on the board."

Alexander is responsible for board meetings, which are held three times a year — February, May and October. Committees within the board meet other times. The executive committee meets with Interim President Frank Campbell on a monthly basis to keep up with the happenings of the school.

Another committee within the board is the student affairs committee. This is the only committee that directly involves students. The SGA President sits in on this meeting and voices any student concerns or opinions to committee members. Currently, no students are allowed in the full board of trustees meeting.

"I think they should have a board member that is a student," said Patrick Woody, SGA president. "That would be a good way to start [building the student-trustees relationship]."

Woody said the trustees are very attentive to what he has to say and usually ask him

questions about students during the student affairs committee meeting.

Some members of the board agree with Woody that the board should be more involved with students.

"We do not interact enough," said Gene Washburn, board member for 18 years. "We are working on getting more interaction with the students, as well as the faculty. I think it will get better."

Washburn, who lives in Boiling Springs, said whenever he sees students in town he tries to talk with them. Washburn and many other trustees attend athletic events.

Alexander said that whenever he and other trustees are on campus they make every effort to visit with students and eat in the caf.

No matter how little interaction there may seem to be between students and trustees, Alexander said their number one concern is students.

"We want to make sure things are being done for the health and well being of students," Alexander said. "We want to create a Christian environment for them to learn in."

The board is trusted to make sure the university is upholding its goals and objectives to provide students an education. The board also is responsible for the judiciary and financial aspects of the university.

"Their primary concern after students getting an education is to make sure the budget is balanced," Campbell said. "They will also be in charge of appointing a committee made up of trustees, faculty and students to hire a new president."

Trustees do not get paid for their services. In fact, the majority of trustees give money to the school. Many trustees have other 40-hour-a-week jobs or are retired.

Trustees do not have to be alumni of the school. They must be nominated through the N.C. State Baptist Convention, which makes the final decision on board members.

Terms for trustees are four years. Each trustee must take a year off before being nominated again.

## GREEN THUMB



Photo by Angela Murtiff

Jack Partain works in the rose garden fertilizing and repairing the irrigation system in order to have the garden in top condition for graduation.

## Partain cares for roses

Angela Lachney  
Pilot staff

Do you ever take time to smell the roses? Well, Jack Partain does.

Located near Dover Memorial Library and the Poston Center, which houses university security, the Kathleen Nolan Dover Garden consists of 156 bushes of roses. "We have several types of roses: hybrid tea and floribunda and also famous old rose types such as the Polyanna and the English rose and many more," said Partain, retired professor of religious studies. Colors consist of everything but blue. There are red, white, yellow, red, pink, and many bi-colored roses.

In 1981, a few houses were removed to make space for the rose garden. Charles I. Dover donated funds in 1981 in memory of his wife, Kathleen.

Many town members take pleasure in seeing the rose garden. Cline Hamrick, the Director of Grounds from 1986-1991 is still able to enjoy the rose garden as he drives through Boiling Springs. "It's very beautiful to ride by and see," he said. "It's a wonderful place."

Three years ago, former GWU President M. Christopher White asked Partain to maintain the garden. Since then, Partain has taken care of the rose garden on campus.

Partain likes to do research on what methods and techniques are best for care of the roses and tries to obtain a variety of roses for the garden. In the winter

months, he researches which types would be best to add to the garden. This selection is based on type, color and fragrance. In the summer months, he has a spray schedule to rid the roses of insects and de-heads them, which is to trim the buds to create more.

A popular legend surrounds the rose garden—if a couple visits the rose garden together, they will one day be married. Partain had never heard of this myth. "That sure puts a lot of pressure on me, doesn't it?" he said.

He is currently retired but works in the religion department as needed. He has been a staff member of GWU for the past 20 years. He loves studying, especially on ideas related to the Bible.

"Being part of a small college means if you invest in it you have a chance to make a contribution and get to know a broader variety of students," said Partain.

Even though he is retired, he stays busy with many community organizations. He is a member of the National Rose Society of Cleveland County. He is active in the Boiling Springs Appearance Commission, which aids in making Boiling Springs a beautiful town. Partain tends to his own garden at home too, which consists of flowers and vegetables.

Partain currently lives in one of the oldest houses of Boiling Springs with his wife Ruth of 48 years and has three sons.

He likes to take care of the garden to show others the beauty of nature. "I love to spend time smelling the roses," Partain said.

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