Election, Election, Election!!!

That’s what the Nominations and Elections Committee has been working on. Hopefully you will hear about and read about this election so often you’ll even consider nominating yourself just to keep us quiet. The challenge this year is that we have reached the three-year mark. That means there are members of Staff Council who have been serving since the first year, and who will be ineligible to serve next year.

We also have established the goal of a fully seated Staff Council next year. We have remained short several representatives through this entire year, and we do miss having our committees well staffed. With several “old-timers” vacating their seats at the end of this year, it’s an important time to have new people step in and continue and improve what’s already been done.

I wish to explain a bit about how the election process will work this year, since there will be a few changes, and then editorialize about why you might find serving on Staff Council beneficial.

The nomination form is attached to this newsletter (see back page) and will also be distributed at the Staff Council open forum, as well as at several places on campus where we can reach the hard-to-reach, those whose mail doesn’t come directly to them. There are no changes in the nomination form, and the process of collecting the names and printing ballots will remain about the same. (See the nomination form on page 12 for more details.)

The ballot is where you will see something different. In the past everyone (hopefully) got a ballot with the names of the people from their department or group (hopefully) who were running for Staff Council. We selected the people from our area who we wanted to represent us and the ballots were counted. This left some people unselected, where there were too or more choices from a given area, while there were seats designated for other areas which went unfilled. We have discussed this matter several times, and have come to see that it’s better to have someone from a different area serve on Staff Council than to leave the seats unfilled.

This year you will receive a ballot, part of which resembles what I described above, and which we’ve used in the previous elections, and part of which will be new. The new part will consist of a list of all of the candidates on all of the ballots. You may cast votes for anyone on this list without regard to what area you work in. Where seats may be left empty by the regular election, they will be filled by the winners continued on page 2
Changes

**Staff Council-Sponsored Community Forum**

*Wednesday, April 5, at 1:30 p.m., Sage Hall*

Spring warming nature’s time for renewal, is approaching like a runaway freight train.

Spring is a time for reassessment and preparation for the coming year. While we at Smith begin to enjoy the beauty unfolding all around us, Commencement sneaks in the screen door and blinds us with Smith College reality. The garden has to wait. Every other pastime is put on hold until early June.

This year there will be many changes. Indeed already there have been some. Mary Maples Dunn will be leaving us. Ruth Simmons will join us. Other staff people will be gone as “attrition” takes a bite out of our numbers. Staff Council as well will undergo changes. We are entering our fourth year, and many devoted council members must vacate their positions. Many people have participated over the last three years. Many people have strong feelings about Staff Council, either pro or con. We will soon need new members from each department across campus. Whatever your feelings about the council, please become involved. Place your name in nomination from your area and see what drives people to involve themselves in Staff Council.

Attending the staff is an invitation to attend the forum and make yourself heard.

This forum, as at the last one we sponsored, we have solicited staff for door prize donations. Come early and take a number. You could be a winner! Celebrate Staff!

Also we have invited Information Systems to address the forum with information about workshops. Lisa Morrel from IS will explain the assortment of workshops available to staff. If you are confused about whether you are entitled to attend computer workshops, come and find out. There are all types of training available to staff both in workshops and self-paced training.

If your supervisor or co-workers have been attending Banner training and you are curious about how this may affect your life in the future, be at the forum. A brief description of Banner will be offered by Kimberly Butz.

After a stormy beginning the committee drafting the staff response to the Task Force on the Smith Design has begun meeting. We will submit our reply to the forum before our written submission to the Office of the President.

Kevin Skelly will preview the nominations and election process for the coming elections. There may be some changes made to assure a complete membership.

—Scott Girard

Staff Resource Library

30 Belmont, 2nd floor, adjacent to the Staff Training Meeting Area

Open from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday

**Users:** The Staff of Smith College: This means you.

**Contents:** Books, audiocassettes, videos, pamphlets. A few titles are listed in the back of the Training and Development Program Course Schedule. Topics covered in the library include, but are certainly not limited to: retirement planning, stress management, public speaking, money management, working in teams, communication and conflict resolution. Videos made of the workshops that have been offered on campus by Staff Development over the past year and a half are available as well.

**How to borrow:** Just visit the library.

Check out our ever-expanding card catalog. (Yup, just like the real libraries have, thanks to student assistants trained by one of Nelson Library’s catalogers.) But also look on the shelves. It takes a long time to type cards for the nearly 500 items we have in the collection, so browse through the stuff. Find something you like?

