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- Put your right elbow on a table, hands raised. With your left hand, gently bend your right hand back toward the forearm. **Hold 5 seconds.** Repeat on the other side.

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- Glide your head back as far as you can, keeping your head and ears level. (If you do it right, you should feel a double chin.) How far can you glide your head forward? **Repeat 3 times.**
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- Lower your head and slowly roll your body as far as you can toward your knees. Hold for 10 seconds. Push yourself up with your legs and muscles. **Repeat 3 times.**

**Rally Day Show 2003**

Staff Council has accepted an invitation from the Student Activities Coordinator and the Rally Day Show Chair to participate in this year’s Rally Day Show on Wednesday, February 19. If you are interested in participating, please contact Janice McDowell by telephone at x2271 or email at jmcdowell@email.smith.edu as soon as possible.

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A special meeting devoted to investigating the use of the "Study Circle" model for staff diversity development. Due to space limitations, an RSVP has been requested. Please contact Patty Kimura (x2208 or pkimura@smith.edu) or Marilyn Lewis (x2630 or mlewis@smith.edu) if you would like to attend.

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**Cast your vote...**

How will you be spending your Smith community service day?

For what organization(s) do you currently volunteer? What has been your most rewarding volunteer experience?

Email your response to smnnews@smith.edu.

**The Cookie Swap - A New Smith Tradition?**

The cookie swap on December 16th was a scrumptious success! Many thanks go to Susan Holdsworth for her vision and organization. Roughly twenty-five Smith community members brought in two-dozen or more of their favorite holiday cookies (baked or bought) to exchange with each other. Those in attendance brought a bag lunch along with their cookies and shared stories of holiday memories and the history of their recipes. Some shared funny stories about the baking of their cookies. One baker commented that she had done a test run with one recipe a few weeks earlier only to decide it would not make the cut for the Smith swap. What recipes did make the cut? There were biscotti, sugar cookies, ginger snaps, peppermint moasses cookies, "dog" cookies and candy cane cookies - just to list a few. (See the recipes for Peanut Twister Cups and Candy Cane Cookies on the third page.) The Activities Committee hopes to make this swap a yearly tradition. It's a great way for employees of the college to get to know each other and expand their cookie selection around the holidays.
Personnel Policy Committee

The Workload Report was distributed to the Smith College staff in December. The Personnel Policy Committee will be discussing the results and how best to proceed.

The Staff Orientation Committee has met and is in the process of reviewing and updating a checklist that managers can use to make sure a new employee has been informed about benefits and procedures at Smith College.

The Job Classification and Compensation Advisory Group continues to work with the Mercer Consultants to revise existing job classifications.

Submitted by Sandy Rynecki

Planning for Retirement

Connie Dragon, Payroll/Billing Assistant at Physical Plant, started working at Smith College in April of 1985. This coming September she plans to retire from Smith to, among other things, spend time with her husband (who retired last August) and her eight grandchildren. Another of her retirement goals is to put her house and financial matters in order so her children won't have to. Those of you who know Connie "Kodak" Dragon will enjoy knowing that she may even consider a second career as a photographer. Here, Connie shares some tips that she has found useful in preparing for her retirement:

1. Meet with your investment counselor to discuss your current financial standing and your plans for retirement. Ask for an illustration of the monthly income you can expect to receive in retirement.

2. Contribute as much as you can to an IRA (Supplemental Retirement Account).

3. Meet with your benefits coordinator to check on health, life insurance, etc. to confirm what you are eligible for when you retire.

4. Go to as many workshops on retirement, finances, investing, and health as possible. Take advantage of Smith offerings. Look also in your local paper for events sponsored by groups such as Cooley Dickinson Hospital and BHPN (Business & Professional Women).

5. Stay healthy by taking advantage of Smith's great fitness programs. Aerobics, yoga and "Heart to Heart" are but a few. Health is an important part of a happy retirement.

6. Visit the Social Security Office at least three months prior to your retirement. You will need a copy of your birth certificate, marriage certificate, and last pay stub. Did you know that you must be retired the full month in order to get that month's retirement money? If you retire on January 8, you won't receive retirement income for the months of January. (might as well work through the end of the month.) You can also access the Social Security Administration at www.ssa.gov.

7. Decide if you will work part-time (for either the paycheck or just to stay busy).

8. Pursue a hobby or passion. Stay active. Have goals even in retirement. Remodel your kitchen or teach your teenage grandson how to drive. Do volunteer work.

