Are We Ready to Take Up the Challenge?

BY SCOTT GIRARD

Inclusion will take work. Staff people must be ready to take up the challenge and lead by example. When the college administration chooses to open doors, already, committee work takes time from what is perceived as "actual work." There must be commitment on all fronts to assure everyone has time to participate and be included in committee work.

The question that people meeting in committees only makes life more difficult for those not choosing this route is a major obstacle for service workers. Service workers cannot have seen excluded from any meetings involving decision making on a substantial scale. It is only natural that the concept escapes us. The decision usually affects us, not any input from us. I think this can stop. But for now and the near future, the service worker will be the most difficult to convince.

The question now becomes, how can we make change when workers are unwilling to participate in the process? It's not the fault of the leaders. Often, it is about the process. The key here is to be inclusive and focus on issues that matter to the community we serve.

continued on page 4

The Most Important Hire I'll Ever Make.

BY NANCY BRADY

It was a beautiful last fall morning as I made my way to College Hall for my interview with CFO, Ruth Constantine. I had heard that she was very excited about her involvement in the Human Resources hiring and my interview confirmed that.

Ruth took a lot of time to be sure I understood the official components of the search which I will detail for you here. What impressed me, however, was the excitement and enthusiasm that Ruth brought to this search. She is who is a "key hire" for the college. The person who fills this position will be empowered to fulfill the administrative goals of making Smith "a place where people know their work is important and where they put it into" and strive to respect all employees for the service they perform.

When Jack Simpkins stepped down as director of Personnel in 1992, his assistant, Jan Keene, was appointed to succeed him. Last spring, the administration took the opportunity to launch a national search for a successor to Jan, who announced her resignation from the position. A committee was formed, which included: Bill Brandt, John Connolly, Dori Goulet, Carmen Santana-Melgoza, Charles Stangel, Nancy Whiston, Marilyn Woodman, with Constantine as chair. This group hired a search firm, Educational Management Network (EMN), to recruit and screen candidates.

EMN was founded 20 years ago by Mr. H. Hilske and Associates, Nancy Archer Martin. The group specializes in top level positions in academe and other nonprofits. Working from their main office in Nantucket, their professionals staff (mainly composed of Five College alumni) brought both Ruth Constantine and Chief Admissions Officer, Carey Bloomingdale to the attention of Smith search committees.

Admissions in national publications were published in July and August, and by September, thirty-nine applications had been received. From those, face-to-face interviews were held with ten candidates. Three candidates have been brought to campus for the final interviewing sessions. Open forums were held for each candidate and reactions requested from all those in attendance. In addition, members of Staff Council have had an additional meeting.
There are many ways you can communicate with your Staff Council.

E-MAIL
staffcouncil@oci.smith.edu

THE WEB
http://www.smith.edu/~sgrafo/soc.html

CAMPUS MAIL
Send mail to the Staff Council box in Central Services.

TELEPHONE OR IN PERSON
See the Staff Council roster on page 12.

STAFF COUNCIL SPONSORED COMMUNITY FORUM
February 9—1:30-2:30 p.m.
April 16—1:30-2:30 p.m.

Opportunity

This is all about opportuni-
ty, a word I'm likely to use too many times in this piece. But the word that most accurately describes the present and the future for staff at Smith. Let's begin with the recent self-study that was undertaken as part of the college's reaccreditation review. For Smith, as a well-established, high-ranking college, the reaccreditation process need not have been much more than a routine exercise, or a simple exercise routine. With Smith’s leadership, however, the college went well beyond the basic requirements in the depth and focus of its review in and its inclusion of staff, "an-
other first." While Russ may profess some aversion to exercise, he didn’t stop her from building an extensive program — for the future and for the upcoming fundraising cam- paigns—on the warm-up exercise needed to reaccred it the college. The President took full advantage of the opportun ity provided by the reaccreditation re-
view. And given her leadership and their interests, staff also have taken advantage of the valuable opportun ities that were presented.

First, the inclusion of staff (distinct, in this case, from managers and senior administra- tion) on more than half of the eleven self-study teams permitted staff to directly contribute their experiences to the review process, to raise issues and present perspec tives that might not have been covered without them. The Organization and Gover nance team, for example, might have fo-cused solely on the organizational chart of the college, considering the vitality of a Provost model, working to make the President's work life more manageable by reduc ing the number of individuals repor ting to her, addressing faculty concerns about the impact of their governance sys tems on workload, and the like. It accom plished all of that. It also took the time to address the role of Staff Council in provid ing staff with "...a direct involvement in the governance of non-academic affairs and in the life of the Smith College community," as mandated by its charter. The team noted the value of Staff Council, its role in in creasing recognition within the administra tion of staff issues and concerns, its sponsor ship of community-building activities, and its other successes. With information from meetings with current and former Staff Council members, the team also discussed ways to improve Staff Council and charged Staff Council with considering its recom mendations. Changes are already under way. The Co-op's steering committee re cently held its first meeting with the Presi dent, one of a series of meetings to be held according to a regular schedule. We learned from her that a meeting of Staff Council with the Board of Trustees is likely to occur in February, when the Board is next on campus. And, beginning next month the full Council will discuss and vote on the many recommendations that have come forward through its committees, for changes in its Charter. These recommendations include a reduction in the number of its members, clarification of the roles of non- voting members on committees, and changes in the composition of its steering committee. The opportunities continue — and I am confident that the board of Work of Staff Council members will result in a focused and stronger voice for staff.

That is about Staff Council. But let’s not forget that Ruth Simmons instituted an ad hoc self-study team comprised of fourteen staff members who represent a healthy cross-section. That was a particularly striking decision that presented staff with another opportunity, another venue, for staff to be heard. It was a public recogni tion and validation of our presence on campus, an acceptance of the need to identify both positive and negative aspects of work at Smith, and a challenge to de velop solutions. It was an incredible oppor tunity and I am very appreciative of the many long hours these staff members de voted to producing a thorough, balanced, and professional report. In its report, the team detailed the substantial strengths of Smith as a workplace. It also stated clearly and without apology that there are areas needing work. The team cited the follow ing as requiring attention: community val ues, flexibility of employees and employer, leadership, personal and family values, and workplace—making it manageable. It is an amazing document and I hope you will take the time to read it. (A memo from Ruth Corson thai informed Staff Council members that copies will be available in the library.) Ruth Simmons has sought feedback from Staff Council on the team’s report, and that discussion has only just begun. Ruth Corson has reported that a number of items are already sched uled for action. These include: mailing electronic information available to all staff, improving campus mail delivery so that it is more frequent and reliable for staff who work is not based in offices, a possible pilot program involving the appointment of an ombudsman, and the identification of an advocate for staff.

