

Founders Green

Vol. 1 No. 1

January 2002

A Newsletter by Haverford Parents for Haverford Families

IN THIS ISSUE:

Message from the President

A Meeting with Dean Tolliver

Student Housing Primer

DC is the Capital of Haverford Dining

Editor	Leslie Curtis P'04
Contributing Editor	Ann Summer P'04
Assistant Editor	Eva Werbell P'04
Associate Director, The Parents' Fund	Eileen Haupt
Director, External Relations	Violet Brown
Associate Director, External Relations	Jill Wharton

Founders Green would appreciate your input. If you have any ideas for articles, suggestions on topics to cover, or tips to share with other parents and families, please send an e-mail to Eva Werbell at:

ewerbe@law.columbia.edu.

If you would prefer to write a note, please send it to:

**Founders Green
External Relations
Haverford College
370 Lancaster Avenue
Haverford, PA 19041-1392**

From Dad, with Love

by Tom Tritton, President

When my youngest daughter Christi headed off to college this fall, I wrote her a letter containing various advices. She, of course, is a thoroughgoing teenager, and I a grizzled academic, so this seemed a perfectly fitting channel of communication. When asked what advice I might share with Haverford parents I realized the communiqué to my own daughter would accurately convey my thoughts. So, with Christi's permission, I share that fatherly missive:

Dear Christi:

Mark Twain once said: "When I was a boy of fourteen, my father was so ignorant I could hardly stand to have him around. But when I got to be twenty-one, I was astonished at how much the old man had learned in seven years."

I suppose it's true—I do have a lot to learn. But I do know a thing or two about college, having spent my entire adult (!) life at one college or another. So here are some advices from a so-called expert:

1. Don't always study alone. Who says learning has to be solitary?
2. Do it (school work, that is) every day. I got this from Derek Walcott (Nobel Prize winner in Literature) when he was at Haverford a couple of years ago and had dinner at our house. Someone asked him how to be a good poet and he said, "Do it every day." I assume this applies to things other than poetry.
3. Mind your time. Here is my breakdown of a typical college student's week: 56 hours sleeping (i.e. 8 per night); 15 hours in class; 30 hours studying (2 hours for each 1 spent in class); 67 hours eating, recreating, goofing off, writing letters to Mom and Dad. Notice which category is largest.
4. Get really involved in at least one extracurricular activity. Life is too short to be a monomaniac.
5. Get to know a faculty member. Adults—even academics!—can be really cool people.
6. Be sure to get off to a good start as a froshling. If you make it through the first few weeks with all your work under control, the rest is easy.

Most of all, remember that Mom and I love you. Lots of other people love you too, but ours is unconditional and forever. Count on it.

*Love (of course),
Dad*



EDITOR'S NOTE

Welcome to the first issue of *Founders Green*, a newsletter created to serve the needs and interests of the parents and families of Haverford College students. Judging from the enthusiasm of the parents who have already learned of its existence, *Founders Green* will be a welcome addition to the Haverford publications group. We are only at the start of what we hope will serve as another means of providing support, news, and information as well as a sense of community to its readers. We welcome your help, your comments, your input, and your shared concerns. And we hope, as this newsletter grows over the years, that it will reflect the great spirit and kind heart of Haverford College itself.

This issue would not have been possible without the help of Ann Summer P'04, our very first contributing editor. Thanks to Eva Werbell P'04 for volunteering to receive your suggestions. Parents Kathy Hart, Kathy Mathieson, Pamela Muldowney, and Karen Nussbaum provided positive input. And the Haverford community, represented by Jill Wharton, Violet Brown, Eileen Haupt, and Stephen Heacock, has made all of this possible for us. Thank you.

Leslie Curtis P'04
Editor

Making the “Rounds”

by Ann Summer P'04

Since most students tend to call home with complaints, sophomore parents are usually the first to learn about Haverford's housing lottery: “I know I won't get the housing I want and I'll end up on the wait list,” your student frets. We then worry: does “wait list” really mean “nowhere to live”? What about your friend's daughter at another college assigned the worst room in the worst dorm in an unsafe neighborhood off-campus, or your son's soccer pals at Big-Time U, turned loose junior year and forced to find private housing in the hinterlands? Panic sets in until we realize there are no hinterlands at Haverford, and housing is guaranteed. But what is this housing lottery your child refuses to explain satisfactorily – Points assigned? Names and specific rooms called out? The Rounds?

Beginning with the housing website and its 30-page description of rules, (<http://www.haverford.edu/housing/index.html>), followed by an interview with the extremely helpful Housing Director, Robin Doan, we learned all about housing. Haverford has clearly labored long and hard over every contingency to devise an eminently fair system that optimizes choices. The system's complexity also challenges the students' skills in problem-solving and use of strategy. Basically, upperclass students apply for housing for the following year by participating in a process known as Room Draw, culminating in a series of lotteries (the Rounds) held on five consecutive days in April.

