Finding Our Way
MARILYN WOODMAN

As we near the close of another academic year, it seems timely to reflect upon our journey of the past twelve months and the opportunities that lie ahead. During this year of Smith’s self-study, staff have been present and active in a number of arenas.

✓ At least one staff member has served on nearly all of the self-study teams.
✓ President Simmons appointed a staff team to focus directly on strategic priorities in the working community at Smith.
✓ Staff Council met with the President to discuss concerns brought to us about fear in the work place.
✓ Staff Council input has been sought by various groups on campus including but not limited to the architects working on the campus center design, the integrity team, the organization and governance team, and the public disclosure team.

The channels of communication are open: Staff Council is now regularly consulted on a variety of issues and staff are being included in areas where they have not been represented previously. There has been a shift in the culture at Smith. Staff have the opportunity to participate much more fully in the non-academic affairs of the college, and the potential for meaningful change is significant! It is now up to us to ensure that we are ready to act. Much progress has been made.

On a more personal note, I want to express my gratitude to all of you for the opportunity to represent you in so many ways. During the year, it has been my honor to serve on ACRA, on self-study teams, and on the self-study steering committee. As a result of this work, I now have a profound appreciation of the complexity of keeping an institution like Smith functioning well.

At the same time, I am keenly aware of the differences in what Smith staff do and the variety of interactions we have with students, faculty and other staff. Though we staff do many different things in our effort to keep Smith going, always I return to the things that we share:

✓ A deep concern for Smith and the students who come from all over this country and the world, in search of the very finest educational experience available to women.
✓ A commitment to excellence in all that we do
✓ A keen sense of fairness
✓ A desire to be involved and to take advantage of every opportunity to strengthen and improve our service to the college

continued on page 4

Dollars & Sense
Since early in the year, we have anticipated a surplus in this year’s $101 million operating budget for the college. Income should exceed the budget for both investments and Alumnae Fund gifts. Though utilities costs will be higher than we expected because the cost of oil rose rapidly after the budget was prepared, the extra revenue from investments and gifts should allow us to allocate over $1 million for priority needs.

The president invited the Advisory Committee on Resource Allocation (ACRA) to advise her on how the expected surplus should be allocated. ACRA recommended setting aside $850,000 of the surplus for academic and other priorities identified through the self-study process, with the remainder going to address needs presented to ACRA over the past year.

ACRA recently completed its budget recommendations for fiscal year 1997-98.
Faculty & Staff Picnic!

Tuesday, June 17
5:30–7:30 p.m.
Playing Fields
[rain date, Wednesday, 6/18]

Featuring:
Trevor the Games Man
Magician Michael Wald
Celebrations with Su Eaton
Pokey the Clown
Natalie the Face-Painter
Premier Talent Group DJ Service
(formerly Rack-A-Disc)
Dunking Booth to benefit
The American Cancer Society

These features are brought to you by
the Activities Committee of Staff Council.

Staff Council
Activities Committee Presents...

A Summer Baseball Trip

Plan Ahead!
Red Sox vs. Kansas City Royals
Sunday, August 10
Game Time 1 p.m.

For Costs of Bus and Game and
Departure Time...
Call Cindi Rucel X2923
e-mail CRucel@Smith.
Private Clubs
Tiger Woods, the African-American, Japanese, Thai, White, pro golfer is not eligible to be a member of most of the private golf clubs in the United States. I am sure he could care less. He has plenty of money, more money that most of the club members. He can stay where he wants, eat where he chooses and travel where his heart leads him and thumb his nose at discriminating clubs.

Private clubs are evil because they discriminate against most people. Many forbid people of color and women to become members. Openly gay men, lesbian women or transsexuals cannot be members no matter what money or social prestige they may have.

Clubs are evil on a deeper level. Members band together to be with their own, with the people they love and are comfortable with. They come from the same social class and background. They go to the same schools and universities. They never meet, on an equal level, people of color, the poor, the foreigner, the immigrant, members of unions and anyone with whom they are likely to disagree.