These are just the beginnings. Please do take the time to read the self-study reports and share your ideas and concerns with Staff Council and with Ruth Simmons. (Become a member of Staff Council!) --Cynthia DiGeronimo

President Ruth Simmons has issued invitations to all employees—staff and faculty, plus emeriti and guests, for the first ever Winter Party. In a meeting with the Staff Council Steering Committee, Ruth explained that since the president’s house cannot accommodate the whole Smith community for her September reception, she wanted to build a new tradition into our annual calendar by inaugurating an all-inclusive, seasonal celebration. The date has been picked so that RAAD staff will not have the pressure of serving students—they will be gone—and an outside caterer will provide refreshments, so that food service staff can enjoy the party.

The organizing committee: Judy Haridi, Dick Fish, Dick Hunter, Marie 1‘Heureux, Jud Marksby, Peg Finner, Cindy Raic, Vicky Schimel, Charles Staelin, Tim Straw and Kathy Zanis.

Remember to return your RSVP card by December 1!
Health Insurance Benefits
Open Enrollment in December

Blue Cross - Blue Shield having priced themselves out of the running, there has been a review at Smith of both Tufts and Harvard-Pilgrim’s health plans. The Benefits section of HR, along with employee and faculty consultation, have worked hard at discovering and weighing the pros and cons of each plan. Their choice will be announced within the next couple of weeks. Meanwhile, the American Medical Association has recently published the following list:

1. Does your family doctor in the plan? If not, what will the out-of-pocket costs be for office visits? And find out if the plan’s directory of participating doctors is up-to-date and accurate.
2. Is the plan cover prescription drugs, preventative care, and mental health services?
3. Does the plan cover pre-existing conditions? What hospitals are in the plan and what treatments are covered if the condition recurs?
4. Does your primary care physician have to receive permission from the insurance company to refer you to a specialist? Find out what penalties or incentives surround that rule.
5. How does the plan determine which treatments are “experimental” or “investigational”?
6. What standards are used?
7. Will the plan pay for emergency care when the patient is out of town, away from a network provider?
8. How does the plan treat physicians? Are they terminated with cause or due process rights? And how stable is the physician panel — will the doctor you see this year be a part of the plan next year?
9. How does the plan define “medically necessary”? The AMA advises consumers to stay away from plans that will cover only treatments the plan determines to be “reasonably reimbursable.”
10. Does the plan cover treatments for “congenital conditions” and “cosmetic conditions”? How is the latter defined by the plan?

The AHA notes that more than 160 million people in the United States are enrolled in some form of organized health plan. The average worker switches plans every two years.

Changing the Law at Staff Council

His year, Staff Council asked the N&E Committee to look into making changes in the By-Laws of the council. Although the original charter writers tried to cover all the bases regarding the composition of Staff Council and all its sub-committees, it was inevitable, as with any new organization, that changes would have to be made. It takes time to find the strengths and weaknesses in the original formulation of any charter. The primary changes that the N&E committee recommended to the full council were: a reduction in the number of committee members; the elimination of two committees; a change in the structure of the steering committee; and parallel changes in the wording of all the committee’s charters regarding the dismal of voting members, and the description of non-voting members.

Due to the problems of finding enough staff people who can take the time to review their normal work load to attend Staff Council and sub-committee meetings, we recommended that the council be reduced from 30 to 25 people, while still emphasizing the need for members from all constituencies on campus.

We recommended the elimination of the finance committee as, by and large, the lack of complexity of bookkeeping, which could be easily accomplished by the treasurer alone, was taking valuable person hours from more essential committees. We also recommended the elimination of the Training and Development Committee because the work of this group was being duplicated by a similar body which was centered out of Human Resources.

A desire on the part of many Staff Council members to more clearly identify the role of non-voting members of sub-committees was satisfied by substituting the term “informal liaison” for “non-voting member.” Also the working has been changed regarding the department from which the appointee comes to allow for more flexibility and appropriateness of fit with each specific committee.

All of these changes are only recommendations from the N&E. They will be presented to the full council for a vote at an upcoming meeting. Anyone who has concerns about these changes should contact their Staff Council representative.

—Jim Mason

Become a (Working) Groupie and Get Involved

The Campus Climate Working Group (CCWG) is a forum where all members of the Smith Community — students, staff, and faculty — can meet to explore campus issues. Founded in the spring of 1996 by President Simmons to address immediate problems on campus, it is now led by Carmen Stenstam-Melgoza, Assistant to the President and Director of Institutional Diversity. The group meet monthly to discuss campus problems and all are welcome to raise questions about life in the Smith community. As Ruth Simmons said when she established the group, there is only two requirements for membership:

- Members must be dedicated to improving the way different groups communicate, and
- Members must abandon rigid agendas in the interest of working together to promote new ways of achieving a healthy campus environment in which different voices are heard.

The CCWG hopes to show that conversations about race and ethnicity are possible within a framework of intelligence and civility.

- Molly Ivanov — Reflections on the Elections
- Toni Morrison — reading from and discussing her work
- Yousif Majid and Khalil Shikaki — Israeli/Palestinian Dialogue
- Vernon Briggs and Deylores Huerta — Immigration.

This fall the subcommittee has sponsored the following two events:
- "The Ins and Outs of Homophobia and Pride" — Five speakers and open discussion
- "Through the Kitchen Window: Women Explore the Intimate Meanings of Food and Cooking" — Five speakers who have contributed to a book on this topic.

Vicky Spelman of the Philosophy Department is now the chair of this group. If you have suggestions for topics or speakers, please contact her (ext. 3646 or vspelman@smith).

—Betsy Harriss
As We Ready?

continued from page 1

recuperate, why don’t those of us that are able, step up and fill in for them? They may be back!

There are many of us working here for a long time with less of an attitude still in us. Let us humble and use it to help the college reach our true power here. Yes, the janitor can write. Yes, the library workers can coordinate final rinsing and social events. Yet, the administrative workers do know how to interpret the cost of living and the merit increases in their pay raises. Questions now become, are there enough workers willing to sit on a hiring committee? Will the administration see the value of a grounds worker sitting on a hiring committee? Can each set aside the time to learn the value of inclusion? I am betting on the positive. Somebody in the service worker will be allowed to sit on ACRRA, just not today.

At this point, there are two directions that this process can go. Employees can try to take this out or continue to be prodded into submission, or we can become filled with attitude and take “no” for an answer. I warn you that this means work! I am encouraged over the last few weeks. Individually, we are stepping forward from across campus and finding a niche where they feel they can institute change. I can only encourage and praise you for doing so.

Administration and management must make decisions also. Are they willing to allow workers to step out of traditional roles? Will they mandate that committee work shall include the service workers as well as the administrators? Will arrangements be made for workers from catering to be excused from their labor to sit at the table with the trustees? Will lunch still be served? How will compensation for all of this be worked out?

