

Editorials

Where Have all the Juniors Gone?

By: Laney Frick

Nearly half of the class of 1987 chose not to participate in Fall Fest this year.

Monday, Sept. 30, began with each class chanting spirit songs and marching into the refectory for the traditional Fall Fest breakfast of Moravian sugar cake and orange juice. The freshmen class orderly filled its seats at the 11 tables in the far end of the dining hall. The freshmen were followed by the sophomores, who shared that far end of the room by occupying the remaining nine tables there. This left the entire near side of the refectory for the junior class to fill, since the seniors ALWAYS get the center section. The juniors proceeded to chant and march their way into the room. Their efforts, however, almost went unnoticed as they filled a mere four tables. Soon, the refectory was again swarming with the action as the senior class scurried to reach its seven tables.

Clearly, something—or someone—was missing from Fall Fest. Amongst the sea of white, pink, and yellow and white t-shirts, the

small area of green ones in the corner looked lost. Where was the class of 1987? Understandably, several students—lest we not forget our purpose here—spent the day in the library, attending internships, or working at jobs to meet financial demands. However, forty-six percent of the class of 1987 did not fit into any of these categories on Fall Fest day. Many took the day off from classes to sleep-in, road-trip for a long weekend or just to goof off. These activities are all deserved and indeed justifiable, but to forfeit the activities of Fall Fest in order to gain them is definitely self-centered.

Classes are suspended on the fourth Monday of Sept. each year to give each class the opportunity to work together on decorations, costumes, entrances, games, songs, and skits. The purpose is to promote class and school spirit through fun, challenging and original ideas and activities. The class of 1987 did ban together to meet these objectives, but only the truly dedicated showed up for meetings, planning sessions and

rehearsals. An average of 11 persons showed up for any given event until Sunday night, the night before Fall Fest. On this night, 42 members of the junior class showed up hoping to learn the entire skit, all the songs, entrance routine, and to pick up their costumes—in three hours or less! Relieved that 42 persons had shown up, no one questioned where the remaining 38 juniors were.

The junior class evidently is faced with a problem—be it apathy, laziness or disinterest, a combination of such factors, or even an undeterminable factor. Regardless of the reasons behind it, on Fall Fest day the junior class made two polar statements. One, that time and time again, the majority of the class of 1987 has fallen short of its commitment to its class sisterhood. So why should Fall Fest '85 have been any different? And second, that the class of 1987 must rely on the old adage that "it is quality not quantity that matters." Luckily for the junior class, that saying proved to be true on this Fall Fest day.

Sumus Quod Sumus

By: Liz McGehee

The trees in front of Josephine Scruggs' tiny, rundown gray house had yet to shed their leaves, but for the 62-year-old diabetic, winter already had arrived.

After five operations—including cataract and heart surgery—and four years of kidney dialysis, even seasonal temperature changes had become life-threatening to her.

So when I stopped by her house one day this summer to interview her for *The Knoxville Journal*, the daily morning newspaper where I've interned as a "cub reporter" for the last two summers, we filtered through the decades of minutes of her life as if we were straining the excess juice from some freshly cleaned green beans waiting to be split and canned.

Surrounded by stacks of unpaid utility bills and rows of medicine bottles, Mrs. Scruggs basked like a raisin in the sun pouring through her opened screen door as we talked: about how the sun ate up her tomatoes and how she "like to froze to death" last winter, about the shotgun she keeps behind her living room door, about grandchildren and how you should never trust Republicans, about 30 years of hotel maid work, about just surviving and how sometimes she doesn't.

Staring now at a blank word processor screen back at Salem a few months later and many miles

from Mrs. Scruggs, scenes from Harper Lee's novel *To Kill A Mockingbird* have filled my thoughts. In the novel, Atticus (a.k.a. Gregory Peck) tells Scout that in order to understand a man, one must step into his shoes and walk around in them. Talking with people like Mrs. Scruggs during my internship let me step into some shoes I'd never tried before and begin to understand (especially in Mrs. Scruggs' case because she had very large feet) what big shoes many must fill.