A. If it’s got a book card in a pocket on the item, with a title on the top, just put your name on the card and stamp the card and the date slip stuck by the card pocket with the date two weeks after the date you are borrowing the item. Put the card in the red oblong box. Enjoy the material.

B. If it’s got a book card in a pocket on the item, with no title typed on the top, write the title on top of the card, and your name below, and stamp the card and the date slip stuck by the card pocket with the date two weeks after the date you are borrowing the item. Put the card in the red oblong box. Enjoy the material.

C. If it has not got any kind of pocket or book card, there is a folder where you can

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_Election? Smith Design? Banner? Workshops?
list the title, your name and the date you are borrowing it. Enjoy the material.

When you bring the item back, put the card back in the item and cross your name off, or, in the case of the folder, just cross your name off.

Please use this facility. It was developed for you. A lot of work is going into making it useful and useable. The next time you are at Human Resources for any reason (getting your ID updated, getting a benefits form, changing your beneficiary on your million-dollar life insurance policy or just looking over job opportunities) check out the library!

Who Put the Staff in Staff Council?

Many years ago in Smith College years (1991-1992), a task force developed by college staff, with the aid of Mary Maples Dunn, created a representative body inclusive of all Smith staff. Two years before the task force, a small band of staff people had created Staff Connections. This was an effort to give voice to college employees. This group came about after two or three intensive workshops with Equity Institute. Equity Institute provided workshops here during a time of racial unrest among students. The institute also brought up concerns that staff had about the working environment, classism, elitism and homophobia among them. Concerned staff rallied to create what has now become Staff Council. Are you still with me?

Looking back on these efforts to create a representative workplace environment, I see employees eager for inclusion. Many people have worked long hours to create the mechanism we have in place now, Staff Council. Staff now has means to contribute in the process of discussing policy issues before they become policy. Frequently Staff Council receives invitations from the Office of the President to seat staff people on committees. In addition staff now have been invited to participate in many important college activities. For example, staff members have recently participated in the interview process of the Affirmative Action Director.

This is where you enter into the big picture. Is it important to you to know what issues will affect your workplace next year? Are you interested in working to make your workplace safer or less stressful? Join interested staff people concerned about their work environment. There is a process available now to staff to participate in decision making. Committee work and Staff Council participation are during work hours. You can meet during work time and be paid for your contribution to the college community. RADS and Physical Plant workers are sorely needed to create a balanced representative organization. It is vitally important now to become involved, or the slots reserved for these groups will be offered to other interested staff members. Staff Council needs people! We need 30 active people on the council to continue what we have started. There are built-in term limits on the council. Members are limited to three years. For the initial members this means that their terms are ending this year. To continue our work, we now need new people ready to serve.

This year Smith College will inaugurate a new president. This president will be unlike any previous, because she has already expressed surprise at the lack of staff involvement in her hiring. Staff Council requested inclusion in the hiring process. Now we will have a president seeking our involvement.

We need people to answer the call to become involved. Please seriously consider nominating either yourself or a coworker (with her or his permission) to Staff Council for next year. The ballots will be out soon. Let's show this community what we are capable of. —Scott Girard

Smith Design Response

The final review of the Task Force on the Smith Design is now in progress. Mary Maples Dunn requests that staff review the report and "come together on strategies to achieve common goals." With this in mind Staff Council will entertain discussion of this report at the next community forum. Copies of the Task Force Final Report and Recommendations are available at the class deans' office in College Hall 23.

Anyone interested in working on the staff response to the report may contact Scott Girard at extension 2400. Leave a message and he will contact you.

Staff Visions 1995

Last year, more than 20 artists and craftspeople exhibited their work at Staff Visions, the second annual exhibit of arts and crafts created by Smith College staff. The exhibit included sculpture, photography, drawings, oil and acrylic paintings and needlework and more. Guests and artists alike were very enthusiastic about the event last year, and we're looking forward to even greater success in 1995!

This year, the exhibit will be held in Davis Ballroom from May 1–May 5. (See page 7 for the registration form.) Questions? Contact Patricia Hayes, ext. 2180, asvax:phayes, or Amy Holich, ext. 2404, asvax:aholich.