No matter what your role here at Smith, there is much to consider and much to be done. Let us begin today! —Scott Girard, Chair, Staff Council

The Most Important Hire...

continued from page 1

with each candidate, where questions solicited from staff were discussed.

The Director of Human Resources is a primary link for staff, as staff regarding the candidates is especially valued. Ruth feels the final candidates represent the best of a strong pool and expects a positive outcome. It is expected that the new director be on campus by January or shortly thereafter.

Since my inception under Jack Simpkin, the Office of Human Resources has been evolving. The present administration, in concert with the committee, has established the following job description:

"Smith College seeks an individual who has the demonstrated ability to head the human resource function into the next century. The successful candidate shall possess a broad knowledge of human resource areas, including labor relations, employment, compensation, employee relations, and benefits, and knowledge of current practices in each of these areas. The successful candidate will have demonstrated the ability to design and implement innovative and responsive human resource programs and policies, as well as the ability to communicate effectively with all groups of constituents. A master’s degree, plus 10 years of significant human resource management experience in a complex organization is highly preferred. Additionally, the successful candidate will possess the following qualities and qualifications:

- Evidence of achievement in human resources leadership and a proven ability to manage change.

- Ability to communicate, to interact effectively with diverse constituents, and to be a good listener.

- Deep understanding of and insight into the human resource needs of today’s educational institutions and the contemporary work force.

- Knowledge and understanding of the higher education environment, including faculty governance.

- Commitment to a positive labor relations environment.

- Demonstrated success in union negotiations.

- Sensitivity to the mission of a women’s college and for women’s issues.

- Demonstrated comfort level with and advocacy for information technology with a proven record of success in streamlining procedures.

- Commitment to diversity, evidence of the leadership necessary to develop and maintain a diverse community of employees.

- Talent to promote a positive work environment with an appreciation for and commitment to professional development.

- Qualities of compassion, fairness and integrity." This new, new director will be responsible for the interpretation and implementation of policy, for revising the procedures for staffing and hiring, for articulating a "flexible" model for HR, for continuing the process for making more flexibility in policies and programs, and for advocating for staff concerns. I certainly left Ruth’s office with a positive impression. She saw this search as a chance for the new administration to put their thumbprint on the Human Resources Department. While the search committee has outlined some of their goals, they are looking for someone who can restructure their own vision and provide mechanisms to achieve the administration’s goals. It was clear to me from our conversation, that the committee is very invested in the results of their search and recognizes how vital the position of HR director is for setting the tone for college employees and making Smith College a great place to work. —Naomi Brady

Convocation

First semester Convocation is time of great optimism and high spirits, and an opportunity to hear our leader at her best.

Ruth Simmons’ remarks from the 1997 Convocation:

Smith College has been successful over a very long period of time for many reasons. In my view, largely on the fact that its students have been remarkable and talented and have been successful in their lives beyond Smith. When they leave Smith, they have not been coddled or hobbled in their good fortune; they have only been assisted in making the fortune of this college by reinvesting in it and in students. The only return on the selfless investment is the satisfaction that their college moves into the future growing stronger because they refuse to forget what they have received. These people not only say they believe in the power of education, they put their money behind their support. In observance and lip service are deceptively easy. But when our goals and our commitments are not reflected in our personnel choices or in our actions, the consequences can be grave. Contamination, disaffection, disappointment, yes, it is easy to say one thing and do another, but the consequences can be a lifetime of disillusionment. In keeping with the example that many students see, we ask you to participate in this year’s Convocation with us in this important event. Let us recapitulate the lasting staying power of the Smith community and the wisdom and cohesiveness of the Smith alums. So, let us use this to celebrate our success and take this chance to recognize our good intentions and our actions.

Let us undertake this year with a determination to reconcile our good intentions and our actions.

Let us not say that we believe in progress only to fight change.
Time Rules Her Ceaseless Course

Because the Office of the President carries such a host of responsibilities, time management is one of the most difficult tasks, one which attempts to balance work life and still have personal time. This is the issue to which Ruth Simmons responded, in a recent interview for the Chronicle.

Each fall the calendar is set up with all of the meetings that are fixed: for example, faculty meetings (same time every week) and other offices whose meetings are scheduled the same day and time each week, outside obligations (Five Colleges Board meetings, Concerts on Financing High Education, Seven Colleges Conference meetings) and general staff meetings, particularly those at which the president's attendance is necessary. These dates are placed on the master schedule. Then she meets with other offices such as Advancement, College Relations, etc. and tries to prioritize work in those areas. Then the dates of outside obligations are fit in. At this point the calendar is basically in place. Lastly, she will return to the scheduled events and work toward balancing all aspects of the year's calendar.

Balancing the schedule entails making sure that the president is on campus a certain number of days each week to be available to meet with associates and students, and that she has time to attend student activities. At this point the rest of the team is filled with meetings with administrative staff, faculty, alumni and so forth. In this type of position, there is no time for spontaneity. Personal time must be scheduled well ahead of time. Hence, establishing the calendar presents a major task of intrici-

Ruth explained that she chose to work in academia because it had the flexibility to combine work and family. Starting in a junior level position, she worked her way upward. On the academic work journey, she had the opportunity to work within many aspects of college administration: Human Resources, Admissions, Development, and she has also taught. This work history, she feels, has given her insight to the problems faced in the operation of a department. All this exposure is most useful in understanding the problems that arise on many levels. This reporter left our meeting with the sense that the college is fortunate to have this woman as president. She sees an example of what a person can achieve, if one works at it. —Marjor Parsons Poulis

The Staff Art Show

Another Facet of Staff Excellence

Staff Visions began six years ago as a loosely-organized exhibit of artwork and crafts by Smith College staff members. The first year in Grinnell Hall was just a taste of what would become a very successful expression of the diverse visions that Smith staff have in their lives away from the workplace. Through the past few years, we have used Grinnell Hall and Davis Center as exhibit spaces, and while we were pleased to have the space and were always able to make them resemble proper exhibit spaces, something was always missing. It was with great pleasure that we moved Staff Visions to Filley Gallery this year, a site that we hope will become a permanent home to the exhibit. My co-organizer, Patty Hayes, and I were thrilled when the Art Department agreed to let us use this more suitable exhibit space that is usually reserved for exhibits by students, faculty and professional artists, thus raising the staff artwork and handicrafts to a higher level of recognition.

More than 20 staff members participated in this year's show, exhibiting work in a variety of media including oil, acrylic, pen and ink, watercolor, and pastel. Styles ranged from traditional needlepoint, rug hooking and quilting, to contemporary silkscreen prints, jewelry design, calligraphy on handmade paper, large-format photographs and stained glass. An exciting range of techniques and sizes, from palm-sized boxes to large-format paintings, were exhibited. We were delighted to see exhibitors, their families, staff and faculty at the opening reception on September 22nd, where we heard many positive comments.

