

THE MCGREGOR EXPERIMENT

GREG HOWARD

For the first time in the history of Montreat-Anderson College, there is a dorm on campus that houses both male and female students. McGregor dorm has been selected to house Jr. and Sr. men and women in a sort of working experiment.

So far things have generally run smoothly and most attitudes concerning the project are positive. There are, however, two sides to every coin and to say it's been simply perfect would be a very unfair remark.

The residents of McGregor (guys on 1st floor and girls on 2nd floor), are for the most part, generally happy about the situation. There is a real closeness within the dorm which is probably attributed to the fact that over half of the residents are student leaders, and because these students have generally spent more than one or two years, together, here at Montreat.

There really hasn't been a problem with the girls feeling like they have been invaded by guys, in fact, most of the McGregor women like having the guys around. "Having the guys in McGregor," senior resident Monique Dugas said, "gives the dorm more of a family atmosphere." Senior resident and RA Peggy Leis added, "I feel safe having the guys here."

The new male residents have mixed feelings about their new dorm, but usually end up with a positive feeling. After spending a couple of years in either Howerton or Davis, it's hard not to miss those places where you spent so much time. Junior resident Jimmy Smith looks at it this way, "I miss Howerton and Davis and the brotherhood there, but I really enjoy the privacy in McGregor and the fact that it's co-ed."

Resident directors Doug and Janet Belden are pleased with the way things

are working out in McGregor and are thankful for having a responsible and mature group of residents. Doug Belden pointed out that there are little things to be worked out, but that is the case in any new situation. There are things that guys are used to and the girls aren't, having lived in a guys' dorm and vice versa. But, with time and patience, the leadership in McGregor feel these things can be worked out in a way that will accomodate all.

It would seem hard to go directly from a honeymoon into a dorm directorship position as the Beldens did, but it has proved otherwise in the case of McGregor. "This is the perfect place to spend these first couple of years of our marriage," said RD Janet Belden, "I was concerned about our privacy before we came, but it has turned out to be fine." Janet goes on to explain how the McGregor residents have respected her and Doug's privacy and they really appreciate it. "I am overwhelmed by the sense of community that is already present within the dorm," she added.

Some of the residents of McGregor are concerned that it is not as sociable as it should be. They are frustrated that it is not as easy to get to know the freshmen because a great deal of the freshmen don't feel comfortable just going into McGregor to visit because it is the "Jr./Sr." dorm. "I wish they felt more comfortable here," one resident said.

The leadership of McGregor anticipated this problem and tried to "nip it in the bud" from the beginning of the year. They hosted the first Vespers (which is predominantly freshmen) and

they even went "all out" hosting a party in honor of the freshmen. Both events were highly successful and the

participation of the freshmen was tremendous. But, even with events like these, it's hard to overcome the inevitable fear or apprehension a freshman has about "the upperclassmen" and "their domain."

The McGregor residents still long to make the freshmen feel comfortable in their dorm and encourage all to go and feel welcome and at home in McGregor.

Since over half of the dorm is composed of student leaders, there are mixed emotions about their role on campus and how McGregor may help or hinder that. Some feel a ministry to the older students and upperclassmen and they feel very useful in McGregor. There are, however, some student leaders in the dorm that feel their ministry is with the freshman and they don't feel they are being used in that way, because they are in the Jr./Sr. dorm. McGregor RA Lori Reel explains, "My heart is with the freshmen and I don't really feel challenged in my job here."

In an article like this, it's easy to show the positive, "rose" side of the issue. It's more challenging and informative to be objective and show the opposite side of the "rose." The "McGregor experiment" has many wonderful things to offer the campus and those students wishing to remain at M-AC for four years.

A lot of responsibility relies on the present and first residents of the new Jr./Sr. dorm. They are given more privileges and with that comes more responsibility. McGregor is being observed closely by the administration and this first class of residents has to show that this can work at M-AC. The school will be watching and the underclassmen will be waiting to see if the present McGregor residents blow it, or secure it for them.

So far, so good. Resident Director Doug Belden is very pleased. He summed it all up by saying, "This group has been given more privileges and they have respected them. I hope that will continue."

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CYNTHIA BURGESS

The Graybeard Players will be presenting an interesting story to students and their parents during Parent's Weekend, November 6-8. The story entitled "Catacombs" was written by Paul McCusker. As the title suggests, this play is not meant to be a comedy. It is rather thought provoking and serious for each person who will watch it. The play takes place in the future, and the story is about the persecution of the modern-day believers. There is struggle between good and evil, and in some ways the thoughts of the Jewish persecution come to mind. The believers' faith is tested, and ultimately brings them through, one way or another.

The play seems to be progressing well with Ms. MacDonald as the director. The cast is a good group of students with a variety of talent. Everyone is encouraged to come out to see this production, not only to enjoy a play, but to broaden our thoughts and make us think about our own beliefs.



MCGREGOR CO-EDS ENJOY FELLOWSHIP AND SONG AROUND AN OPEN FIRE.

