



The Belles

of
St. Mary's
College

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St. Mary's Campus Landscape Improving Slowly But Surely

by Kathleen Kincaid

Many students may be wondering if we should consider revising the school song, "In a grove of stately shrub bushes, where the sunlight dominates..." etc. I, myself was pretty concerned about all the plowing and digging that was taking place in front of the library, that is when *The Belles*, decided to get in touch with Mr. Conrad to answer a few of our questions. Mr. Conrad put my worries right at ease and got me really enthused about the landscaping program. The landscaping project was proposed by the Trustees and Grounds committee about two years ago. The project

includes a campus-wide redesignment. The project was first initiated to create a walkway system but rapidly grew to include many areas of the campus. The object of the redesignment is to create one big "good" spot rather than having the beautiful spots at St. Mary's competing or racing with the "bad" spots. St. Mary's also hopes to attract prospective students and maybe encourage alumni to contribute to the project. St. Mary's had architect Charles A. Fink draw up the plans and took bids from landscaping firms. The major problem they have run into is the financial aspect of the project. To give one an idea of how

overwhelming the cost is, an estimate on the area in front of the library, when completed will include brick walkways, lamp posts and benches, is approximately 50,000 dollars! You can now understand why all of this will be a gradual process most likely spread over ten years.

After talking to Mr. Conrad I realized there is a lot more involved in the project than meets the eye. The plans for the college are beautiful. Don't worry, all the trees won't be plowed over. The change will be nice but there will be respect for the traditional atmosphere of St. Mary's.

College Board Program To Improve Standards For High Schools and Colleges

The College Entrance Examination Board has announced a ten-year program to improve the quality of secondary and university education by setting well-defined standards of academic preparation. The project is called "Project Equality," with the "E" standing for equality of access to education and the "Q" standing for quality.

The College Board intends to provide colleges and high schools with a set of definitions of educational tasks. The high schools would prepare students to meet the standards, and the colleges would be asked to accept the standards as part of their admissions criteria. The College Board, which sponsors the Scholastic Aptitude Test, widely used

examinations for college admissions, would presumably provide the instruments to test whether students have met the academic standards.

The Board has already worked with large numbers of educators to begin to define the skills that would be specified in the new standards. Six areas of competence have already been defined. They are reading, writing, speaking and listening, mathematics, reasoning and studying. A seventh area, observing, would deal with more artistic perceptions, and is currently being worked on.

The following is a selection from a larger number of competencies that have been defined by the College Board in the first

three areas:

Reading

The ability to identify and comprehend the main and subordinate ideas in a written work and to summarize the ideas in one's own words.

The ability to use the features of books and other reference materials such as table of contents, preface, introduction, titles and subtitles, index, glossary, appendix and bibliography.

The ability to recognize different purposes and methods of writing; to identify a writer's point of view and tone; to interpret a writer's meaning inferentially as well as literally.

Writing

The ability to conceive ideas about a topic for the purpose of writing.

The ability to improve one's

own writing by restructuring, correcting errors and rewriting.

Speaking and Listening

The ability to engage critically and constructively in the exchange of ideas, particularly during class discussions and conferences with instructors.

The ability to vary one's use of spoken language to suit different situations.

Mathematics

The ability to perform, with reasonable accuracy, the computations of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division using natural numbers, fractions, decimals and integers.

The ability to make and use measurements in both traditional and metric units.

Critics of the College Board and the Educational Testing Service, which prepares exams for the Board, have argued in recent years that the agencies have too much power over the lives of students. The new program will probably be cited as a new and significant example of the growing power of such agencies.

SAT Scores Remain Steady After Declining For 18 Years



For the first time in almost two decades, the scores earned by high school seniors on the Scholastic Aptitude Tests did not go down. Last year's statistics were released by the College Board, sponsors of the tests, and they received wide publicity because the long-term decline has been a source of great concern for educators. It is impossible to tell whether the 1981 statistics represent a reversal of the trend or simply a pause in a decline that will be resumed in

future years.

For high school seniors who intended to go to college, the average SAT scores in 1981 were 424 on the verbal section and 466 on the math section. When the decline in scores began in 1963, the average verbal score was 478 and the average math score was 502. The SATs are scored on a scale that goes from 200 to 800.

The decline in scores had leveled off since 1975, when the scores fell sharply. This may indicate that this year's results are indicators of a long-term trends towards ending the decline.

The Scholastic Aptitude Tests are taken by about 1.5 million students each year. Male students continued to get higher scores than females. Men earned an average score of 430 on the verbal and 492 on the math portions of the exam, while the scores for women were 418 and 443.

The scores among men in 1981 increased by two points in math and one point on the verbal part of the test. Verbal scores for women declined by two points but remained the same in math.

The significance of the new scores is not entirely clear because the decline has never been fully understood. Some educators and researchers have believed that the decline represented a weakening of educational programs. Others have explained them in terms of the mixture of students taking the exam and intending to go on to college. It is inevitable, however, that some educators will point to the new statistics as evidence for the claim that new programs in the schools are working.



In A Grove Of Stately Oak Trees.....

by Foo Vaeth

"To put off doing something until later; delay." That's how Webster's defines procrastinate. I like calling it tomorrow and I am definitely a do later or put offer. The problem with calling it tomorrow is that it will often be due today. This seems to be a major problem especially around this dreadful time of year. (Unless of course, the editor does not get her tail out of that bed and the poor procrastinated put off from the printers paper is not published until next year!!) I was worried that I was the only one capable of such, so after putting it off for a good week or so, I finally got

around to asking others: "What do you most often procrastinate about?" Dr. Murray's desk looks like a New York alley - he refuses to clean it. The professor of everyone's favorite class still has not given me his reply - sllaaack! The class as a whole would like to put off those Monday econ. quizzes permanently. I was most distressed with Dean Miller's response: "I don't procrastinate." That someone could be so normal and near perfect appalled me. Nevertheless, my next victim made me feel much better. Debbie Shelley said, "Let me call you tomorrow." The

funny thing about that was neither Mrs. Shelley or myself realized her mistake. For those of you strange few who still don't know how to master this fine practice, here's a quick lesson that is worth delaying. First, sit back. If you happen to nod off, no problem there because we will worry about it tomorrow. Secondly, begin thinking about how much you have to do. It also helps to think about how much you really don't want to do it. Think longer. IF you have done these simple steps, played every album, rearranged your closet, room, thoughts and life, it is now time to get to work. Tomorrow. (For the results of procrastination, tune into semester grades.)