One of the most fulfilling aspects of organizing this exhibit has been seeing staff members who are continually evolving as artists, who are more confident in their work and more skilled in their craft, return year after year to exhibit. We've met people who were hesitant to exhibit in earlier years, but who now come to us with confidence, eagerly looking forward to the show. Exhibitors have commented that seeing the exhibit date is nearing provides them with a goal for completing projects. Presentation techniques (framing, hanging hardware, etc.) have improved greatly, and as a result, the finished exhibit is a very professional display.

Staff Visions is a great opportunity for staff members from diverse backgrounds and work experiences to come together to find common ground. Whether they are housekeepers, administrative assistants or department heads, they share a vision with their fellow artists.

While it is a significant effort to coordinate the show each year, we always look forward to seeing the work of the artists and craftpeople that are part of the Smith community!

—Amy Hallick

More Art News

Staff member, artist, and alumna Patricia Hayes will exhibit her recent oil paintings in the Alumnae House Gallery, January 6-March 28, 1998. The show, entitled A Day on Roses, commemorates founder Sophia Smith and the Sophia Smith Rose. The reception will take place February 6, 4:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m. in the gallery.
Denim Day In Review

The Staff Council Activities Committee extends its sincere appreciation to the participants in this year's Denim Day campaign. Denim Day is a national effort to raise funds for the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to eradicating breast cancer as a life-threatening disease. In exchange for a donation of $5 or more to the Komen Foundation, staff received a pink ribbon pin, an information sheet about breast cancer, and were permitted to wear denim to work on Friday, October 10. Last year, 213 employees took part in the first campaign, raising an encouraging $1,555. This year, over 300 members of the Staff Council took part, generating a total of $8,580 in donations. This is especially impressive in light of the fact that Denim Day was scheduled 15 days earlier than in 1996. Over 9,000 organization participating nationwide, up from the 3,200 last year.

—Cindy Baccio

Appreciating the "New" Campus School

In September of 1996 the Campus School opened its doors to expanded and renovated facilities at both Gill Hall and Fort Hill. It took some time for all of us to get used to the new building, with its glass classrooms and materials and new traffic patterns inside and outside of the school. Now, a year later, we are settled into our new spaces and are appreciating the many things they have to offer.

The old Smith College laundry building was renovated and connected to Gill Hall where classes from kindergarten through sixth grade are located. This made it possible to move the kindergarteners and sixth grades classes out of small, modular classrooms into much larger room at Gill Hall. The sixth grade teachers can tell you how much difference having adequate space for projects and materials, discussions, a computer in the classroom and the students themselves makes in the quality of life and education in the classroom.

Kindergarteners can carry out their explorations and test their ideas about how the world works without turning out of space. The art room moved from space located under the gym, which provided rather constant "sound effects," to a classroom in the new wing, which is much more conducive to artistic endeavors.

The renovation and rearrangement of already existing spaces at Gill Hall allowed us to create a Spanish room, a fully networked computer lab, a multipurpose space for special projects and group work, and a space to be developed as a science lab.

The structure that connects the original Gill Hall which the renovated "new" building includes an elevator, wonderful spaces to display children's work, an inviting alcove area in our library, and spaces that can be used for small group work or informal meetings. Having worked with a new and reorganized space for a year, it is difficult to imagine life at Gill Hall prior to the addition and renovation project.

The renovations at Fort Hill, where our preschool program and the infant and toddler program are located, resulted in a newly created classrooms which allowed the toddler group to move into Fort Hill from temporary space it had occupied for the past few years. The improvements at Fort Hill included the renovation of meeting rooms, research spaces, office space and storage areas, all of which have allowed us to more fully and effectively use the facility. Through the efforts of all involved in the renovation project at Fort Hill, the integrity of the building and the warm and inviting atmosphere so important for this young children who spend their days with us at Fort Hill have been maintained.

All of the changes at both Gill Hall and Fort Hill have enhanced our work with Campus School students and with Smith College students for whom we serve as a laboratory. I invite you to come and see our facilities and our program at both locations.

—Carrie Hofer Reid

Activities, Activities, Activities

- 47 Smith staff, faculty, alumnae, parents and friends participated in the Rays of Home Walkathon for breast cancer research on Sunday, October 26.
- On Saturday November 15th, two sold-out buses of Smith employees and their guests, traveled to New York City to sightsee, take in a show, or visit museums. The fine bus sold out in five days. A second bus was quickly added, selling out in four days. Thanks for your support!
- Upcoming events include a New England Blazers basketball game (a sellout earlier this year), answering phones during public television station WGBH's winter pledge drive, and possibly a visit to Bright Nights in Springfield.

BankBoston's "Workplace Banking" Comes to Smith

Thanks to Controller Tony Szymanski and a committee representing various campus constituencies, a new relationship has been negotiated with BankBoston, which provides new and additional benefits to college employees and students. For those who have a BankBoston card, there is now an ATM (automatic teller machine) installed in the campus post office. Although it does not accept deposits, it is a great convenience when we're "stuck with a buck at lunchtime!"

BankBoston's Workplace Banking program now offers Smith employees the following:

- Monthly fees waived for 2 years on new checking accounts (with Direct Deposit)
- Up to $30 off mortgage closing costs
- Reduced attorney's fees—up to $125 savings
- $10 off a safe deposit box rental (subject to availability)
- Weekend and extended weekday banking hours at full-service supermarket offices, (Northampton Street, 24-hour, seven days a week, account information by telephone)
- HomeLink: banking from your home computer
- No fee comparison savings account
- Reserve Credit overdraft protection
- BankBoston Visa or MasterCard with no annual fee.

Check with the Benefits Group at Human Resources (ext. 2270) to receive a packet of information and money saving coupons from BankBoston.

Looking for a Career Change?

New Beginnings Can Happen Right Here

New job opportunities occur at the college on a regular basis and the Office of Human Resources encourages staff to stay informed about career opportunities at Smith. If you are thinking about a new job—challenge, be sure to check any of the resources listed below to find out about available openings.

There are four primary ways to find out about job opportunities on campus. There is the Job Information Line, which can be accessed by dialing 585-2278. This is a pre-recorded message, updated regularly, which lists all available Administrative, Administrative Support, and Service positions. The information provided includes a position summary, qualifications and deadline for application.

On My Mind

Chalking

I suppose its really harmless, but I still don't like it. Although I sit on the Committee on Community Policy, which approves it each time the subject is revisited, it doesn't mean that it's ok with me. But, it is better than spray paint—just barely!

Chalking, that in-your-face method of communicating which DE-faces our campus in irregular spurs, is supposed to be signed. Mech loves Beth isn't bad, but can you imagine signing some of the rude comments we tramp across on our way in and out of buildings? No, no one is going to take responsibility for garbage.

