

the following

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December 1991

Farewell, Dr. Pfaff

Back in May, Dr. Eugene Pfaff came to the 20th reunion. He was clearly not in good health, but he was there with us. Less than two months later, on July 2, Dr. Pfaff died.

Obituaries are curious things, both for what they do and do not tell us. Dr. Pfaff's noted that he was born in Pfafftown, N.C. and that he received his bachelor's and master's degrees in history from Chapel Hill and his Ph.D. from Cornell. It also noted that he came to UNCG in 1936, retired in 1977, and was cultural affairs officer at the U.S. Embassy in Cairo, Egypt, in 1966-67.

What it could not adequately convey was the force of his personality and intellect--and, above all, the stories. "Some of the more colorful stuff, we couldn't put into print," as former RCer David Turner said. "And half of those stories were probably apocryphal--but if they weren't true, they should have been. In seminars, he was devoted to the shock method. He was so irreverent--there was a revolutionary zing to his thought. He was extremely colorful, very opinionated, and thoroughly engaging."

David, now an assistant professor of history at Davis and Elkins College, added: "He probably had more influence over me as a teacher than anyone else. I never met anyone who had quite the broad-based knowledge that he did. And despite his gruff nature, he would really take the time to talk to his students."

In the words of Dr. Bob Calhoun, who spoke at the memorial service: "Gene Pfaff was a liberal in several of the best senses of that good word: He valued civilized behavior, humane values, and persuasive public discourse. Most of all, he considered education as something which should liberate people by developing their curiosity, rationality, and love of learning.

"Like all great teachers, he understood the value of drama and spontaneity. In 1970, he taught in the first European Civilization core course in the Residential College. I went to hear his first lecture because Warren Ashby had invited me to join the RC Faculty and I wanted to see how history fit into the interdisciplinary core

course. Gene lectured on the origins of the modern state and one of the terms he wrote on the board was bureaucracy. His lecture took us into courts, tax collections, army posts, and naval bases, but the term on the board had not come up. So a student asked what bureaucracy had to do with the modern state. Gene had about 30 seconds to answer before the bell rang. He paused for a moment and then dropped his hands to his side: 'Stands before you a bureaucrat. Your parents pay me to keep you occupied with worthwhile tasks during a difficult time in your lives. I do the best I can.' He surely did."



20 years of memories

Back in May, about 150 RC alumni spent a weekend together laughing, eating, drinking, talking, listening, dancing, staying up late, and--most of all--remembering. It was, by most any measure, quite a success, especially considering that throughout the planning process no one was ever sure how anything would turn out; RCers, never known for their promptness in responding to invitations or pleas, really outdid themselves this time.

I was especially grateful during the weekend for the amount of time we had to reflect and wonder and consider the experience, both the immediate experience of the reunion and our collective experience as RCers. It's true that we all have different stories to tell about our time in RC, and even more true that we've all gone our separate ways since leaving, but despite the differences, we do have something in common, hard as that might be to define. What is it about being an alumnus of RC that makes us different, much less that's worth celebrating with reunions every few years?

It can be argued, I suppose, that what we share is not exclusive to RC, that it could have been developed elsewhere. I don't know because I've never known anything like what we had during the four years I spent in RC. Since then, though, I've come to realize in several general ways (mostly by doing without) what I learned very specifically in RC: the importance of community. Much has been written about the fragmentation of American culture and our increasing isolation from one another. As I watched the reunion take shape and then actually happen, I saw people deal with one another in ways that aren't at all common in the "real" world. Is this willingness to work together, to voluntarily become part of a community despite differences in opinion and background and interests, is this the heritage we share?

The reunion was a lot like RC itself; It meant something different to everybody who was a part of it. This diversity has always been one of RC's greatest strengths; it is, in a sense, the foundation

on which the entire experiment is based. We're already thinking about a 25th anniversary reunion in 1996, but don't wait until then to celebrate the old RC ethic--it's worth doing every day.