Because clubbers are usually wealthy, well educated, and socially prominent, they make big business and political decisions about people whom they do not know as individuals but only as a class. They do business with each other, socialize with their own kind and tend to patronize those who they do not know. Decisions are made that hurt, disable and push into poverty people who they never meet as human beings.

Golfer Fuzzy Zoeller made so-called humorous remarks about Tiger Woods blackness. He apologized not realizing how his remarks hurt people. He clearly stereotypes African Americans. Sadly, he does it unconsciously. He is so thick he isn't aware. I have any number of friends who refer to Jews derogatorily and with a wink as "the Hebrews." Jokes about African-Americans, Jews, Poles, homosexuals and others are still quietly told and enjoyed among friends.

Private clubs keep people in their place. Members spend most of their play and recreation time with their own and seldom communicate with people of difference. They remain isolated, elitist and spoiled.

I know that I can be accused of stereotyping club members. However, their behavior can be controlled. Blacks, women, gays, lesbians, Asians and the poor cannot help the accident of their birth. Club behavior is separatist on purpose. There is no attempt to be in dialogue with people of difference.

People will band together like by like. Jews, African Americans, Christians, Poles all do it. We cannot stop such behavior by legal means, nor should we. But we should not kid ourselves that such banding together is essentially separatist and evil. We cannot complain about the behavior of others when we refuse to sit down and talk with those others on levels of equality and have dialogue with them.

The clubs are just one of the institutions of society that are separatist. Big business, government, education, religion, media, and unions are dominated by white males who talk with each other and seldom anyone else. They do it in private clubs a lot. It is no accident that the fight to end affirmative action is led by conservative politicians and business leaders. Getting an African-American spokesperson against affirmative action fools no one.

As we strive for broader diversity in our own institution, perhaps we can reflect, from time to time, on this evil image of the club mentality. It is everything that we are working against!

—(name withheld)

Attendance
HATFIELD—A bus driver carrying Smith Academy students to school this morning suffered a heart attack and died, causing his bus to cross into the on-coming lane but stop without crashing. "He was terrific. I don't think he ever missed a day!"

This excerpt from a story in a recent Daily Hampshire Gazette, really struck home with me because I think it's such nonsense when the college acknowledges everyone with perfect attendance each year. Most have come in sick—to the detriment of their co-workers. Others should take a break and give their co-workers one as well. Can't this college recognize people for something more important than being present for a body count? Couldn't they expand upon the idea of awards for those who come up with innovative ideas or recognize people who volunteer on a regular basis in their community?

—(name withheld)
We are a strong staff...

continued from page 1

Smith staff are a hardworking and loyal group of people. It has been my distinct honor to get to know many of you during my work on the council. This month I will step down as Chair of Staff Council, but I hope that I will continue to have other opportunities to know you and work with you. The 1997–98 Staff Council will have its first meeting in June under soon to be elected leadership. You have elected an outstanding group to represent you, and next year promises to be a terrific one for the council and for Smith. I hope that you will lend them your support and that you will let them know what is on your mind. We are a strong staff, but we can be even stronger if everyone finds a way to contribute to the welfare of our community. I wish you well in finding your way. Thank you.

—Marilyn Woodman, Chair
Staff Council 1995–97

Dollars & Sense

continued from page 1

The total budget will be $107 million, an increase of 6% over this year. The board of trustees already approved an increase of 4.7% in the comprehensive fee (tuition, room and board) for the upcoming year. Endowment income available for spending will increase by more than 7% because of strong endowment earnings in recent years, despite the final reduction in the “takeout” rate (the amount allowed for annual budget support) to reach the 5.25% goal set in 1991.