Bus Talk

On November 19 I pulled into Smith College's Alanson Gym parking lot only to get immediately filled with eager shoppers looking forward to a relaxing ride to Kittery Maine Outlets. Most of them had shopping lists in hand, anticipating the bargains that awaited them.

My heater had a hard time warming up, but the conversation of my passengers—plus their body heat—eventually made for a warm and happy excursion. To make sure my riders stayed happy, I provided them with a movie to watch and very comfortable seats for those who were more interested in napping.

The chatter kept building as we neared our destination. The sun shone brightly and invited us to Maine to enjoy a beautiful day.

I parked behind the Kittery Trading Post, and my driver informed the now eager shoppers when I'd be available to them for taking on their purchases. I watched as they all went in different directions: to toy stores, kitchen shops, craft shops, clothing boutiques, trading post and lingerie stores. As the morning progressed I saw fewer and fewer of my comrades; they were now as much as a half-mile down the road and enjoying the balmy breeze on this beautiful November day.

The day was going by fast, and more and more bags came to be stood in my compartments. As five o'clock neared, my passengers arrived happy but tired. Two ladies made one last trip to the toy store to retrieve a last purchase.

Head count now done, I knew everyone was accounted for and we could start on our journey home. Now was the best time for me. I could just relive the day: of hearing about the deals my friends got, of that last Christmas gift they had found, and, of course, of that irresistible piece of clothing they just had to buy.

As a lull came over my passengers and weariness set in, my driver directed me toward home, and all seemed very happy with their day's shopping excursion.
— as told to Sandy Byenski
Activities

The Activities Committee capped off a busy first semester on December 13 with a holiday party and sing-a-long at the Hampshire County Long Term Care Facility in Leed. About a dozen Smith employees treated the seniors to refreshments, flowers and attention. The residents seemed to appreciate our spirited but off-key singing, which was fortunate when you consider the fact that they thought we had recently performed at Vespers! Special thanks go to CFLAC's Anna Fessenden, who accompanied us on piano, and the art department's Dick Fish, who drove the Smith van.

We decided to give ourselves a well-deserved month off in January and hoped to swing into second semester with a February 18th skating party on Paradise Pond. Mother Nature had other ideas, and even early February's frigid temperatures could not sufficiently thicken the ice for skaters. Though we hadn't intended to call upon Dean Mary Philipps until spring, we are grateful that she provided us with a video she purchased of highlights from the 1994 Chelsea (England) Spring Flower Show. The video was shown at a brown bag lunch in Wright Hall Common Room on February 27.

In response to numerous employee suggestions, the Activities Committee planned a March 11th bus trip to the Massachusetts Horticultural Society's 124th New England Spring Flower Show in Boston. Staff who participated in our fall plant exchange will be happy to hear that a spring event is also being planned.

What would you like to do this semester? Are you a baseball fan? Perhaps we'll try to re-schedule a trip to Fenway Park. Do you like to garden? If so, you might want to volunteer to plant flowers at the Northampton Remembers memorial this year. Are you a gourmet cook? Perhaps you could help us arrange a special interest group for people who share your interests. The Activities Committee is open to suggestions. Feel free to contact any of our members with your ideas.

Cindy Rucci (Chair, ADS)

Communications

In addition to publishing this newsletter, the committee continues to look for ways to improve campus communication.

In response to a letter written to Staff Council in December by a RADS employee (see p. 10), we are re-examining some communication issues within RADS. Specifically, we're looking into the mail delivery and e-mail access.

To ensure that the upcoming election is well publicized, we have designed an election timetable to dovetail communication efforts with the election process and we will be using all means available to “get the word out.”

We hope this year's election will succeed in filling all 30 of the representative positions so that Staff Council will begin the 1995-96 academic year on a strong footing and can work effectively with our new president.

Mari Hobbs (Chair, ADS)
Patricia Czepiel Hayes (ADM)*
Lisa DeCerolis Ostpowicz (ADS)*
Kathleen Ross (ADM)**
Chris Ryan (ADM)

(SER) vacancy
(SER) vacancy

Finance and Budget

On February 8, the Finance and Budget Committee for Staff Council met with Ruth Constantine to discuss Smith College's future with regard to its budget. Ruth told us that the overall picture of Smith finances is very good.

