

Faces OF ELON



meet

Patrick McCabe

Year: Sophomore
Major: Broadcast Communications
Hometown: Burtonsville, Md.

Q: What was your most awkward moment at Elon?

A: I had a professor ask my mom one time if she enjoyed dancing in the Dominican Republic because he had seen the pictures on Facebook.

Q: What is your fondest Elon moment?

A: Homecoming because I really enjoyed watching Elon come together in celebration of our school's success and graduates.

Q: Let's play a little word association. What's the first thing that comes to mind when I say Smith Jackson? Haggard Avenue? Catch the Fire?

A: Rapist e-mails. Sandy's. Awkward Rhino.

Q: Do you have any advice for freshmen?

A: Get involved and have some fun!

Q: Who is your hero?

A: My hero is my dad because all of his life he was told he wouldn't amount to anything and he then created a very successful business.

Q: Describe yourself in one word.

A: Passionate.

Elon declines coed dorm rooms

Lauren Brown
Reporter

So you think you like the opposite sex, but could you live with them for a year in an 8 ft. by 12 ft. brick room?

Many college students across the nation say: "yes," but at Elon, the response is far from enthusiastic.

As part of a growing trend in campuses across the nation, freshman college students are rooming with friends, siblings and even significant others in coed dorm rooms.

In February, People magazine ran a story on several colleges across the nation that adopted gender-neutral housing.

More than 17 colleges and universities allow students in designated dorms to pick their own roommates with no questions asked.

Despite this new-age way of thinking, Elon University won't be jumping on the coed bedroom bandwagon anytime soon.

"We have to consider that this is the South," sophomore Alex Brown said. "Elon considers itself a Christian university, and that might also hold up a policy that has people of different sexes living together."

Brown said that living with a significant other is a bad idea.

"You always have to be careful about moving in with a girlfriend in college if you're still in the university dorms," Brown said. "You've probably only known your significant other for one or two years at the most and that seems a little soon. It just wouldn't be a wise idea."

Brown said he would support male and female friends living together and that people would be wise in choosing whom they live with.

"I'd love to live with my female friends," he said. "They're just like my guy friends, but more attractive."

Assistant Dean of Students Jeff Stein also doesn't think Elon will be going down the coed-dorm-room path anytime soon.

He said that Elon has only had one or two requests for coed housing from students within the past five years.

"I think our campus is more conservative than other schools I have worked with," Stein said. "I'm not sure a majority of students, staff or trustees would push for this specific change but I imagine there would be a great deal of discussion, guideline setting and safety considerations that would accompany such a shift at any school."

According to the article in People magazine, the coed housing policy was adopted in 2005 by the University of Southern Maine as a way to accommodate gay and transgender students who felt more comfortable living with someone of the opposite sex.

"I think it could potentially help many lesbian, gay, bi and transgender students who might not feel comfortable living with someone of the same sex," said junior Brandon Tynan, a member of Elon's gay/straight alliance organization, Spectrum.