Many people ask about the college’s endowment because they know the stock market has been producing high returns in recent years — until the last quarter, that is! About half the endowment is invested in the U.S. stock market. A total of two-thirds is invested in both U.S. and international stocks, with the remainder primarily in bonds. A small amount is invested in energy and real estate. After accounting for investment fees, the college’s endowment earned a 14.6% return in 1996, with 18% earnings in stocks and 5% in bonds. The market value of the endowment is now more than $600 million.

The budget for 1997–98 includes a pool of funds for initiatives emerging from the self-study. Soon the steering committee will propose directions for the college for discussion with various groups in the Smith community.

—Ruth Constantine, Treasurer and Chief Financial Officer

A Council Visit with Ruth Constantine

Members of the Finance and Budget Committee of Staff Council, Linda Jacque, Susan McDonald and Stanley Rosko, recently met with Chief Financial Officer Ruth Constantine to discuss some critical and current issues facing Smith College. The discussion focused primarily on the Self-Study that has been underway since last fall and the issues that are surfacing as a result of this massive task. What will Smith be like in 25 years?

In answer to the committee’s question about the reason for the self-study and what the results might be, Ruth Constantine explained that this in-depth probe is both an evaluation and a planning effort which has already produced many new ideas. One of Ruth’s priorities is to continue improving services to students, faculty and staff. President Ruth Simmons is sending a strong message that new directions for the college will result from the work that is being done this year.

Ideas submitted by members of the Smith community and by self-study teams are available for review at the Self-Study Office in Clark Hall and also at Neilson Library. The CFO stressed that not only changes will take place as a result of this study but that assessment needs to happen on an on-going basis. With a set of clearly defined objectives, Smith will be able to monitor its progress on an annual basis and not just during the reaccreditation every 10 years.

Asked if there were the possibility of the college extending medical benefits to employees retiring between ages 60 and 62, Ruth explained that the Benefits Group at HR raised this question last year and is currently reviewing the implications of such a move. She noted that, Smith already offers this benefit to accommodate employees with ten years of service, retiring between ages 62 and 65.

Smith recently consolidated the college’s student health insurance plan with those offered by Mount Holyoke, Hampshire and Amherst. Council members asked Ruth if thought had been given to doing the same for employee health plans. She explained that a consolidated employee plan was actually developed before the student consolidation. After two years of working together, a four-college group recommended the CHP plan that the college began offering two years ago.

Where would Ruth Constantine like Smith College to be in 25 years? She feels that Smith’s mission should remain consistent with Sophia’s wishes, in providing the best education possible. Ruth added that she wants Smith to remain the best employer in the area and to be an excellent workplace for all of its employees — staff and faculty.
Two Smith Women

Anyone seen the parlor maid?

Oh, she’s helping the bath and pantry maid wash dishes.

This is an exchange that you might have heard in any of the houses only twenty years ago. The titles have changed, along with some of the duties. Our housekeepers no longer wash dishes, but they do an unusually super job of making student houses sparkle!

“Those bathrooms were so grungy, I didn’t dare take a shower,” said a returning resident of Morris House about her weekend away at another college. While returning alumnae search for familiar faces among the housekeeping staff, sometimes corresponding between visits, their praise is especially gratifying, according to the women with the longest service in the housekeeping department.

Nancy Rubeck of Tyler House, in her 27th year and Diane Vermette, with 28 years of service, and now at Morris, have seen a lot of change. Two staff cuts mean that they work harder now, but all of the appreciation they receive just makes their day. “Transfer students remark to us about how clean everything is,” noted Rubeck. “And parents pay pretty close attention to where their daughters live, so when they compliment us, we know we’re doing well,” chimed in Vermette.

Working at Smith is a family tradition for both women. Diane Vermette’s mother, Lee Thomas, came to the college as a cook. “Mom worked at the Burnham School and when they merged with Stoneleigh Prospect School in Greenfield, Smith bought their buildings [to become Chase and Ducket houses], mom started cooking here and stayed for 19 years before retiring in 1986,” Diane explained. Her mother encouraged Diane to apply for a housekeeping position and after nearly three decades here, she has worked in most houses. A husband, a grown son in Springfield, three cats and a dog, and “at least one night a week at bingo,” keeps Diane hopping off-campus too.