Ruth said there has been no major change as far as revenues, which break down as follows:

- 60 percent from student income
- 20 percent from endowments
- 10 percent from gifts
- 10 percent from miscellaneous sources

But in the last 10 years, there has been increasing need for financial aid. So on the expense side, the college now allocates 17 percent of its budget for financial aid, in comparison to 10 percent in the past.

Smith College has already realized the necessity for providing financial aid to Ada Comstock as well as traditional students.

The change in the Ada Comstock program has made the most growth in the need for financial aid this year.

But since the budget officers are always watchful of Smith College’s endowment, the financial future of the college looks excellent and is not expected to change.

Ruth also gave us a general explanation of how ACRA works. ACRA spends the fall of each year looking at major trends that will affect the upcoming budget. The next few months they get to into studying these issues, and by February recommendations are forthcoming on:

- whether tuition needs to be increased
- making sure salaries are competitive
- arriving at specific goals

This year one of ACRA’s goals was the staff tuition assistance program and making sure that the need for financial aid was met.

The Finance and Budget Committee felt that our time with Ruth was very well spent. Ruth wanted us to know that her door is always open.

The committee wants to know if any employee needs to know or is just curious about any budget issue. If so, we would be glad to investigate any such issues.

Sandy Byerson (Co-chair, ADM)
Linda Jacque (Co-chair, ADS)
Mickey Finn (SER)*
Bob Fleming (SER)*
Jonathan Lovell (ADM)**
Nominations and Elections

See page 1.

Kevin Skelly (Chair, SER)
Barbara Day (ADS)
Patty Hentsch (ADM)
Patty Kimura (ADS)

(SER) vacancy
(ADM) vacancy

Personnel Policy

The Personnel Policy Committee has been working on a car pooling proposal which was submitted to us for further study by the Employee Suggestion Program. We are developing a survey which will be distributed to staff later this spring to determine the level of interest in such a program here at Smith.

Based on the results of the survey, the committee will either encourage adoption of the proposal, make recommendations to improve it according to suggestions received from staff, or recommend that it not be adopted.

Kathy Yarnell (Chair, ADS)
Kathleen Casey (ADM)**
Sarah Lazare (ADM)*
Lorraine Paper (ADM)*
Chet Salts (SER)*
Valerie Schumacher (ADS)
Tracey Woron (SER)

(ADS) vacancy

Staff Development and Training

The committee has had a productive year thus far. With the cooperation of Bruce Sajdak of Neilson Library's reference department, we were able to offer, to all staff members, three training sessions on the library's on-line catalog and CD-ROM system. A total of 24 college employees were able to attend. In addition, Bruce will be reusing his role as staff trainer for an April 11th session which is one of the many listings in the Training and Development Program Course Schedule. The committee appreciates Bruce's assistance.

We were happy in December to be part of the Staff Council's community forum on stress—not that we caused the stress, just that we introduced the video "Managing Stress." And, speaking of videos, we hope that staff will take the opportunity to attend some of the Lunch and Learn Series in the Staff Training Meeting Area at 30 Belmont. These are informal events which feature a short video and a discussion of its content. No pre-registration is necessary, but your attendance will be noted in your documentation of participation in workshops throughout the year. Just bring your lunch and enjoy the show. These videos are available for individual and department check-out with the use of on-campus equipment.

Speaking of check-out, the Staff Development and Training Committee is pleased to let you know that the Staff Resource Library continually adds new books, cassettes and videotapes to its collection. What Staff Resource Library you ask? Where is it? Who's it for? What's in it? See our separate story on page 2. We are interested in any suggestions the staff has for materials to add to the Staff Resource Library. Let one of the members of the Staff Development and Training Committee know of any suggestions.

We will be working on the orientation of the new Staff Council members, which will take place on May 16. Our committee holds monthly meetings in the Staff Training Meeting Area. Contact us if you have any ideas for staff training, for improving our committee's visibility, for reaching out to involve the staff in training, and for improving accessibility to staff training workshops.

Mary Lou Bouley (Chair, ADM)*
Marion Abrams (ADM)
Kathleen Chauwood (ADM)**
Les Hancock (SER)*
Jeff Rankin (SER)*
Cindy Rucci (ADS)
Vera Smith (ADM)*

Steering

The committee has been devoting its efforts to ensuring a strong Staff Council in the future and a good relationship with the new president. Together with the Nominations & Elections Committee, we reviewed and updated the election process to encourage broad representation of staff on Staff Council and to ensure that the 30 elected positions on Staff Council are filled.

