

Alumnae Gather to Show Their Support

by Dot Hughes

November 2 was a significant date for the future of both Salem Academy and College. Leaders of the academic community, consisting of Academy and College alumnae board members, the Board of Trustees, the Board of Visitors, Academy and College parent's boards, faculty and staff - participated in an all day meeting to review the Salem Plan. This comprehensive plan is built on a platform of five main objectives targeted towards retention of students, fund raising and increased enrollement for both institutions.

Information, ideas and strategies were shared by more than 120 alumnae and friends. Speakers at the conference included David Black, Headmaster of the Academy, Dr. M. Cynthia Farris, Associate Dean of the College and W. James Harman, Director of Institutional Advancement.

Ginger Harris Shuler (C'77) introduced the Plan's five objectives:

- To achieve a total Academy enrollment of 175 students, 110 boarding, 65 day, in September 1991
- To enroll 150 traditional aged college students in September 1991
- To achieve a total enrollment of 250 full-time equivalent adult students in September 1991
- To increase retention of students by 50 percent in September 1991
- To increase unrestricted gifts by 15 percent and scholarship gifts by five percent during the fiscal year 1991

Round table forums were held for the benefit of exchanging ideas and to give participants a working knowledge of the Academy and College Admissions procedures, Development, Alumnae Relations, Public Information, Career Networking, Academic Programs and the Student Commons.

"Salem is the only institution among our competitors without a center for students to gather with friends, parents and each other. The funding campaign for the Salem Commons, begun 10 years ago, has now reached the halfway mark of \$425,000. The balance will be raised within the next few months; the commons will open next year," Harman said, regarding the Salem student center.

Recommendations were made from

the round table forums and presented to the entire assembly. And, the new recruitment videos for the College and the Academy were shown.

Doris Eller, Director of the College Alumnae Affairs, said the college community should feel good about the Salem Plan and the 120 alumnae who attended.

"These people got here for their interest in Salem," Mrs. Eller said. She added that the Salem Plan was started by many people including alumnae and campus administration.

"It's our responsibility to replace ourselves," said Nancy Cameron Capel during a recent telephone interview.

Ms. Capel, who is a Salem College graduate, a member of the Board of Trustees, and a member of the Interim Search Committee (for President) shared a very positive outlook about the results of the conference. "It's a beginning of the exchanging of ideas ... from the Alumnae Association to the Trustees to the students and the faculty," Ms. Capel said.

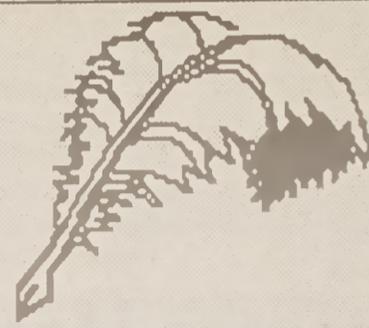
New developments on the Salem Plan will be featured in a new alumnae publication called the "Salem Newsletter" to be published approximately once every two months by the Publications Office. The newsletter will also include campus news concerning faculty and students, updates on the admissions program and an application for a perspective student.

During the conference a question was raised by an alumna concerning the alumnae part in the admissions process.

The response was a challenge for each alumna to encourage a high school student to apply to Salem. And, in doing so give them an application which will be attached to the newsletter. Another suggestion, from the Admissions office, was that if a student was hesitant about applying that the alumna offer to pay the student's application fee.

The Conference concluded with closing comments by Dr. D. Wayne Burkette, Chaplain of the College and Academy.

"We face what may well be the severest test of Salem's will, character and determination in its 219 year history ... But I believe in my heart that whatever that spirit is which makes Salem a special place set apart remains undaunted," Dr. Burkette said.



The Oracle

by Dr. Cindy Farris, Associate Dean of the College

This first edition of *The Salem Newsletter* will relay to you the specifics of the Salem Plan Conference held November 2. I am concerned, however, that what the simple recounting of the events cannot convey is the spirit of the day and the ultimate challenge that emerged from the discussions and confrontations during the scheduled program.

To those who created and organized The Salem Plan and the day's activities, I take off my hat and thank you for the opportunity to participate. I felt engaged and enriched by the day's events. But those I most want to thank are the alumnae who not only participated in the pay, but who for over the months and years have voiced concerns about Salem's future. The Salem Plan Conference left me with a genuine sense that Salem's alumnae are deeply and passionately committed to her well being and future livelihood. I left the meeting on November 2 with the assurance that Salem is a community that has begun to proact rather than react. Regardless of the external environment that challenges the future of women's colleges, Salem is poised to survive into the next decade and the new century.

Along with the confidence about the future that the Salem Plan meeting instilled,

there emerged a formidable challenge. The time has come for the Salem community to actively engage all constituencies of the Salem family to insure her survival. To that end, all alumnae must be welcomed into the efforts to shape Salem's future. At the same time, the alumnae of the future, the students of today, must begin to be recognized for the importance of their voices.

There is a great deal to be optimistic about at Salem these days. The gathering of alumnae to examine, challenge, and commit to undertaking the Salem Plan is evidence of a commitment to the future of women's education and particularly to the Salem experience. The challenges that were acknowledged, even though not fully resolved, unquestionably commit a community of alumnae, students, faculty, administrators, and friends of Salem to a plan of action that promises to lead Salem to a bright and rewarding future.

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