Boston Common used to— and may still—provide a venue for all sorts of orators, exposing their theories and Golden Opinions, from the not-so- lofty heights of the soap box, or more likely, the mile crushed. Folk walking by could choose to stop and listen or not, but they did have a choice. Someone once called a drivel. "verbal phantom." Well maybe, but it certainly seems very concrete here. There aren't just one or two chalking spots that we could choose to avoid; chalking is everywhere.

I don't have a problem with folks expressing themselves. I don't need to agree with what they say, if it isn't abusive or hurtful, its fine with me. Most thoughts can be passed along without using offensive language. We can get the point without four-letter words. But wouldn't it work just as well to hand out flyers, or even to get that mile crushed and preach a little in person? Who knows, a discussion might even develop.

Both sides of an issue might get discussed. Some learning might take place, and we wouldn't be forced to have anonymous graffiti defacing our view. To paraphrase The Old Testament, publish it in the streets of Smith!

—Dick Fish

The JOBS posting on the campus AIS VAX can be accessed by typing JOBS at the EPro terminals. This listing contains all available Administrative, Administrative Support, and Service positions and is regularly updated. Information on how and where to apply is also given.

The "official" college bulletin boards are kept updated with job postings every time there is an opening. These postings are now printed on green paper so that they are easily found on the boards. These boards are located in six different buildings on campus: 30 Belmont (in the HR office), Clark Science Center (Bumon foyer), College Hall (at the floor copy machine), Nelson (1st floor administrative office), Physical Plant (1st floor main office), and Wright Hall (1st floor copy and computer rooms). These job postings are also sent to all departments for internal distribution.

In Academia, there is often a listing on the back page, showing positions that recently became available. If you see something interesting, you can look for details through any of these options.

Staff are always welcomed to HR. To discuss various job opportunities and to read descriptions in their entirety, call the Employment Office at x 1260 for an appointment.

—Marie Kane
Denim Day In Review

The Staff Council Activities Committee extends its sincere appreciation to the participants in this year's Denim Day campaign. Denim Day is a national effort to raise funds for the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to eradicating breast cancer as a life-threatening disease. In exchange for a donation of $5 or more to the Komen Foundation, staff received a pink ribbon pin, an information sheet about breast cancer, and were permitted to wear denim on work days. Friday, October 10. Last year, 213 employees took part in the first campaign, raising an encouraging $1,555. This year, over 300 members of the Staff Council took part, raising a total of $1,850 in donations. This is especially impressive in light of the fact that Denim Day was scheduled 15 days earlier than in 1996. Over 9,000 organization participants nationwide, up from the 3,200 last year.

—Cindy Baccu

Appreciating the “New” Campus School

In September of 1996 the Campus School opened its doors to expanded and renovated facilities at both Gill Hall and Fort Hill. It took some time for all of us to get used to the new campus—new buildings, new classrooms and materials and new traffic patterns inside and outside of the school. Now, a year later, we are settled in our new spaces and are appreciating the many things they have made possible.

The old Smith College laundry building was renovated and converted to Gill Hall where classes from kindergarten through sixth grade are located. This made it possible to move the kindergarten and sixth grades classes out of small, modular classrooms into much larger rooms at Gill Hall. The sixth grade teachers can tell you how much difference having adequate space for projects and materials, discussions, a computer in the classroom and the students themselves makes in the quality of life and education in the classroom. Kindergarten children can carry out their explorations and test their ideas about how the world works without running out of space. The art room moved from space located under the gym, which provided rather constant “sound effects,” to a classroom in the new wing, which is much more conducive to artisitic endeavors. The renovation and rearrangement of already existing spaces at Gill Hall allowed us to create a Spanish room, a fully networked computer lab, a multipurpose space for special projects and group work, and a space to be developed as a science lab. The structure that connects the original Gill Hall which the renovated study building includes an elevator, wonderful spaces to display children’s work, an inviting alcove area in our library, and spaces that can be used for small group work or informal meetings. Having worked with a new and reorganized space for a year, it is difficult to imagine life at Gill Hall prior to the addition and renovation project.

The renovations at Fort Hill, where our preschool program and the infant and toddler program are located, resulted in a newly created classroom which allowed the toddler group to move into Fort Hill from temporary space it had occupied for the past few years. The improvements at Fort Hill included the renovation of meeting rooms, research spaces, offices space and storage areas, all of which have allowed us to move more fully and effectively use the facility. Through the efforts of all involved in the renovation project at Fort Hill, the integrity of the building and the warm and inviting atmosphere so important for the young children who spend their days with us at Fort Hill have been maintained. All of the changes at both Gill Hall and Fort Hill have enhanced our work with Campus School students and with Smith College students for whom we serve as a laboratory. I invite you to come and see our facilities and our program at both locations.

—Carla Hofer Reid

Activities, Activities, Activities

• 47 Smith staff, faculty, alumnae, parents and friends participated in the Rays of Home Walkathon for breast cancer research on Sunday, October 12.
• On Saturday, November 15th, two outdoor buses of Smith employees and their guests, traveled to New York City to sightsee, take in a show, or visit museums. The first bus sold out in five days. A second bus was quickly added, selling out in seven days. Thanks for your support!
• Upcoming events include a New England Bullnose basketball game (a sellout earlier this year), an evening of phone calls during public television station WGBY’s winter pledge drive, and possibly a visit to Bright Nights in Springfield.

BankBoston’s “Workplace Banking” Comes to Smith

Thanks to Controller Tony Sysmanski and a committee representing various campus constituencies, a new relationship has been negotiated with BankBoston, which provides new and additional benefits to college employees and students. For those who have a BankBoston card, there is now an ATM (automatic teller machine) installed in the campus post office. Although it does not accept deposits, it is a great convenience when we’re stuck with a bank at lunchtime.

BankBoston’s Workplace Banking program now offers Smith employees the following:
• Monthly fees waived for 2 years on new checking accounts (with Direct Deposit)
• Up to $30 off mortgage closing costs
• Reduced attorney’s fees—up to $125 savings
• $10 off a safe deposit box rental (subject to availability)
• Weekend and extended weekday banking hours at full-service supermarket offices, (Northampton St. & Shop)
• 24-hour, seven days a week, account information by telephone.
• HomeLink: banking from your home computer.
• No fee compared savings account.
• Reserve Credit overdraft protection.
• BankBoston Visa or MasterCard with no annual fee.
• Check with the Benefits Group at Human Resources (ext. 2270) to receive a packet of information and money saving coupon from BankBoston.

Looking for a Career Change?