At the Rubeck house, Nancy was the first in Smith’s front door, but her son Scott, a senior cook, came aboard about 12 years ago and daughter Lori now works in the Northrup dining room. Nancy, a widow, and Scott have recently bought a house together and are very involved with restoration work. “Then there are my four grand kids,” Nancy announced with pride.

Although the increased need for student financial aid and the resulting influx of student workers has eliminated some housekeeping positions, and the need for flexible staff coverage among houses is sometimes a challenge during the flu season, The Council Chronicle found two very enthusiastic employees who even allowed us to make a photograph.

—Dick Fish
A Little Hindsight:
Financial Planning for Retirement

As head of the Neilson Library acquisition section for nearly thirty years, Edith Libby looked forward to an active retirement of world travel. During her time at Smith, she had visited many fascinating corners of the world on Appalachian Mountain Club hiking tours (and made the very finest color slides this writer has seen!), so with more free time, Edith expected to travel and see (the rest of) the world. But her 1970's dollars aren't making it now, at the end of the century.

Growing up in St. Louis, Edith was a 'city kid'. She went on to Central Methodist College, the library schools at both the University of Wisconsin and the University of Michigan. Ten years in the library at Indiana State paved her way to arrive at Smith in 1948. Barbara Pierson, another Neilson staffer, is credited with introducing Edith to seeing life from mountain tops and travel on 'shank's mare'.

Edith began her TIAA-CREF participation at Indiana, nearly 60 years ago, and that connection remains unbroken today. "One of the great things about TIAA—it travels," said Edith one recent Sunday afternoon in her studio apartment at the Loomis retirement community in Holyoke. Now past 80, and "happily situated" at Loomis for five years, Edith was recently joined by Betty Baum, who retired as the director of the Smith Counseling Service, also in the 1970's.

"I should have contributed!" Like a lot of us, Edith was a passive participant in the TIAA-CREF program. Smith continued to contribute to her TIAA fund, but Edith didn't feel that she could afford to add to it. Now she's sorry. "Health insurance, life insurance, renter's insurance, all keep going up, while my income remains pretty static," she said. "You may get the same income that you planned on, but it just won't buy the same things. Perhaps if you're a 'stay at home' and want a little place in the country to raise flowers, it might be alright," she added.

It is true that Edith retired a little early and she was able to continue her house-sitting services that had made her well-known up and down the Valley; her specialty was most any house with cats! When she was working, this was supplemental income that helped make her world jaunts possible. After retirement, the extra income was precious.

Some problems with her eyesight brought driving to a halt several years ago and, although she still thinks nothing of meandering down to the Academy of Music to catch the bus home after a visit with her Florence physician, Edith's world walking tours are finished. "I can't hike the way I could, but there are a lot of trains I'd like to ride and there are still many places I haven't seen. I'd go if I had the money. But by the time you pay all the bills, there's not much left for fun."

Any advice? "Well, plan to spend some money for fun—don't skimp all the time. But make life better for yourself twenty years after retirement, when the prices of everything are much higher than you can imagine now. Add to the college's TIAA-CREF contribution."

—Dick Fish
The Local Bank That’s All Heart

Sheila’s chronic stomachaches had been diagnosed as gastritis, but after months of discomfort and a CAT scan, a small growth was discovered. Surgery was scheduled at a teaching hospital in Boston and her long journey toward regaining her health had begun. This purely fictional story, takes Sheila through post-surgical convalescence, another stay in Boston for daily radiation treatment followed by massive doses of debilitating chemicals. Sheila’s ordeal lasted three months. How did she enough sick time? Sheila thanks the Bank.

In June of 1992, Smith College established a new employee benefit called the Sick Leave Bank. It was established to insure that employees who were facing serious and long-term medical conditions would receive continuing income.