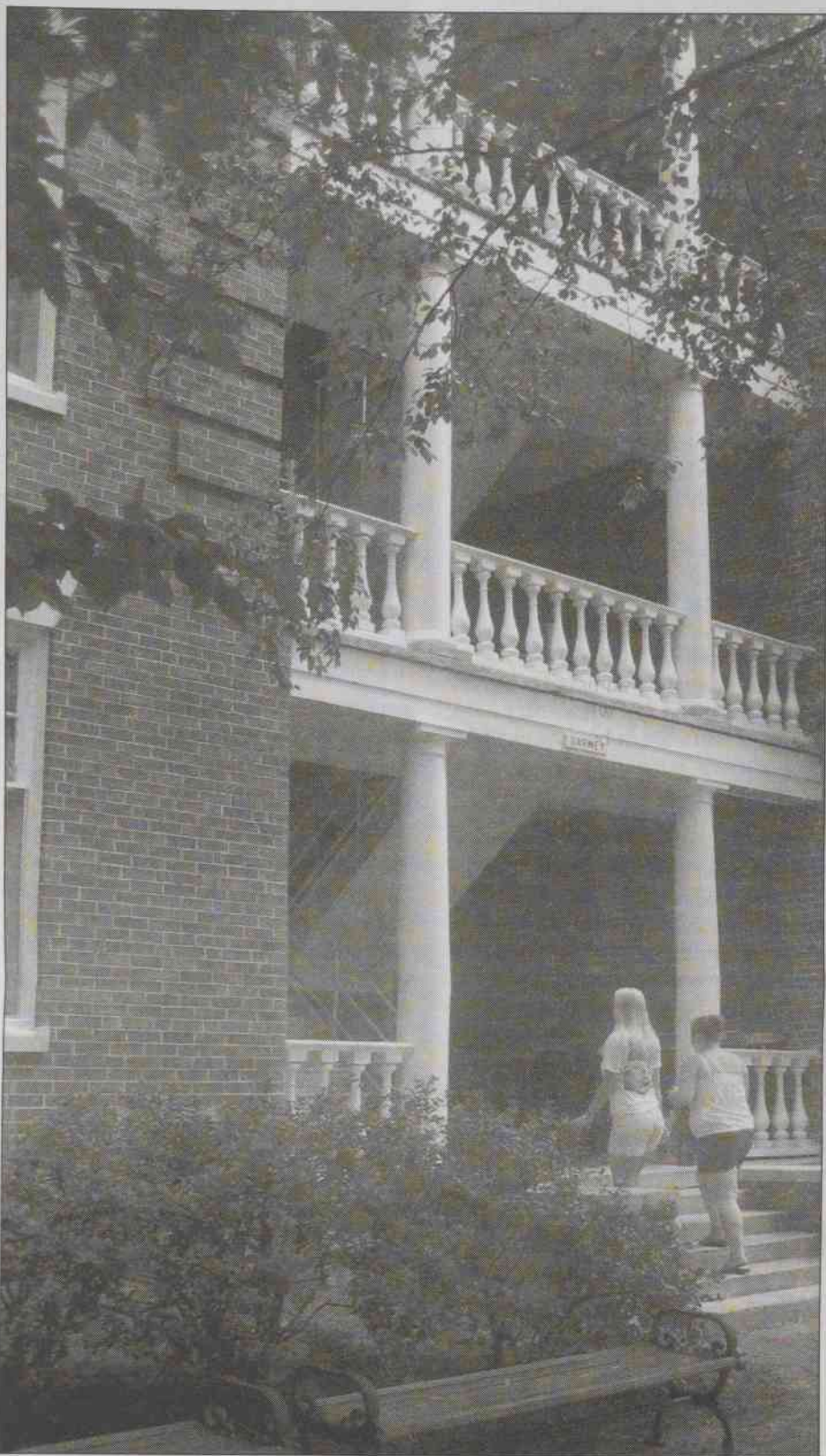
Both Brown and Tynan said coed dorm rooms could lead to unsafe situations on Elon's campus.

"I would be concerned that getting a coed dorm room could lead to sexual assault," Tynan said. "So in that way, it is definitely a mixed blessing. Considering the assaults Elon has experienced in the past, I don't see it adopting a policy like this anytime soon."

Lt. Vickie Moehlman of the campus police department said North Carolina

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— Brandon Tynan, junior, member of Spectrum



Caroline Matthews/ Photographer

Two freshmen students enter Brannock, one of the 14 coed dormitories.

criminal law does not provide for coed dorm rooms on campus. The law currently states that an unmarried man and woman living together and/or sharing the same bed for "immoral purposes" is a Class 2 misdemeanor (Statutes 14-184; 14-186).

"In my opinion, if the law were to change and this were to be allowed on any university, college or school campus, there is a high probability of increased domestic disputes and domestic violence complaints," Moehlman said.

Elon students and faculty members are content with coed dorm buildings and floors. As of this year, Elon's largest all-female dorm, Staley, became coed with the addition of a learning community on the first floor.

"There's an interesting change in dynamic when you go coed by floor," Stein said. "Evidently, years ago Sloan Hall was single sex, and very few students really liked it. As soon as it was changed to coed, everyone loved the building."

On-campus dorms such as Sloan and Moffitt already present a challenge

when it comes to enforcing the visitation policy, which dictates the hours males and females are allowed to be in each other's rooms.

Junior Shannon Waite, a resident assistant, last year, said coed dorm rooms would make enforcing the visitation policy almost impossible.

"It would be really hard because even though we know our own residents, we don't know everyone in the area," Waite said. "Then it would also be hard to have a double standard when you are trying to enforce a policy where people are living together."

Even though dormitories like Staley are going coed this year for the first time, there are no plans for any other dormitories to change their gender ratio.

The university is also not going to allow students to live in coed dorm rooms any time in the near future. Other colleges and universities are being jumping on that bandwagon, but Elon has not and does not plan to.