The committee has requested a late July meeting of Staff Council with the new president for the purpose of welcoming her to the college on behalf of all staff and explaining the purpose and goals of Staff Council.

Staff Council played an active role in the interviewing process for a new director of affirmative action. We were allocated 45 minutes for a private session with each candidate. Attendance at the sessions was outstanding and the questions even better. We wish all staff could have listened in on the sessions.

Bill Sheehan (Chair, ADM)
Joan Ballestas (ADM)**
Scott Girard (SER)
Marti Hobbs (ADS)
Jay Lucey (SER)
Gerri Owen (ADS)
Stacey Schneid (ADM)**
Marilyn Woodman (ADM)

ADM administrative staff
ADS administrative support staff
SER service staff
* at-large member
** appointee
WHO'S WHO ON STAFF COUNCIL

The following is a comprehensive list of who serves on Staff Council and how to get in touch with them. We hope that you will find it a useful tool for bringing issues to our attention.

Marion Abrams
(ADS) Billing/Insurance Assistant, Mason Infirmary, ext. 2822, e-mail AISVAX:: MABRAMS, Staff Development Committee

Joan Ballas*
(ADM) Systems Coordinator, Registrar’s Office, ext. 2553, e-mail AISVAX:: JBALLAS, Steering Committee

Sandy Bycenski
(ADM) Reports/Query Programmer, Information Systems, Stoddard Hall 32, ext 2634, AISVAX::SBYCENSKI, Finance and Budget Committee

Barbara Day
(ADS) Academic Secretary, Social Sciences, Wright Hall 12, ext. 3589, AISVAX::BDAY, Nominations and Elections Committee

Scott Girard
(SER) Custodian, Physical Plant, ext. 2400, e-mail AISVAX::SGIRARD, Steering Committee

Patty Hentz
(ADM) Supervisor, 30 Belmont, ext. 2326, e-mail AISVAX::PHEINTZ, Nominations and Elections Committee

Marti Hobbs
(ADS) News Assistant, College Relations, Garrison Hall, ext. 2190, e-mail AISVAX::MHOBBS, Steering and Communications Committees

Linda Jacque
(ADS) Accounts Receivable Assistant, College Hall 5, ext. 2225, prefers campus mail or phone, Finance and Budget Committee

Jay Lucey
(SER) HVAC Maintenance Mechanic, Physical Plant, ext. 2461, no e-mail, Steering Committee

Gerri Owen
(ADS) Administrative Assistant, Physical Plant, ext. 2402, e-mail AISVAX::GOWEN, Steering Committee

Audrey Pomeroy
(ADM) Assistant for Administration, Art Department, Hillyer Hall, ext. 3102, e-mail AISVAX::APOMEROY, Activities Committee

Cindy Rucci
(ADS) MARC Cataloguer, Technical Services, Neilson Library, ext. 2923, e-mail SMITH::CRUCCI, Activities and Staff Development Committees

Chris Ryan
(ADM) Reference Assistant, Neilson Library, ext. 2962, Communications Committee

Stacey Schneidel
Director of Media Relations, College Relations, Garrison Hall, ext. 2190, e-mail AISVAX::SSCHEIDEL, Steering Committee

Valerie Schumacher
(ADS) Student Employment/Fund Coordinator, Financial Aid, College Hall 10, ext. 2530, e-mail AISVAX:: VSCHUMACHER, Personnel Policy Committee

Bill Sheehan
(ADM) Chief Accountant, Controller’s Office, ext. 2222, e-mail AISVAX::WSHEEHAN, Chair of Staff Council, Steering Committee

Kevin Skelly
(SER) Floater Senior Cook, RADS, 30 Belmont, ext. 2300, e-mail SMITH:: KSKELEY, Chair of Nominations and Elections Committee

Tracey Warton
(SER) Pruner/Propagator, Lyman Plant House, ext. 2739, e-mail SMITHVAX:: TWARTON, Personnel Policy Committee

Marilyn Woodman
(ADM) Staff Writer, Development, Clark Hall, ext. 2679, e-mail AISVAX::MWOODMAN, Steering Committee

Kathy Yarnell
(ADS) Administrative Assistant, Campus School, Gill Hall, ext. 3271, e-mail AISVAX::KYARNELL, Personnel Policy Committee

* presidential appointee
STAFF ART SHOW
Registration Form

STAFF VISIONS is an annual exhibition of arts and crafts created by Smith College staff. Monday, May 1–Friday, May 5, 1995, Davis Ballroom

Please complete the information below and return to Patricia Hayes, Garrison Hall, by April 13!