Employees who have service and administrative-support jobs at the college are eligible to join the bank if they have also been employed here for 12 consecutive months in a regular position of half-time or more. Usually the “cost” to join is depositing one day of your sick leave allotment, though last year current members did not have to donate because the Bank had many hours already on deposit. Currently the Bank contains 5,258 hours.

In order to use hours from the Bank, in addition to being a member, it is necessary that the employee has a certified and serious illness and has exhausted all of their own paid leave time (sick, personal, vacation). Application is then made to the Sick Leave Bank Committee for review and permission. The committee is composed of 9 members: 2 from RADS, 2 from Physical Plant, 2 from administrative support and 1 from Human Resources.

Since its creation, 14 employees have used the Sick Leave Bank and have used a total of 3,074 hours. Most applications are granted. Applications are denied only when the prerequisites haven’t been met. Commonly the Bank is used to provide coverage following surgery for someone with a long recuperative period. Current membership is 133 service employees and 113 administrative-support staff, which is about 50% of the eligible employees. Open enrollment is from May 1 to May 30, annually. Eligible employees will be sent information and enrollment materials. For more information please refer to the Staff Handbook or contact Human Resources.

Joining the Sick Leave Bank is a way to provide protection for yourself and your dependents and is a good way to support fellow employees like Sheila.

—Nancy Brady, Dave Brown

Answering phones, recording and confirming pledges, seven members of the Smith College staff and one student volunteered their time for a stint at the WGBY-TV, Channel 57 Pledge Break during the their March membership drive.


Volunteers
A Look at Ourselves

The Staff Self-Study Committee has been working hard since the 17 members became a team last November. Ruth Simmons invited us to take a philosophical approach to our work, to evaluate our deficits as well as our strengths, and to suggest a set of initiatives that would aid staff in better meeting future workplace challenges.

Much of the winter was spent gathering information from 500 staff members in 53 departments. In addition, questionnaires were sent to members of the 25 Year Club and some former employees. Committee members have been asking questions, listening, thinking, reading and debating as we evaluate where Smith is now and where we hope the college will be heading in the next 2 decades.

As a result of what we have learned in our research, we have drafted a staff mission statement which is being circulated among all staff and was discussed at the Staff Council Community Forum in April. Please read it over and think about it. Does it accurately and fairly describe who we are as a staff unit? Is something not clear or excluded? Please let us know either via our group e-mail address (Staff Planning) or contact me directly. The values highlighted in the mission statement—excellence, ethics/integrity, cooperation/teamwork, recognition/reward and responsiveness and flexibility—will serve as key areas in our final report which will be submitted to Ruth Simmons in June.

Many common threads are woven through the findings of our committee. While we have witnessed tremendous pride and loyalty among staff members, we heard about frustrating issues related to communication, flexibility, civility and workload. We hope to do justice in representing what we’ve learned, while making useful suggestions in our final report. Please wish us luck as we put pen to paper and fingertips to keyboard.

It’s not too late to have an idea considered by our team, so don’t hesitate to get in touch with one of us if you have a brainstorm or a thought which has been mellowing over the months. Thanks for your continued interest and support and a special thanks to all who took part in our focus groups.

—Sid Dalby, Chair, Staff Self-Study Committee

"The values highlighted in the mission statement—excellence, ethics/integrity, cooperation/teamwork, recognition/reward, responsiveness and flexibility—will serve as key areas in our final report.”

The Committee Members

Miguel Candelaria
Eileen Corbiel
Sid Dalby
Lisa DeCarolis-Osepowicz
Mickey Finn
Dottie Goulet
Patricia Czepiel Hayes
Michelle Laplante
Sarah Lazare
Maureen Litwin
Wayne Nelson
Marta Ostapiuk-Staiti
Sheri Peabody
Bruce Sajdak
Kathy Saltis
Bill Sheehan
Marilyn Woodman
On My Mind

A former student shared this with me via e-mail. It's a very distilled method of understanding our world. I found it quite humbling.

