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LIBRARY FACES HEAVY LOSSES

by Andrea P. Brown
Head Librarian

Missing books. Missing magazines. Vandalized materials. Hazardous violations of smoking regulations. Damaged furniture. Books long overdue. Happening in OUR library? Unfortunately, YES.

Historically the organization of the St. Mary's Library has been based on the Honor Policy of the Student Government Association. In years long past there were essentially no violations of library regulations. In recent years the library has been suffering considerable losses and damages - at the hands of St. Mary's students.

Books and magazines are stolen, with very few returned or found at the end of the school year. Important reference books and circulating books are underlined in ink, as are magazine articles. Coupons and articles are torn from magazines. Cigarette butts are put out on the floor, only three feet from an ashtray, and in planters in an area where smoking is not allowed. This year cigarette butts have been found in the carpet among the book stacks, which is a serious fire hazard. Recently three magazines were found partially burned. Wooden tables and cloth upholstered chairs bear heavy graffiti. Books are kept long overdue, and notices to return ignored.

These are serious problems. The library's resources are being ravaged. Thousands of new books are published each year in America. At St. Mary's we find ourselves buying the same books over and over again, as truly outstanding and helpful books are taken repeatedly. All of us are aware of rising costs; the library world has experienced more than its share. With the average cost increase of 24 percent from 1979 to 1980 on books published in America, and a doubling, sometimes tripling of magazine subscription rates, the more the library must replace, the fewer new items it can buy. Books go out-of-print very rapidly, as publishing houses press for profits and small inventories. This means that sometimes we can't replace that really wonderful book that has been stolen. It also means that if we miss buying a book at the time of publication (because money is being spent on replacements) it may not be available a year later when the library has the money to buy it. Recognizing the importance of the library to the total academic program, St. Mary's administrators have tried to provide adequate funds for collection building. But now we simply cannot keep up with the double problems of replacement costs and inflation in prices of books and magazines.

Often missing magazine issues are very hard to

replace. Like book publishers, inventories are kept small. Companies which deal in back issues of magazines charge high rates: \$7-\$15 per issue. In our library, we try to replace missing issues of magazines that we bind between hard covers. Otherwise we have what librarians call an "incomplete run." Imagine the effect on a student doing a term paper when she finds that the issue of the magazine she needs was received but was later stolen. Thus again we spend limited funds on replacing issues that were already paid for through the subscription.

How serious is the problem? The partial inventory of the book collection taken during the summer, 1980, shows more than 600 books missing. At the conservative value of \$15.00 each, this amounts to \$9,000 in missing books. Due to the magnitude of inventorying our complete unbound magazines, this has not been attempted. However we have records showing a number of missing issues. Some of the most recent are: *National Geographic* - Jan., 1980; *New Republic* - Nov. 29, 1980; *Newsweek* - Aug. 25, Dec. 1, 1980; *Business Week* - Jan. 7, Nov. 24, 1980; *Consumer Reports* - Aug., 1980; *Harper's Bazaar* - Feb., Aug., Dec., 1980; *Journal of Marriage and the Family* - nos. 2 and 3, 1980; *Journal of Physical Education and Recreation* - Feb. and March, 1980; *Mademoiselle* - Feb., May, June, 1980; *Sci-Quest* - nos. 5 and 10, 1980; and *Seventeen* - Feb., April, June, 1980. These represent issues taken from the display shelving at the front of the library and illegally removed from the building. They have not been returned.

Mutilation and vandalism of books and magazines is another alarming development. Despite our 5 cents per copy photocopier price (temperamental, I know), students tear out articles and coupons from magazines. Underlining, which is so childish and disturbing the next user, seems to be on the rise.

Problems with smoking violations have been so severe that smoking will not be allowed in the library building after April 1, 1981. First allowed in 1971, smoking has been permitted in the Smoking Study and Room C on the upper level of the library. Irresponsible smoking has become so bad this year that serious fire hazards have been created, and tables, tiled floors, plants, and carpets have been damaged. A fire could completely destroy the library building and collections. As explained earlier, many of the books and magazines, as well as College Archives and the Thomas Wolfe Collection, are irreplaceable.

