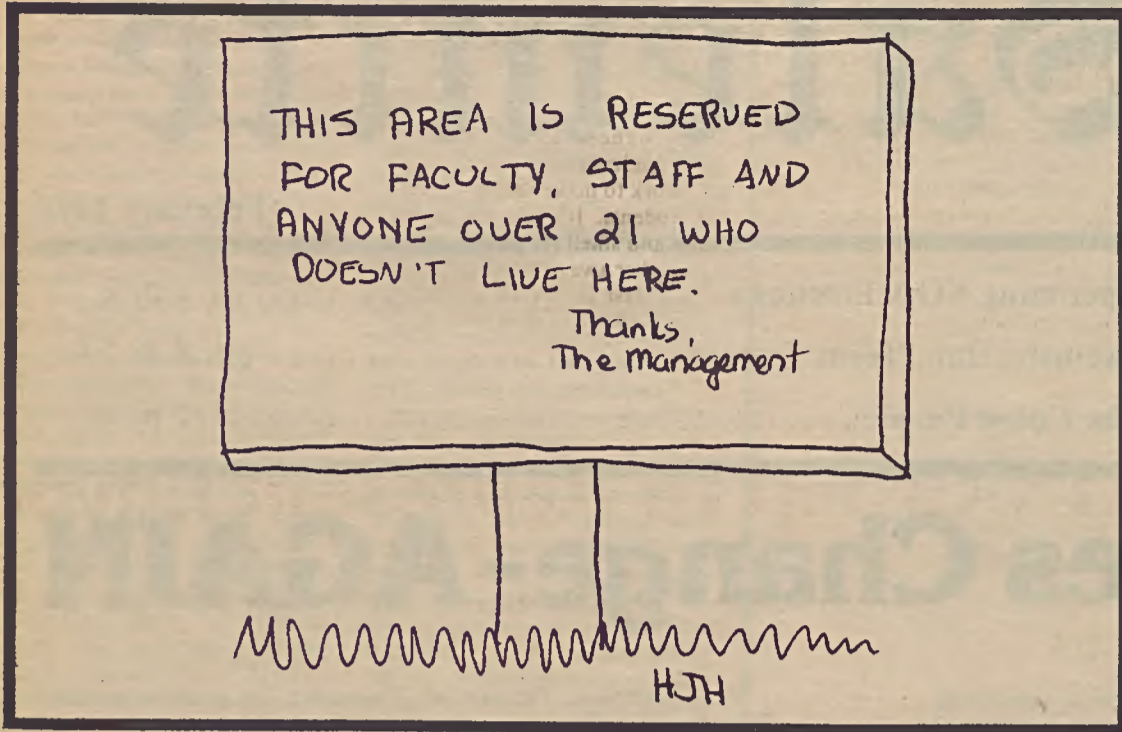


The Oracle



A Sign of the Times

By: Carol Thomas

On Thursday, January 30, many of the students on campus were surprised to find the FAC parking lot decorated with more new signs declaring yet another area where student parking is prohibited. I, myself, was furious and immediately vowed revenge on the instigators. After speaking with several persons concerning this issue, I at least understand, though not necessarily agree with, the reasoning behind the change.

Apparently a proposal to regain the area to the side of the FAC as faculty parking has been in consideration for quite some time. Prior to last year, that area was designated for faculty and staff. It was opened to student vehicles in the fall of 1984. That change was brought about when front-campus parking was taken away. As a consolation, students were permitted to park in the FAC area previously reserved for faculty and staff. Now, once again, these privileged spaces are in the hands of those employed by the college.

According to the faculty, students will often park in these spaces and not move their cars for days at a time, whereas the faculty members are in and out every working day, often more than once. On the other hand, students feel that they live here and are more secure parking closer to main campus late at night. Both faculty and students have valid arguments, and it seems to me that both should have been consulted before any change was made.

How is it that the students were not informed or consulted concerning this change that directly affects us? Those involved include the parking committee, the administrative council, and the faculty affairs committee: but where was there student representation? Our main argument as students is that we feel this was handled behind our backs. We should have at least had the chance to negotiate a compromise. I can only hope that in the future we will be included in making rules that affect us, the student body.

SGA Elections Around Corner

By: Lisa Councilman

Much to my disbelief, election time has rolled around again providing an appropriate opportunity for me to say a few words about leadership.

At the beginning of this year, a special friend gave me a piece of paper that spoke of what it takes to be a good leader. I tacked those words to my bulletin board not realizing how much they would mean throughout the year. I have read them many times since then and I would like to give you an idea of what they have meant to me.