New Beginnings Can Happen Right Here

New job opportunities occur at the college on a regular basis and the Office of Human Resources encourages staff to stay informed about career opportunities at Smith. If you are thinking about a new job—challenge, be sure to check any of the resources listed below to find out about available openings. These are four primary ways to find out about job opportunities on campus. There is the Job Information Line, which can be accessed by dialing 585-2278. This is a pre-recorded message, updated regularly, which lists all available Administrative, Administrative Support, and Service positions. The information provided includes a position summary, qualifications and deadline for application.

The JOBS posting on the campus AIS VAX can be accessed by typing JOBS at the prompt. This listing contains all available Administrative, Administrative Support, and Service positions and is regularly updated. Information on how and where to apply is also given. The “official” college bulletin boards are kept updated with job postings every time there is an opening. These postings are now printed on green paper so that they are easily found on the boards. These boards are located in six different buildings on campus: 30 Belmount (in the HR office), Clark Science Center (Burton foyer), College Hall (at the first floor copy machine), Neelon (1st floor administrative office), Physical Plant (1st floor main office), and Wright Hall (1st floor copy and computer rooms). These job postings are also sent to all departments for internal distribution.

In Academia, there is often a listing on the back page, showing positions that recently became available. If you see something interesting, you can look for details through any of these options.

Staff are always welcome to HR. To discuss various job opportunities and to read descriptions in their entirety, call the Employment Office at ext. 1260 for an appointment.

—Mark Carney

On My Mind

I suppose it really harmless, but I just don’t like it. Although I sit on the Committee on Community Policy, which approves it each time the subject is revisited, it doesn’t mean that its o.k. with me. But, it is better than spray paint—just barely!

Chalking, that in-your-face method of communicating which DE-faces our campus in irregular spats, is supposed to be signed. “Meg loves Beth” isn’t bad, but can you imagine signing some of the rude comments that we tramp across on our way in and out of buildings? No, no one is going to take responsibility for garbage.

Boston Common used to—and may still—provide a venue for all sorts of events, expressing their thoughts and Golden Opinions, from the not-so-lobster heights of the soap box, or more likely, the milk crate. Folks walking by could choose to stop and listen a while, or not, but they did have a choice. Someone once called chalk a verbal phantom.” Well mayn’t, but it certainly seems very concrete here. There aren’t just one or two chalking spots that we could choose to avoid; chalking is everywhere.

I don’t have a problem with folks expressing themselves. I don’t need to agree with what they say, if it not abusive or hurtful, its fine with me. Most thoughts can be passed along without using offensive language. We can get the point without four-letter words. But wouldn’t it work just as well to hand out flyers, or even get that milk crate out and preach a little in person? Who knows, a discourse might even develop. Both sides of an issue might get dissed. Some learning might take place, and we wouldn’t be forced to have inane graffiti befoul our view.

To paraphrase the Old Testament, publish it in, the streets of Smith!

—Dick Fish
Time Rules Her Ceaseless Course

Because the Office of the President carries such a host of responsibilities, time management is one of the most difficult tasks, one which attempts to balance work life and still have personal time. This is the issue to which Ruth Simmons responded, in a recent interview for the Chronicle.

Each fall the calendar is set up with all of the meetings that are fixed; for example, faculty meetings (same time every week) and other offices whose meetings are scheduled the same day and time each week, outside obligations (five College Board meetings, Veterinary, College Conferences and general staff meetings, particularly those at which the president’s attendance is necessary. These dates are placed on the master schedule. Then she meets with other offices such as Advancement, College Relations, etc. and tries to prioritize work in those areas. Then the dates of outside obligations are fit in. At this point the calendar is basically in place. Lastly, she will return to the scheduled events and work toward balancing all aspects of the year’s calendar.

Balancing the schedule entails making sure the President is on campus a certain number of days each week to be available to meet with associates and students, and that she has time to attend student activities. At this point the rest of the time is filled with meetings with administrative staff, faculty, students and students. In this type of position, there is no time for spontaneity. Personal time must be scheduled well ahead of time. Hence, establishing the calendar presents a major task of intricate planning and establishing priorities.

Barbara Kokoski spends most of her time working on the calendar and is assisted by David Greene, who adjudicates the invitations that come in for different speaking engagements. There are a plethora of outside invitations, which are workable, and interesting, and Ruth said she regrets that there is a lack of time to attend them. Ruth’s day begins about 8 a.m. and her obligations end somewhere around 11 p.m. This is a long workday. However, no two days are alike and that is one of the faces of her work that she says is so enjoyable—each day presents a new challenge.

So where’s the fun? President Simmons says that spending time with students is what makes working in academia so satisfying. “You have the sense that you are doing something to provide a strong educational life for the students, aiding students to take a position, and helping them establish goals/ambitions. What we do is for the students!”

Ruth explained that she chose to work in academia because it had the flexibility to combine both work and family. Starting in a junior-level position, she worked her way upward. On the academic work journey, she had the opportunity to work within many aspects of college administration: Human Resources, Admissions, Development, and she has also taught. This work history, she feels, has given her insight to the problems faced in the operation of a department. All this exposure is most useful in understanding the problems that arise on many levels.

This reporter left our meeting with the sense that the college is fortunate to have this woman as President. She sees an example of what a person can achieve, if one wants to.—Marcell Parsons Poulin

The Staff Art Show

Another Facet of Staff Excellence

Staff Visions began six years ago as a loosely-organized exhibit of artwork and crafts by Smith College staff members. The first year in Graham Hall was just a taste of what would become a very successful expression of the diverse visions that Smith staff have in their lives away from the workplace. Through the past few years, we have used Graham Hall and Davis Center as exhibit spaces, and while we were pleased to have the space and were always able to make them resemble proper exhibit spaces, something was always missing. It was with great pleasure that we moved Staff Visions to Flight Gallery this year, a site that we hope will become a permanent home to the exhibit. My co-organizer, Patty Hayes, and I were thrilled when the Art Department agreed to let us use this more suitable exhibit space that is usually reserved for exhibits by students, faculty and professional artists, thus raising the staff artwork and handcrafts to a higher level of recognition.

More than 20 staff members participated in this year’s show, exhibiting work in a variety of media including oil, acrylic, pen and ink, watercolor, and pastel. Styles ranged from traditional needlepoint, rug hooking and quilting, to contemporary silkscreen prints, jewelry design, calligraphy on hand-made paper, large-format photographs and stained glass. An exciting range of techniques and sizes, from palm-sized locks to large-format paintings, were exhibited. We were delighted to see exhibitors, their families, staff and faculty at the opening reception on September 22nd, where we heard many positive comments. One of the most fulfilling aspects of organizing this exhibit has been seeing staff members who are continually evolving as artists, who are more confident in their work and more skilled in their craft, return year after year to exhibit. We’ve met people who were hesitant to exhibit in earlier years, but who now come to us with confidence, eagerly looking forward to the show. Exhibitors have commented that knowing the exhibit date is nearing provides them with a goal for completing projects. Presentation techniques (framing, hanging hardware, etc.) have improved greatly, and as a result, the finished exhibit is a very professional display.