This discussion would not be complete without reference to the difficulties the library staff faces in collecting

overdue books and fines. At this writing there are 272 books overdue, some of which date back to first semester. There are 260 unpaid fines on overdue books already returned. With a loan period of almost three weeks, and with renewal privileges, this is ridiculous! As other students need these overdue materials, failing to return overdue books is a very selfish action. A considerable amount of time is spent by the staff and student assistants on the various steps in overdues and fines, time that could be better spent on developing new collections and services. An example might be creating a listening center for records

and cassette tapes. Ultimately, the College usually collects the unpaid fines and the costs of unreturned books. However, as some of the books are out-of-print, they can never be exactly replaced. The waste of human time and effort cannot be replaced. Again, these problems have worsened in the past few years.

The library staff and library committee sometime speculate on the motivation of students who steal library materials. We remember our own student days with heavy deadline pressures and the panic that sets in. We can't sympathize however with any motivation for vandalism.

Several points should be made. First, no library book, magazine, chair, table, etc. belongs to any one student. Rather, the library and its facilities are for the use of generations of St. Mary's students. Secondly, stealing library materials is the same as stealing someone's jewelry or wallet, or shoplifting a sweater from a store. Colleges and universities often expel students for this. Public libraries are now prosecuting thieves in criminal court.

There are several physical systems that St. Mary's could purchase to prevent thefts. They are expensive; a number of our
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Beth Simpson and Louise Johnson lounge on the library steps as the weather turns warmer.

SMC Girls Receive Honors

by Anna Tate

Three honorary societies at St. Mary's recently inducted new members. The National High School Honor Society inducted the following girls: Elizabeth Jane Archer, Rena Clark Harris, Mary Colt Horton, Karen Maria Lado, Sally Moya Mayo, Mary Miller Meares, Tiffany Lee Miller, Florence Love Norris, Kathrine Frances Norris, Margaret Ann Norris, and Ellen Barbara Reynolds.

Phi Theta Kappa, the national honor society for Junior Colleges, inducted the following girls on March 31:

Seniors with a 3.25 cumulative average taking 12 academic hours, Kara Patricia Campbell, Astrid Chirinos, Linda Kathryn Ingram, Elizabeth Lee Trotter. Juniors with a 3.5 on one semester's work, Marilyn Layton Ellerbe, Kathrine Iris McCrary, Sarah Cunningham Rice, Frances Heidt Roberts, Jean Huske Schaefer. Accelerated Juniors with a 3.5 on first semester work, Constance Alexandra Apostolou, Evelyn Bee Derreth, Jane Hamilton Steward. Accelerated Seniors with a 3.25 cumulative

average, Elizabeth Ellen Fussell.

The Societe Honoraire de Francais is the high school French honor society which aims to promote higher standards of scholarship and encourage an understanding of French culture and civilization. Candidates must have a 3.5 in French and a 3.0 in all other subjects for the preceding three semesters.

On March 17 the following girls were inducted: Margaret Bassett, Bettye Davis, Stephanie Gardner, Louise Johnson, Mary Grady Koonce, and Margaret Norris.

Summer Jobs Are Waiting

by Mary Horton

How do you go about getting a summer job? You should have started looking before Christmas, but if you've missed that point, the sooner the better. The heavy competition is during May and June, so if you don't have a job by July don't give up. If you can work after Labour Day, mention it because that is a plus. Know your Child Labour Laws, Social Security Number, and what you are entitled to earn.

There are several potential employers that you should talk to: the owners of stores where your family trades; the owners of the place where a member of your family works; places that have "summer jobs"; or a job that a friend has recently left. Phone, or stop by to see the potential employer in person, or write to an employer that is remote. Don't hesitate to advertise yourself on a bulletin board.

There are several jobs

that are easy to get and are common summer jobs: fast-food counter service, childcare, farm harvesting, and camp work. If these jobs don't appeal to you, create your own: watch houses for vacationing neighbors, get up a musical group to play at parties, or clean up neighborhoods. If these jobs are too run-of-the-mill: give tours in Alaska, work at Six Flags over Texas, or at the Department of Labour in New York.