The people behind the poverty statistics quoted on the nightly news and in our textbooks have become very real to me in the last few months. Sometimes the connections to these folks seem muddled, like a bundle of frayed shoestrings. But without the liberal arts tools I brought from Salem to Knoxville I never would have been able to start unraveling the bundle and finding the knots connecting the strings.

Perhaps there really is a method to the madness of the liberal arts, of requiring us to know a little something about everything and how to get at that something when we don't. In other words, as any resident of Lake Wobegon would tell us, we are what we are—the sum of our parts and maybe even some other things that we haven't discovered yet. The liberal arts simply help map our search and find the rest stops along the way.

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Another resource for information on campus can be found in Salem's own foreign students. They come from Holland, China, Sweden, Guatemala, India, Colombia, and Japan. These women know what it is like to travel thousands of miles to college. They have experienced culture-shock, homesickness, language barrier, and jet lag along with the thrill and excitement of discovering a new country and making new friends. The advice they can offer students preparing to go overseas would be extremely beneficial.

The student network at Salem can be the first step toward improving the pre-study abroad situation, but students have to make it work. I learned to take responsibility for myself by going abroad, but I began to learn before I ever left Salem. Making the plans takes initiative, and it does involve a search for resources that are often hidden, but in the long run the effort is well worth the return.

Brett Ashcraft

Letters To The Editors

To the Editor:

For the two years I've been here at Salem I have always heard others outside of Salem talk about the reputations of Salem girls. Sometimes the opinions range from extremely bad to extremely good. However, many opinions weigh heavily in the negative area. There are many instances in which Salem students have really had to defend Salem College and the people that go to school here. Perhaps most of the attention we get comes from our being an all-female college. Nevertheless, how Salem is perceived depends primarily on our individual behaviors and how we come across to others. Unfortunately, sometimes the actions of a few

determine how Salem is evaluated by others. That is why we have to work twice as hard to give a good impression of ourselves.

As always, there are numerous occasions when we have had too much to drink, acted ridiculous, and wasted time on guys that do not deserve attention. That is the fun part of life. But when we lose track of how we come across to others, especially those who already think negatively about Salem, we hurt not only Salem students, but ourselves as well.

Nevertheless, by being at Salem we have the opportunities to become intelligent, mature, and independent women. This time at Salem is our time: our time to know ourselves, correct our

mistakes, and move on in life. However, sometimes I feel that we, as women, fall into the trap of depending on others (i.e. men) rather than depending on ourselves. Rather than hoping that others will make us happy, we need to realize that we are the only ones that can really make ourselves happy. If we always rely on others for our happiness, we end up behaving in ways that lower our self-esteem and self-respect. Furthermore, these behaviors lower others' respect for us. In many ways, our actions speak louder than our words. Some actions certainly deserve "X-ratings," but the drama does not end there. Unfortunately, Salem gets the bad reviews.

Salem Today:

By: Lucy Cheshire

How is your liberal arts education preparing you for life after Salem?



Maryanne Downs, senior:

"A liberal arts education gives one a broader view of many different subjects, thus makes one think, which I think is important. However, for those who plan to go into business and economics fields I would suggest possibly a double major. The best combination I can think of would be philosophy-economics."



Kelly Stevens, sophomore:

"My liberal arts major, sociology, will allow me to have a variety of career opportunities after college and won't tie me down to one field."



Nancy Meanor, junior:

"Salem has offered me a broader academic curriculum than other schools which hopefully will prepare me for a coed graduate school."



Sterling Talley, junior:

"I feel that a liberal arts education makes a well-rounded person, and I hope that my history major will help me in pursuing a graduate degree."



Claire Greer, senior:

"In the 'life after Salem,' I plan to use my music degree and primary teacher's certificate in teaching public school children. These children will not be looking to me for direction solely in music, but they will be asking about many other things. I feel that my liberal arts background is preparing me to pass on my knowledge to them with confidence instead of having to leave them wondering."