In essence, a leader must be prepared to face many trials. She must organize her time with her position at the top of her priorities. A good leader has her head in the clouds and her feet on the ground. She must set her goals high, but not lose sight of reality. She must then strive throughout the year to achieve them, no matter how trivial they may seem to her peers.

A good leader sees her position as an opportunity to serve rather than an opportunity to outshine the rest. Being a leader is not all glory; it often means taking the initiative to do things for which you are never recognized or rewarded. She should take pride in her position and try to fully understand what others will expect from her. Others will always expect her to do things for which she is not prepared and she must take these things in stride realizing that they may be crucially important to someone else.

Most importantly, a good leader knows where she is

going and knows exactly how to get there. She prepares herself early by looking ahead and evaluating the future.

Keeping these things in mind, I encourage each of you to seek the leadership position you desire. There are an enormous number of opportunities available to you, whether it be in Student Government, academics, athletics, social activities or residence hall life. There is a place for each of you to prove your commitment to a better life at Salem. Set your goals high, but remember that it is the other women at Salem who will help you to achieve them. Earn your respect through service to the Salem community remembering that the greatest praise will probably come when least expected.

As I face the fact that my time at Salem is very limited, I look back and realize the goals we have achieved in just four short years. It's a great feeling to know that you have been part of some of those achievements.

Please join in making this coming year one that you will always remember because you took part in making Salem the special place that we have grown to love. From my own experience, I assure you that the most important step for a new leader is to take pride in doing the very best that you can do and then keep on fighting to do the job a little better. And when it seems that you can't win, always fight one more round because the one who fights one more round is never whipped.

Editorials

Walk on a Winter's Eve

By: Maryanne McDonough

Spending the month of January at home in St. Petersburg took on special meaning for me as I realized that after graduation I may never live there again. I thought a lot about what my home is to me now and what it had always been. I thought about the sense of security and encompassing warmth that exudes the timeless familiarity, and I wondered if I'd ever know these things in another place.

My contemplation would often lead me to take a walk through the early dusk hours of the winter evening, and this became my pattern for organizing my thoughts and feelings.

The sky has begun to gray, and a warm but gentle breeze carries a heavy, humid, afternoon into a light and pleasant evening. Large oak trees line the coral colored shell and pebble streets with an occasional palm tree that gives me a sense of place.

The cracked road shows its age as it winds lazily around forming blocks. Each street has its own distinct and very different feeling. Most of the houses are large old-Florida, Spanish styles. They are set far back from the curb with neatly tended spacious green lawns. There is a smell of freshly cut moist grass in the air, and the rhythmic ticking of a sprinkler is heard.

The busy pace of the day has slowed, and it is a peaceful time. All sounds seem muted by the gradual darkness that is slowly spreading. In the distance two girls jumping rope are called in to dinner and their voices fade away as they reluctantly leave their game. A tired father returns home from work and a weary dog gets up to greet him before returning to his spot under an azalea bush.

I take the dirt road leading to an open field and find myself at the bay. The weeds haven't been cut back recently and they scratch my bare legs as I make my way to the shore line. The sun has already begun to set, and I take a seat on a large piece of driftwood in the sand to watch the finale. I draw designs in the sand with a stick, and I watch the fiddler crabs creep out of their holes, and scurry back in upon finding me there. A seagull cries in the distance, and the sound of the water meeting the shore is comforting. The silence crowds me, and yet I strain to hear it. It is unusual, and it is welcome. For a moment it seems as if the world has stopped.

I look up at the horizon in time to see the sun meet the water. I almost expect to hear it sizzle as it slowly melts out of sight. The trailing lavender and pale orange streaks in the sky are all that is left of what has been before. The water seems to stretch on forever, and the sky seems so vast and empty. I feel very small, and I feel very alone.

I think about myself and my life. I think about the day that is quickly ending, and the one that will soon begin. I reflect on the past, and I contemplate the future. I am content to be where I am, and I am satisfied to be who I am. All that surrounds me is familiar and secure. Memories are abundant here and dreams are very common.

An elderly couple walk slowly hand in hand down the beach past me. They smile and speak. I watch them as they walk away, and I wonder about their lives. They seem so peaceful, and so much a part of this special place. I stand and brush the sand off of me. I turn away from the water and I can see my backyard in the distance.

For now it's time to go home. And when I do leave for good I will take with me all the comfort I have known along with the knowledge that my capacity for experiencing peace exists within.

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