Your name ____________________________________________ Job title ________________________________

Department ____________________________________________ Campus address ________________________________

Telephone (on campus) ________________________________ (off campus) ________________________________

ART/CRAFT INFORMATION (Please describe the art you’ll be exhibiting.)

Piece #1 Title: __________________________________________

Medium: ____________________________________________ Date completed ________________________________

Size: ____________________________________________ ☐ framed ☐ unframed ________________________________

Piece #2 Title: __________________________________________

Medium: ____________________________________________ Date completed ________________________________

Size: ____________________________________________ ☐ framed ☐ unframed ________________________________

Piece #3 Title: __________________________________________

Medium: ____________________________________________ Date completed ________________________________

Size: ____________________________________________ ☐ framed ☐ unframed ________________________________

Piece #4 Title: __________________________________________

Medium: ____________________________________________ Date completed ________________________________

Size: ____________________________________________ ☐ framed ☐ unframed ________________________________

continued on reverse side
HINTS FOR WRITING AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY (Please write a paragraph or two on a separate sheet if you would like a short autobiography to be displayed with your art.)

How long have you been doing the art/craft that you are exhibiting?
Do you create other arts/crafts than the one being exhibited?
What is your background and education?
Are you actively studying your art/craft with a teacher or group?
Do you belong to any art/craft guild or club?
What brought you to the art/craft you produce?
What influences your art/craft?
What are your inspirations (family, friends, pets, society, nature, other artists/craftspeople...)?

MORE IMPORTANT INFORMATION (Please make a copy of this side of the form so you’ll have this information on hand!)

The show will be hung Sunday, April 30. Please bring your art/crafts to Davis Ballroom on April 30 between noon and 3 p.m., along with special display materials to hang your art if necessary. Contact Patricia Hayes, ext. 2180, aisvax::phayes, or Amy Holich, ext. 2404, aisvax::aholich, if you have any questions or conflicts with this arrangement.

We need volunteers to work as monitors during the exhibition. The exhibition hours will be 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., May 1–5. Please consider volunteering some time, if at all possible. (There will be a sign-up sheet available when you drop off your art.) It’s very important that the arts/crafts are not left unattended.

There will be an opening reception from 4–7 p.m. on Monday, May 1 at Davis Ballroom. Please join us! Refreshments will be served. Thank you for participating in the exhibition!!

Staff Visions is co-sponsored by Staff Council.
Questions from staff should be addressed to Staff Council and sent to the Staff Council mailbox at Central Services.

Please contact us if you have a question for a member of the administration, for a specific department or just in general. We will be happy to act as a liaison and will get your answer for you.
LETTERS

The Council Chronicle welcomes letters of personal opinion. Letters should be no more than 100 words, should be addressed to Staff Council, and sent to the Staff Council mailbox at Central Services. All submissions must be accompanied by the author’s name, campus address, and extension. Names will be withheld from publication only at the author’s request.

To Staff Council:
I enjoyed reading the latest edition of the Council Chronicle. Having served two years on Staff Council, it was interesting to see what the committees are working on this year and to note some different names on the membership roster.

However, it was disheartening to see the two service vacancies on the Communications Committee. RADS service staff, in particular, have many concerns about campus communication, as well as communication within our department. With the impressive amount of communication skills present on the committee this year, it seems as if this would be an interesting project to tackle. Unfortunately, the Communications Committee can’t know about these problems if no one from the service sector speaks up. Given the amount of complaining we do about being left out of the loop, I’m surprised people haven’t filled those vacancies.

Which brings me to some questions:
1. How well have the Staff Council vacancies been communicated to service staff? (No insult intended at all. I wasn’t aware of the vacancies, are other people?)
2. Is this an example of the “employee apathy” which is rumored to be present at Smith, or are the people who want to serve on Staff Council just too busy (with their jobs or other committees)?
3. Are we all (supervisors and staff) being encouraged to let staff members know of vacancies on Staff Council and to make it possible for them to serve the few hours a month?