Staff Visions is a great opportunity for staff members from diverse backgrounds and work experiences to come together to find common ground. Whether they are housekeepers, administrative assistants or department heads, they share a vision with their fellow artists. While it is a significant effort to coordinate the show each year, we always look forward to seeing the work of the artists and craftpeople who are part of the Smith community!

—Amy Holick

More Art News

Staff member, artist and alumna Patricia Hayes will exhibit her recent oil paintings at the Alumnae House Gallery, January 6–March 28, 1998. The show, entitled A Dozen Roses, commemorates founder Sophia Smith and the Sophia Smith Rose. The reception will take place February 6, 4:30 p.m.–6:30 p.m. in the gallery.

Staff member and artist Benjamin Shohan displays his painting: "Watching Japanese Fish."
The Most Important Hire...

continued from page 1

with each candidate, where questions solicited from staff were discussed. The Director of Human Resources is a primary link for staff, so staff regarding the candidates is especially valued. Ruth feels the final candidates represent the best of a strong pool and expect a positive outcome. It is expected that the new director should be on campus by January or shortly thereafter.

Since its inception under Jack Simpson, the Office of Human Resources has been evolving. The present administration, in concert with the committee, has established the following job description:

"Smith College seeks an individual who has the demonstrated ability to head the human resource function into the next century. The successful candidate will possess a broad knowledge of human resource areas, including labor relations, employee compensation, employee relations, benefits, and knowledge of current practices in each of these areas. The successful candidate will also have demonstrated the ability to design and implement innovative and responsive human resource programs and policies, as well as the ability to communicate effectively with all groups of constituents. A master's degree, plus 10 years of significant human resource management experience in a complex organization is highly preferred. Additionally, the successful candidate will possess the following qualities and qualifications:

- Evidence of achievement in human resources leadership and proven ability to manage change.
- Ability to communicate, to interact effectively with diverse constituents, and to be a good listener.
- Deep understanding of and insight into the human resource needs of today's educational institutions and the contemporary work force.

"Knowledge and understanding of the higher education environment, including faculty governance.
- Commitment to a positive labor relations environment.
- Demonstrated success in union negotiations.
- Sensitivity to the mission of a woman's college and/or women's issues.
- Demonstrated comfort level with and advocacy for information technology with a proven record of success in streamlining procedures.
- Commitment to diversity and evidence of the leadership necessary to develop and maintain a diverse community of employees.
- Talent to promote a positive work environment with an appreciation for and commitment to professional development.
- Qualities of compassion, fairness and integrity."
Health Insurance Benefits
Open Enrollment in December

Blue Cross - Blue Shield having priced themselves out of the running, there has been a review at Smith of both Tafts and Harvard-Pilgrim’s health plans. The Benefits section of HR, along with employee and faculty consultation, have worked hard at discovering and weighing the pros and cons of each plan. Their choice will be announced within the next couple of weeks. Meanwhile, the American Medical Association has recently published the following list:

Ten Questions to Consider When Choosing Health Care Coverage

1. Is your family doctor in the plan? If not, what will the out-of-pocket costs be for office visits? And find out if the plan’s directory of participating doctors is up-to-date and accurate.

2. What does the plan cover? Determine your needs — such as prenatal and well-child visits, rehabilitation and home health care — and see if it is possible to tailor the plan to fit them. Also, does the plan cover prescription drugs, preventative care, and mental health services?

3. How does the plan treat pre-existing conditions? What hospitals are in the plan and what treatments are covered if the condition recurs?

4. Does your primary care physician have to receive permission from the insurance company to refer you to a specialist? Find out what penalties or incentives surround that rule.

5. Does your physician’s contract with the insurance company prevent him or her from telling you about certain options or procedures?

6. How does the plan determine which treatments are “experimental” or “investigational”?

7. What standards are used?

8. Will the plan pay for emergency care when the patient is out of town, away from a network provider?

9. How do the doctors in the plan treat their patients? Are they terminated with cause or due process rights? And how stable is the physician panel — will the doctor you see this year be a part of the plan next year?

10. How does the plan define “medically necessary”? The AMA advises consumers to stay away from plans that will cover only treatments the plan determines to be “reasonably reimbursable.”

The AMA notes that more than 160 million people in the United States are enrolled in some form of organized health plan. The average worker switches plans every two years.

Changing the Law at Staff Council

This year, Staff Council asked the NGE committee to look into making changes in the By-Laws of the council. Although the original charter writers tried to cover all the bases regarding the composition of Staff Council and all its sub-committees, it was inevitable, as with any new organization, that changes would have to be made. It takes time to find the strengths and weaknesses in the original formulation of any charter.

The primary changes that the NGE committee recommended to the full council were: a reduction in the number of committee members, the elimination of two committees; a change in the structure of the steering committee; and parallel changes in the wording of all the com- mittee’s charters regarding the disbursement of voting members, and the description of non-voting members.

Due to the problems of finding enough staff people who can take the time from their normal work load to attend Staff Council and sub-committee meetings, we recommended that the Council be reduced from 30 to 25 people, while still maintaining the need for members from all constituencies on campus.

We recommended the elimination of the finance committee as, by and large, the lack of complexity of bookkeeping, which could be easily accomplished by the treasurer alone, was taking valuable person hours from more essential committees. We also recommended the elimination of the Training and Development Committee because the work of this group was being duplicated by a similar body which was centered out of Human Resources.

A desire on the part of many Staff Council members to more clearly identify the role of non-voting members of sub-committees was satisfied by substituting the term “informal liaison” for “non-voting member.” Also the work has been changed regarding the department from which the appointee comes to allow for more flexibility and appropriateness of fit with each specific committee.

All of these changes are only recommendations from the NGE. They will be presented to the full council for a vote at an upcoming meeting. Anyone who has concerns about these changes should contact their Staff Council representative.

—Jimmy Mason

Become a (Working) Groupie and Get Involved

The Campus Climate Working Group (CCWG) is a forum where all members of the Smith Community — students, staff and faculty — can meet to explore campus issues. Founded in the spring of 1996 by President Ruth Simmons to address some immediate problems on campus, it is now led by Carmen Santana-Melges, Assistant to the President and Director of Institutional Diversity. The group meets monthly to discuss campus problems all are welcome to raise questions about life in the Smith community. As Ruth Simmons said when she established the group, there are only two requirements for membership:

- Members must be dedicated to improving the ways different groups communicate, and
- Members must abandon rigid agendas in the interest of working together to promote new ways of achieving a healthy campus environment in which different voices are heard.

The CCWG hopes to show that conversations about race and ethnicity are possible within a framework of intelligence and civility.