9. Get reacquainted with friends and loved ones.

10. Let your first weeking thought be of gratitude.

Cookie Swap Recipes

---continued from page one---

Candy Cane Cookies
Sabinia Marsh
1/4 cup butter
1/4 cup shortening
1 cup sugar
1 egg
1/2 cup crackers
1 cup chocolate chips

Melt 2 sticks of butter with cane, chop and use for melting. Sprinkle the cookie with confectionary sugar. Mix well and press into a 9x13 pan. Melt chocolate chips with 2 tablespoons of butter in a pan and spread evenly over the top. Refreeze 15 minutes and then cut into squares. (Editor’s suggestion: To create special treats for Valentine’s Day, use a heart-shaped cookie cutter.)

Please Contribute!

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JANUARY - FEBRUARY 2003
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COUNCIL UPDATES

Activities Committee

Smith College supports the Food Bank of Western Massachusetts by holding a food drive every February. The dates of this year’s drive will be February 10 through March 3. Collection containers will be distributed to 16 buildings throughout the campus.

Our annual donation is shared by a network of 420 member agencies, which include meal sites, shelters, pantries, and other non-profit programs in Western Massachusetts serving food to low-income people. They are anticipating a need of more than 6.5 million pounds this year—an increase of more than 35% over the past two years. In 2003, we gave 3,038 pounds of food, which was five times more than the previous year.

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Current Staff Council Priorities

- Expanding the "study circle" as an effective dialogue model.
- Encouraging widespread participation in the upcoming Staff Council nominations and election cycle.
- Nominees are tentatively scheduled to be called for in mid-February.
- Elections are scheduled to take place in March.
- Sharing ideas on volunteering and community service at the next Community Forum.

For a comprehensive look at what your representatives are working on, log on to: http://www.smith.edu/staffcouncil/minute/page.html

Communications Committee

The Communications Committee is in the planning stages for the next Community Forum. The focus, inspired by one of President Christ’s recent initiatives, will be on volunteer opportunities in our community. We are currently looking at dates in April. Please let us know if you have any suggestions or ideas.

The Lunch and Learn Series also continues this semester on February 14 with a craft demonstration by members of the staff. Featured crafts will include basket weaving, working with clay, making dream catchers, knitting, and weaving. If you are interested in demonstrating your craft, please contact Jo Cannon-Corison at x9172 or jccorison@smith.edu.

Submitted by Marya Forrested and Conlye Benton

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2. Contribute as much as you can to an IRA (Supplemental Retirement Account).

3. Meet with our benefits partners, Charisse Maguire, to check on health, life insurance, etc. to confirm what you are eligible for when you retire at 62 or younger. If you have a partner, check to see what their coverage offers as well. You are a veteran, check on your VA benefits. Compare costs.

4. Go to as many workshops on retirement, finances, investing and health as possible. Take advantage of Smith offerings. Look also in your local paper for events sponsored by groups such as Cooley Dickinson Hospital and BPIW (Business & Professional Women).

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Cookie Swap Recipes

...continued from page one

Candy Cane Cookies

Peanut Butter Cups

Chris Carrigan

2 sticks butter (plus 2 tbsp)

1 cup granulated sugar

1 1/2 cups peanut butter

1/2 cup confectioner’s sugar

1 cup chocolate chips

Melt 2 sticks of butter and 3/4 cup granulated sugar. Stir in peanut butter and confectioner’s sugar. Mix well and press into at 9” x 13” pan. Melt chocolate chips with 2 tablespoons of butter in a pan and spread it evenly over the top. Refrigerate 15 minutes and then cut into squares. (Editor’s suggestion: To create special treats for Valentine’s Day, use a heart-shaped cookie cutter.)

Sabrina Marsh

1/2 cup butter

1/2 cup shortening

1 cup sugar

1 egg

1 tsp vanilla

1 tsp peppermint (to taste)

2 1/2 cups flour

pinch of salt

1/4 tsp red food coloring

2 candy cane or several red and white mint candies (optional)

Pre-heat oven to 375° F

Do not grease cookie sheet.

In large bowl, cream butter, shortening and sugar until light and fluffy. Add eggs, vanilla and peppermint. Stir in flour and salt. Beat until thoroughly combined. Divide dough in half. Roll 1 1/2 sticks of each dough into 4 inch rope. Twist and form into candy cane shape and place on cookie sheet. (Optional: sprinkle tip of each cookie with broken up candy canes before baking.) Bake 8-10 minutes until light brown. Tip: leave on cookie sheet to cool for 5 minutes, or so, before transplanting to cooling rack to avoid breaking the cookie.

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WORKING WONDERS...

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**Sponsored by the Smith Council Activities Committee**