For example, if I complain to my supervisor about a communication problem, would my supervisor know to tell me to call Staff Council? I sometimes hear people being referred to Faculty Council with a problem; perhaps Staff Council hasn’t been around long enough for us to automatically think of bringing our problems to a council committee?

Meanwhile, as a service staff employee, let me mention to the Communications Committee that we do have some problems with timely communication in our department, and would it be possible to include this issue on a future agenda?

Keep up the good work!
Sylvia Crafts (RADS), Smith College Club

My personal Communications Committee experiences:
As I complete my second year on the Communications Committee, I’m still rather uninformed as to what the RADS communication issues specifically are. Early in 1993–94, a RADS employee (and Staff Council member) reported that the system of getting RADS mail to the houses was ineffective. A staff member from each house is required to pick up staff mail at the mailセンター, which is difficult to arrange and/or inconvenient. After hearing this one report, our committee tried to gather more information about RADS communications, via specific questions to all staff in three 1993–94 Staff Council newsletters. The first two of these newsletters were sent via campus mail; the third went to RADS staff home addresses, since it came out in early May. We received no response from RADS staff.

During the November 1993 Staff Council community forum, the Communications Committee asked the audience for details about RADS communication problems. Following the community forum, the Communications Committee sent a flyer to all staff members in January of 1994 (with space provided for written responses to our communication question).

In these various attempts, we’ve clearly identified who we are, how staff can reach us, and that we’re sincerely interested in exploring communication problems and finding answers. We received no response about RADS communication issues in that first year and a half. We recently received Sylvia’s letter, a response to the January 1995 newsletter.

If getting printed mail is a problem for RADS, perhaps staff aren’t ever receiving these pleas for feedback. However, it seems improbable that every RADS staff member does not receive our newsletter (or didn’t receive the flyer) at all, ever. If someone isn’t receiving it, surely they’ve heard of it, and if interested, might request a copy. And hasn’t there been enough time by now to respond to questions asked by the committee since 1993? These are the questions I keep asking myself.

The nature of community forums can be intimidating. (Personally, I hate public speaking, and I avoid it at all costs.) But since there are other ways to contact the Communications Committee, why aren’t we being contacted? This is Staff Council’s third year on campus (after at least a year in development). Staff must know by now that the council exists.

There’s a responsibility for the Communications Committee to reach all staff, and there’s a responsibility on the staff’s part to be in touch in return. If we want to accomplish anything, both must happen.

My suggestions to all staff members: contact the Communications Committee in writing, or verbally, if you have concerns and/or ideas about communication problems. And please don’t wait for your supervisor to refer you. Contact us directly and tell us what’s going on. Read this newsletter, even if you think it’s boring. If you know of someone who hasn’t been getting the newsletter, let us know. Or urge that person to contact us. Or share your copy.

Sylvia and I have now talked at length about our experiences with campus communication. We’ve discovered we have some ideas and some obstacles in common. The first sign of progress: the Communications Committee will serve as a liaison between Information Systems and the Smith College Club in order to find out why there’s a delay in setting up Smith Club staff e-mail accounts.

This one conversation is just one step. But it’s a start. We can’t always publish the newsletter as frequently as we’d like. And perhaps there are other ways for us to be reaching staff. In an ideal future, everyone will have access to electronic information. In the meantime, we need to keep struggling to find ways to be in touch. As Sylvia points out, having more RADS staff on Staff Council will also help.

Patricia Hayes
Assistant Director of Publications
Garrison Hall, ext. 2180
See reverse side for nomination form!
NOMINATION FORM
1995–96 STAFF COUNCIL

NAME

EXTENSION

DEPARTMENT/GROUP

Please check one:

☐ Service Staff
☐ Administrative Support Staff
☐ Administrative Staff

Nominated by:

☐ Self
☐ Other than self

DEADLINE FOR NOMINATIONS IS TUESDAY, APRIL 18!

Return this form via campus mail to our campus address: Staff Council

or

Deposit this form in a nomination box at one of the following locations: Neilson Library Front Desk; Hubbard basement; McConnell Hall basement; Davis Student Center; 126 West Street; or housekeeping offices at Capen Annex, Albright, Morrow and Washburn.

or

E-mail nominations to: smith::kskelley

or

Phone in your nomination to Staff Council phonemail: extension 4424