- Molly Ivins — Reflections on the Elections
- Tony Morrison — reading and discussing her work
- Yass Stwzian and Khilf Shikazi — Israeli/Palestinian Dialogue
- Vernon Briggs and Deyoer Huerta — Immigration

This fall the subcommittee has sponsored two events:
- "The Ins and Outs of Homophobia and Pride" — Five speakers and open discussion
- "Through the Kitchen Window: Women Explore the Intimate Meanings of Food and Cooking" — Five speakers who have contributed to a book on this topic

Vicky Spelman of the Philosophy Department is now the chair of this group. If you have suggestions for topics or speakers, please contact her (ext. 3646 or spelman@smith).

—Betsey Harries
There are many ways you can communicate with your Staff Council.

E-MAIL
staffcouncil@on.smith.edu

THE WEB
http://www.smith.edu/~sgilrand/so.html

(Come From the Web page you may e-mail individual Staff Council member.)

CAMPUSS MAIL
Send mail to the Staff Council box in Central Services.

TELEPHONE OR IN PERSON
See the Staff Council roster on page 12.

STAFF COUNCIL SPONSORED COMMUNITY FORUM
February 5—3:30-2:30 p.m.
April 16—1:30-2:30 p.m.

We are an organization for you and we want you to hear from you.
Questions, comments or ideas are always welcome. Contact us soon!

Ruth J. Simmons requests the pleasure of your company at a Winer Party for Faculty, Staff, Emeriti and a Guest
Saturday, December 21st
Eight o'clock—Midnight
Scott Gymnasium
Music provided by Doc Bastonache's Big Band
R.S.V.P., by December 1, 1997

President Ruth Simmons has issued invitations to all employees—staff and faculty, plus emeriti and guests, for the first ever Winter Party. In a meeting with the Staff Council Steering Committee, Ruth explained that since the president’s house cannot accommodate the whole Smith community for her September reception, she wanted to build a new tradition into our annual calendar by inaugurating an all-inclusive, seasonal celebration. The date has been picked so that RADS staff will not have the pressure of serving students—they will be gone—and an outside caterer will provide refreshments, so that food service staff can enjoy the party.

The organizing committee: Judy Hardi, Dick Fish, Dick Hunter, Marie 1’Heureux, Judi Marksburg, Peg Fitter, Cindy Ruiz, Vicky Spelman, Charles Staelin, Tim Straw, and Kathy Zarja. Remember to return your RSVP card by December 1!

That is about Staff Council. But let’s not forget that Ruth Simmons constituted an ad hoc self-study team comprised of fourteen staff members who represented a healthy cross-section. That was a particularly satisfying decision that presented staff with another opportunity, another venue, for staff to be heard. It was a public recognition and validation of our presence on campus, an acceptance of the need to identify both positive and negative aspects of work at Smith, and a challenge to develop solutions. It was an incredible opportunity and I am very appreciative of the many long hours these staff members devoted to producing a thorough, balanced, and professional report. In its report, the team detailed the substantial strengths of Smith as a workplace. It also stated clearly and without apology that there are areas needing work. The team cited the following as requiring attention: community values, flexibility of employees and employer, leadership, personal and family values, and workplace—making it manageable. It is an amazing document and I hope you will take the time to read it. (A memo from Ruth, Constance informed Staff Council members that copies will be available in the library.) Ruth Simmons has sought feedback from Staff Council on the team’s report, and that discussion has only just begun. Ruth, Constance has reported that a number of items are already scheduled for action. These include: making electronic information available to all staff, improving campus mail delivery so that it is more frequent and reliable for staff, and work is not based in offices, a possible pilot program involving the appointment of an ombudsman, and the identification of an advocate for staff.

These are just the beginnings. Please do take the time to read the self-study reports and share your ideas and concerns with Staff Council and with Ruth Simmons. (Become a member of Staff Council)—Cynthia Di Geromino
Are We Ready to Take Up the Challenge?

By Scott Girard

Inclusion will take work. Staff people must be ready to take up the challenge of inclusion as it is viewed around the college. Administrators have to be open to the process of change. Already, committee work takes time from what is perceived as actual work. There must be commitment on all fronts to assure everyone has time to participate and be included in committee work.

The question is, how are committee people meeting in committees only makes life more difficult for those not choosing this route a major obstacle for service workers. Service workers constantly have been excluded from any meetings involving decision making as any substantial scale. It is only natural that the concept escapes us. The decisions usually affect us without any input from us. I think this can be stopped. But for now and the near future, the service worker will be the most difficult to convince.

The question now becomes, how can we make change happen? Are we willing to participate in this process? It's an attitude! We often talk with those employees possessing a lot of this. The problem is that many have used their attitude to survive here at Smith and, like almost family members, have learned it only pays to be submissive. The fight has gone out of us. We can only give them time to heal and get back on their feet. While our families members

continued on page 4

THE COUNCIL CHRONICLE

NEWS FROM THE SMITH COLLEGE STAFF COUNCIL

NOVEMBER 1997

1997-98 STAFF COUNCIL ROSTER

Are We Ready to Take Up the Challenge?

The Most Important Hire I'll Ever Make.

By Nancy Brady

It was a beautiful last fall morning as I made my way to College Hall for my interview with CPO, Ruth Constantine. I had heard that she was very excited about her involvement in the Human Resources hiring and my interview confirmed that. Ruth took a lot of time to be sure that I understood the official components of the search which I will detail for you here. What impressed me, however, was the excitement and enthusiasm that Ruth brings to this search. She sees it as a "key hire" for the college. The person who fills this position will be empowered to fulfill the administration's goals of making Smith "a place that acknowledges its employees for the work they put into it" and strives to respect all employees for the service they perform.

When Jack Simkins stepped down as director of Personnel in 1992, his assistant, Jan Reeve, was appointed to succeed him. Last spring, the administration took the opportunity to launch a national search for a successor to Jan, when she announced her resignation from the position. A committee was formed, which included: Bill Brandt, John Connolly, Dorie Goulet, Carmen Santana-Melgoza, Charles Starrels, Nancy Whiston, Marilyn Woodman, with Constantine as chair.

This group hired a search firm, Educational Manangement Network (EMN), to recruit and screen candidates. EMN was founded 20 years ago by Mr. Holyoke graduate, Nancy Archer-Martin. The group specializes in searches for top position in academia and other non-profits. Working from their main office on Nantucket, their professional staff (mainly composed of Five College alumnae) brought both Ruth Constantine and Chief Admissions Officer, Carey Bloomefield to the attention of Smith search committee.

Advertisements in national publications were published in July and August, and by September, thirty-nine applications had been received. From those, face-to-face interviews were held with ten candidates. Three candidates have been brought to campus for the final interviewing sessions. Open forums were held for each candidate and responses requested from all who attended. In addition, members of Staff Council have had an additional meeting.

continued on page 4