--Rick Johnson



Director's Letter

I find sitting here in the RC Director's office again after a year away from it both comfortable and unsettling. Having had almost 15 months of tranquil reflection on life (a little dearer to me now for danger) and on some poets and poetry that I love, having done some serious thinking and writing for the first time in many years, I find the pace here appalling. So much paper, so many silly hoops to jump through, so many nagging problems, so little time, so little energy. But then my bottom feels comfortable in the chair and Martha Anne and Betty and Fred and Fran and Charlie and Dick and Debbie are all wandering around being busy and composed, and then some nice kid comes bubbling in to tell me how RC is the best thing that ever happened to her and how she loves Core (!) and how her life is like a rose just bursting open and some guy comes by to say he's tired of being a cynic and wants to be of use to the world and I wonder how I could ever be happy anywhere else or doing anything else. So I grit my teeth and fill out another form; and in the hall I hear the sound of laughter, happy, real laughter.

I wonder how all of you are with jobs now and growing families and a fiercely real world to face every morning, not just an 11:00 lecture. I hope, in the deepest sense of that word, that some of the things we have all done and thought together still mean something sometimes. That the habits of reading and thinking and writing have not left you. That somehow all that has made you see your world more clearly, has given you the creative energy not to sink to some apathetic mediocrity. I hope that sometimes there is a poem, or a shape, or a song remembered or made because once poems and shapes and ideas and songs were at the heart of what we were. I hope you are happier and, may I even say, holier that you might otherwise have been.

Come by and see us when you can. The paint is still peeling, the walls still crumbling, but it wouldn't be home otherwise. Come on home; we miss you.

Love,

Murray

The next reunion: It's not too soon

While the 20th anniversary weekend provided a unique opportunity to meet all generations of RC alumni and friends, we know some of you missed seeing people you'd hoped would be there. And even worse, some of you didn't make it to the reunion at all!

For those RCers who were freshmen in 1978, '79, and '80, however, you have a chance to recapture the good times again this spring when the alumni committee will host a reunion weekend just for you. So if you entered RC in 1978-80, or if you're in touch with friends from those years, please pass the word and come along yourself. You never know who may be longing to catch a glimpse of you after all these years!

As a bonus, this year's RC reunion-goers will have the privilege of sharing in UNCG's Centennial Celebration and all the attendant festivities. What a great time to get sentimental over the ways that RC and the University have influenced your lives and careers.

So for good food, good times, and good friends, reserve the weekend of May 15-17, 1992, and come reunion with us! More details soon...

--Kathy D'Angelo (co-chair, RC alumni assn)



He's not Elvis, but he may be a saint

Fred Nash may not attract the attention of the Guinness folks, but he has set a record that may rival any they acknowledge: This is his fourth (you heard me, fourth) year as RC's RD. Scheduled to receive his M.A. in Communications/Theatre in December, Fred plans to remain in RC at least through the spring semester, teaching one class there and one class in speech at Lenoir-Rhyne College.

Asked why he has remained in such a demanding position for four years, Fred immediately responds, "I like the students--most of the time. They keep me learning and questioning; because they do. When I ask them to do something, they ask why. Then I realize that I may not have a good reason."

What kind of training equips one to live--not as a student--in RC for four years? From 1975-78, Fred served in the U.S. Army. (He finds it a little strange that he was a 21-year-old operations sergeant and now, at 36, lives in a college dorm; nonetheless, he admits that the RD position actually carries more responsibility.) He graduated from UNCG in 1984 with a degree in theatre and has taught speech, public speaking, and theatre classes.

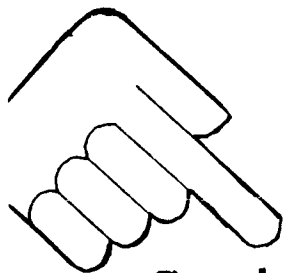
All this is not to say that Fred has abandoned acting. He appears in commercials for area businesses like Lennox and Biscuitville. He also has made training and educational films. One of the real advantages to remaining in the academic community, he says, is the chance to teach part-time and still pursue acting.

In RC, Fred's dramatic talents have gotten a good workout. He's a frequent performer in dorm talent shows, and his Elvis impersonation is especially popular. An admirer of Elvis ("He's so tacky, he's cool"), Fred still doesn't feel "spiritually ready" for the pilgrimage to Graceland. (No, he hasn't sighted Elvis in the parlor, either.)

