

Updyke makes hotel 'home' for 60 students

By Janet Spoon

"She's our mother away from home," says Blair Woody, a freshman living at Best Western with about 60 other Elon students. Blair is speaking of Mrs. Leonard Updyke, area coordinator at the Best Western Inn. Since she came to work for Elon almost 11 years ago, Mrs. Updyke has made an impression on students here.

Coming to Elon in November 1970, she worked as housemother in West Dormitory for women for six years. She took care of her "girls," gave them advice, disciplined them, and gained their love and respect. For the past two years she has looked after students living at Ramada Inn in the fall terms.

"She would mingle with the college crowd and was always welcome," says Bob (Fish) Trout, who lived in Ramada last year. "She was the one person we knew we could turn to if we had any problems," says Fish. Mrs. Updyke also worked at Sloan during the summer session.

This fall Mrs. Updyke is in charge of about 60 young

men at Best Western until they find on-campus housing. Earlier this year, 104 students were living at the motel where Mrs. Updyke is carrying on her tradition. "The students at Best Western are under the maternal care of Mrs. Updyke," says Elon president Fred Young.

How do her charges feel about Mrs. Updyke? "She's always smiling and in a good mood," says Mark Thomas. "If I had to put up with all these guys, I'd be in a bad mood," he added.

She continues to do "motherly" chores for the students. She sews on buttons, stitches up pants, takes care of the men when they're sick, wakes them up to give them medicine, and sometimes even does a little matchmaking.

Some headaches do come with the job. "If there are troublemakers, they either straighten up or they leave very quickly," says Blair Woody. "If we do what we're supposed to do, there are no problems."

Now and then someone plays a practical joke on her. Recently someone stole the peep-hole on her door.

"But it didn't matter because she's too short to look out of it anyway," commented Dean Bill Long.

In addition to her job at Best Western, Mrs. Updyke plans student receptions and checks meal tickets in the cafeterias. In her spare time, she likes to knit, keeping her room door open for students who want to talk or need advice. On Sundays, she

goes to the Church of the Holy Comforter and works for two hours in the nursery with the children there.

Why does she give so much of herself to others? "If we don't share what we have, what's the use in living?" she asks. "I try to live the title of a book I have, *Try Giving Yourself Away*. I believe that in doing this you'll find happi-

ness, because the more you give the more you'll receive."

Mrs. Updyke is often remembered by those who have graduated from Elon. Recently, for instance, she attended a stag party by invitation of a student who had graduated four years ago. Other students include her in activities here.



These male students stayed in Sloan during summer school and are favorites of Mrs. Leonard Updyke. Mrs. Updyke lives with the 60 students at the Best Western. Staff Photo.

Selection deadline nears

Deadline for entering the 1981 Maid of Cotton selection is Nov. 8, the National Cotton Council announced today.

The 43rd Maid, as the international goodwill ambassador for the industry, will travel throughout the United States and Canada and around the world to focus attention on cotton.

To qualify for the Maid of Cotton selection, a candidate must never have been married, be between the

ages of 19 and 23, be at least 5 feet 5 inches tall, and either have been born in, or moved to, a cotton-producing state by age 7.

Finalists are chosen from applications and photographs late in November and asked to participate in the selection held in Memphis, Dec. 28-30.

Applications must be post-marked by Nov. 8, and are available from the National Cotton Council, P.O. Box 12285, Memphis, TN 38112.



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