If we could shrink the Earth's population to a village of precisely 100 people, with all existing human ratios remaining the same, it would look like this:

There would be 57 Asians, 21 Europeans, 14 from the Western Hemisphere (North and South) and 8 Africans.

- 51 would be female; 49 would be male
- 70 would be non-white; 30 white.
- 70 would be non-Christian; 30 Christian
- 50% of the entire world's wealth would be in the hands of only 6 people and all 6 would be citizens of the United States.
- 80 would live in substandard housing.
- 70 would be unable to read.
- 50 would suffer from malnutrition.
- 1 would be near death, 1 would be near birth.
- Only 1 would have a college education.
- No one would own a computer.

When one considers our world from such an incredibly compressed perspective, the need for tolerance and understanding becomes glaringly apparent.
—Dick Fish

"Diversity is not a goal to which we point, but a reality we proudly seek to live."
—Ruth J. Simmons
# 1997-98 Staff Council Roster

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robin Smith (RADS SERV 2 Year)</td>
<td>30 Belmont</td>
<td>x2300</td>
<td><a href="mailto:rsmith@yahoo.smith.edu">rsmith@yahoo.smith.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tracy Sutherland (NEIL ADSU 1 Year)</td>
<td>Neilson Library</td>
<td>x2962</td>
<td><a href="mailto:tsutherl@yahoo.smith.edu">tsutherl@yahoo.smith.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presidential Appointees</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peg Pitzer</td>
<td>Garrison Hall</td>
<td>x2163</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ppitzer@yahoo.smith.edu">ppitzer@yahoo.smith.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bill Sheehan</td>
<td>College Hall 5</td>
<td>x2222</td>
<td><a href="mailto:bsheehan@yahoo.smith.edu">bsheehan@yahoo.smith.edu</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Under each Council member's name is the area they represent and the length of their term of office.  
ADMI = Administrative staff  
ADSU = Administrative support staff  
SERV = Service staff  

* Indicates at-large members
Staff ART SHOW
Registration Form

Staff Visions is an annual exhibition of arts and crafts created by Smith College staff. Saturday, September 20–Sunday, September 28, 1997, Hillyer Gallery

Please complete the information below and return by July 1, 1997 to Patricia Hayes, Garrison Hall.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Your name</th>
<th>Job title</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Campus address</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Telephone (on campus)</th>
<th>(off campus)</th>
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ART/CRAFT INFORMATION (Please describe the art you'll be exhibiting.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Piece #1</th>
<th>Title:</th>
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<th>Medium:</th>
<th>Date completed</th>
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<th>Piece #2</th>
<th>Title:</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Piece #4</th>
<th>Title:</th>
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<th>Size:</th>
<th>□ framed □ unframed</th>
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continued on reverse side
Staff Art Show Registration Form

(see reverse)

Return this form to Patricia Hayes, Garrison Hall, by July 3, 1997!

Piece #5   Title:

Medium: __________________________________________________________________________

Date completed

Size: __________________________________________________________________________

☐ framed   ☐ unframed

Piece #6   Title:

Medium: __________________________________________________________________________

Date completed

Size: __________________________________________________________________________

☐ framed   ☐ unframed

Piece #7   Title:

Medium: __________________________________________________________________________

Date completed

Size: __________________________________________________________________________

☐ framed   ☐ unframed

HINTS FOR WRITING A BIOGRAPHY (Please write a paragraph or two on a separate sheet if you would like a short biography 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 that are 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...)?

The show will be hung Saturday morning, September 20. Stay tuned for further details regarding the setup of the show.

There will be an opening reception from 4–6 p.m. on Monday, September 22 in Hillyer Hall. Please join us! Refreshments will be served. Thank you for participating in the exhibition!!

Questions? Contact: Patricia Hayes, ext. 2180, phayes@ais
Amy Holich, ext. 2404, aholich@ais

Staff Visions is co-sponsored by Staff Council.