It should come as no surprise that there is a down side to living in a dorm. According to Fred, living on campus has made his social life more difficult, and of course the students have been known to get on his nerves (and vice versa, he quickly adds). In addition, one of RC's strengths, its small size, can become a weakness if the rumor and gossip mills start up or if troubled students use the community as a crutch rather than as a support. But he says he loves working with Betty and Murray and especially enjoys being part of such a close-knit community. He feels that RC offers more to students than other programs on campus, giving them opportunities for growth both in and out of class.

Four years of living, counseling, playing volleyball, teaching, singing "Heartbreak Hotel", and learning have given Fred Nash a unique perspective on RC. He sums it up, in all its complexity, in one simple sentence: "RC has become my home."

--Gaylor Callahan



Serious money: One way to help RC

At the last meeting of the Residential College Alumni Association, we asked Betty about specific needs in the college that alumni might help meet. It was easy for her to come up with several ideas right then, but after giving the idea some thought, we decided that the most pressing need in the college right now is that of a new microcomputer. The university has started using computers for class registration, and much of the RC office business (which includes alumni affairs) is now done on the one terminal in Martha Anne's office. It is therefore becoming increasingly difficult to make do with only one computer, especially at preregistration time.

The cost of a new IBM-compatible PC with a 44-mb hard disk is about \$1,000; the existing printer could be used for both terminals, and one would be connected to the university VAX. Here's the plan:

1. If you have access to a good deal on computer equipment, new or used, please call Betty at (919) 334-5915 to discuss the possibilities.
2. We are establishing a special fund for computer donations. Please consider a \$10.00 contribution to this fund. As far as we know, none of us is rich (please contact us if you are), but \$10.00 is no great sum; 100 donors would resolve this issue very easily.

For more information, call Betty. Send checks, payable to Residential College and marked "Computer Fund" on the "memo" line, to the RC office.

--Rick Johnson (co-chair, RC alumni assn)

Friends of RC Membership 1991-92

Maybe it was the 20th reunion. Maybe all the stars lined up just so. Whatever the reason, this has been a great year for our alumni association. The 1991-92 members are:

Melissa Allen	Kim Ballard	Sherry Brabham
Alison Brown	Anne Willson Bruning	April Bunn
Scott Carper	Jeff Carroll	Kim Chaney
Mark Cheek	Gaye B. Clifton	Cindy & Paul Coates
Bill Coker	Carol Croft	Dan Cronin
Kathy D'Angelo	Linda Davenport	Carol Densmore
Ken Elkins	Marty Ford	Mary Ford
Alex Goldstein	Margaret Cox Griffin	Melissa Hagemann
Kathy Haldane	Julia Hardie	Hazel M. Hartsoe
Carolyn A. Hayes	Elizabeth A. Herring	Alix Hitchcock
Debbie Johnson	Kenneth Johnson	Rick Johnson
Anna E. Jordan	Rebecca D. Kugel	Sandy Crawford Leak
Toni Thompson Ledford	Charles Martin	Polly S. Nurney
Alan Pike	Alison Pratt	Amy Price
Kyle J. Ray	Tucker Respass	Nancy Seate
Felixa Sommer	Liza Sprinkle Tamer	Bruce Vail
Louise Whitehead	Abbitha Jane Wilcox	Alison Kimmelman-Lynch
Margaret Snider Nieman	Martha Anne Ferrell Patterson	Sarah Tharpe-Winchell
Michelle Morefield Stegall		

To join this august group and become a friend of RC, just fill out, detach, and mail the form on the next page.

NEWS

Alumni Notes and News

Paul Ashby still lives in the Boston area, where he is director of operations for the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee.

Juliet Balas is a marketing representative for an environmental firm in Research Triangle Park.

Alan Beauvais lives in Kissimmee, Fla. and works at Disney/MGM Studios in production and on the backstage studio and satellite press tours. He also works for MTV and says he still wants to be a film editor.

Benton and Alice Bogle live in Burlington; Benton is working as a rehab specialist and Alice is a claims adjuster. They have two daughters--Sarah, 4, and Alice, 2.

Cindy and Paul Coates had their third child, Ethan Douglas, on Aug. 31. All are well, and the redheaded league has another member.

Carol Densmore recently attended a midwifery conference in El Paso, Texas. She leaves on Dec. 31 for her fourth trip to India (good thing she's been studying Hindi). Take more fabulous photos, Carol.

Keith Ferrell hit the big time when he became editor of Omni magazine a year ago; he lives in New York.

Lynn Fick is production coordinator and marketing assistant for the Center for Creative Leadership in Greensboro.

Kris Goodin married Brian Wilson in July in Winston-Salem. She is a school health nurse with the Randolph County Health Department, and he teaches at Faith Christian School.

Mary Beth Granger and her husband Mike had a girl, Hannah Elizabeth, on April 16. Hannah's older brother David, who's almost 4, has decided to keep her.

Melissa Hagemann is living in London, working on her M.A. in international history at the London School of Economics (a.k.a. Mick Jagger's alma mater). You can write to Melissa at: Butler's Wharf Residence, 11 Gainsford Street, London, England SE 1-2 NB.

James Hering and Jodi Doss were married in Burlington in April. He serves on the UNCG police force, and she is program coordinator with Ralph Scott Homes.

Alix Hitchcock lives in Mocksville, N.C. and has her art studio in Winston-Salem.

FRIENDS OF RC

Dues: \$10.00 per year for non-current students
\$ 5.00 per year for 1st- and 2nd-year graduates

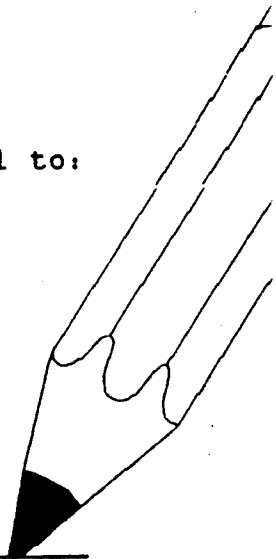
Make your check payable to The Residential College and mail to:

Friends of RC
Residential College
UNC-Greensboro
Greensboro, NC 27412

Name: _____

Address: _____

Information: _____

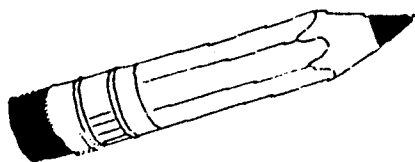


The Last of the T-Shirts

In case you didn't make it to the reunion--or you've already spilled tomato sauce on your RC T-shirt--there are some shirts left over and in need of a good home. They are white and 100% cotton, they have a nifty logo, and they cost \$7.00 apiece. Indicate how many you want and mail this form and a check to the RC office.

size: ___ M ___ XL

Total: _____



Alison Kimmelman married Jack Lynch in June.

Ted Labosky and his wife Jennifer live in Winston-Salem. He is a librarian at the Forsyth County Public Library, and she is chair of the paralegal department at Davidson County Community College.

Michael Pace and Cheryl Pint were married in Greensboro in May. He is employed by Guilford County.

Liz Daum Pendergrass' son, Christopher Gregory, was born 12 weeks early on Sept. 18, but he's doing fine.

Alan Pike, a vice president of First Union National Bank, is a commercial banking officer at the High Point office.

Alison Pratt is engaged to be married to Steve Hetzel next May 9. Steve is a graphic artist, and Alison works at Canon USA on Long Island.

Amy Price married Jeff Smith this past June in Fayetteville. She teaches in the Cumberland County Schools, and he is a sales rep with the Noland Company.

Betsy Rocap is living in Washington and working for the Chemical Manufacturers Association.

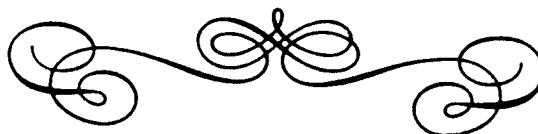
Emily Ruark is the new managing editor of the Gettysburg Review, a literary quarterly published by Gettysburg College in Pennsylvania.

Jean Shaw sang with the Greensboro Opera again this fall and is a member of Singers' Showcase, a new performing group in the Piedmont.

Anne Stanfield married Frederic Holland in June in Winston-Salem. She is a teller supervisor for First National Bank, and he is a manager with Import Parts Specialists.

Thomas T. Taylor is an assistant professor of history at Wittenberg University in Springfield, Ohio. He was given the Omicron Delta Kappa Award for outstanding teaching by a faculty member employed less than five years.

David Turner is an associate professor of history at Davis and Elkins College in Elkins, W.Va. He was awarded the 1990-91 Sears Roebuck Foundation Teaching Excellence and Campus Leadership Award.



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Greensboro, NC 27412

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