Three other options exist for obtaining housing. One is application for Special Interest Areas, including the Asian Cultural Living Group, La Casa Hispanica, the Ira De A. Reid House (Black Cultural Center), Quiet/Alcohol-free (Cadbury House), Smoking housing, and the E-House (environmentally conscious living). A second option is a Group House or Floor Group (combinations of rooms or apartments clustered together to provide contiguous housing for a group of students). The third is Bi-College housing, where students live in a mixed group or in single rooms on either of the campuses. Two groups are exempt from the process: Customs People and students with requests for special consideration (such as medical conditions or disabilities).

The Rounds consists of separate lotteries for each housing category—6-person suites, 5-person suites, 4-person suites, 5-person hall groups, 3-person apartments, 2-person apartments, 2-person suites, doubles, and singles. Students can enter as many lotteries as there are housing configurations that suit their needs. Each application is given a number representing the sum of the weighted numbers for each person on the application (i.e., 1 for rising seniors, 2 for rising juniors, and 3 for rising sophomores). The numbers are called in ascending order so that senior groups have the greatest choice (groups with the same total value are ranked in a random drawing). As each group is

called, members make their selection from the available options. If a room is chosen, and a person later decides against the choice, the option remains to trade the room with a like individual or group during the trading period after the Rounds or give up the room and go to the end of the wait list (to discourage passing on a viable option).

Room Draw illustrates why sophomores are at the greatest disadvantage, justifiable though it is to ensure “first-years” are handled with care (and provided with Customs group placements) and juniors and seniors are given priority for their seniority. The process allows for some creative strategies to optimize any given group's chances. Sophomores may improve their position by coming up with a sufficiently large incentive (for example, the best room in the suite) to entice students with more seniority to join their group. The process

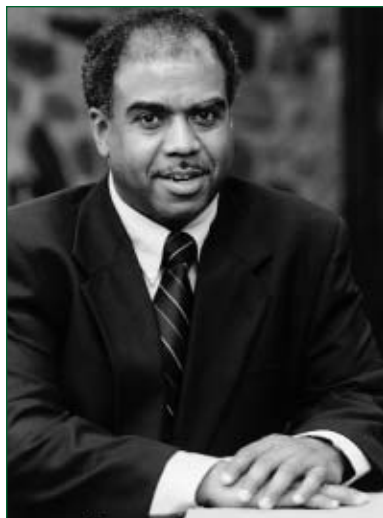
elicits as much anticipatory strategy as a chess game, but once a student draws a room, all other applications with that student's name are eliminated. Students who lost out in one round have the opportunity to regroup in new configurations to try for housing in one or more later rounds—a result of a joint decision by the Housing Director and Housing Committee to extend the Rounds from the original one night to five.

Further complications include students in the process of applying for off-campus study when the lotteries take place, who must submit a contingency plan that will account for filling their room should the study-away opportunity come through. If they leave the College for a semester, they may reenter the grouping for which they applied, as per contingency arrangements. The other choice is to enter the mid-year lottery for the second semester. Those students without a room assignment by the end of the lottery should complete a wait list application before the assigned deadline. They will be contacted in August to determine their assignment.

Some students are lucky enough to get their first choice, especially if they wanted the apartments. Other students have harder choices: a group of three might be offered a room in the chosen dorm for two of the three joint applicants or a room for all three in their last choice dorm. The Housing Director goes out of her way to allow the students time to call each other and deliberate their options.

September comes, and most students seem to have settled in. Some discover unexpected advantages in their new housing unit. “Hey, at least I won't be having to pay security when I forget my key. I'm on the first floor, so now I can just climb into my room.” And thus opens a new chapter in the book of parental anxiety (see Room Draw Rules, Section I. A. 5. Window Locks).





Haverford College prides itself on offering support of all kinds to its students. When students are admitted, they receive a number of reassuring communications involving all the personnel assigned to their well-being. Among them is their dean.

Students are assigned alphabetically to a specific dean and that is where the story, for parents, ends. Who that dean is and what exactly that dean does remain something of a mystery for most of us—until now. After a lengthy conversation with the man who is, for all intents and

purposes, the “dean of deans” at Haverford College, we have the answers.

Joseph Tolliver, Dean of the College, is unquestionably well-qualified to speak on the topic of what deans do—and do not do. He has served as a dean for 18 years: four of them at Haverford, and previously at Barnard, Trinity, Connecticut College, and, most recently, Skidmore. A warm, open, and very direct man, he is known among students as “a really good guy.” He was happy to demystify the job of dean for us in our very own *Founders Green* parent information session.

Founders Green: How does Haverford differ from other colleges where you’ve worked?

Dean Tolliver: Haverford is a unique place, combining a high level of academics with a highly intelligent student body and a Quaker legacy. But “deaning” is similar in many respects from school to school in that each college offers levels of support for the students. Here, we have the faculty advisor, the dean, and the Upper Class Advisor present during the first year; a triple layer. A student can choose a level of self-reliance that is most comfortable.

FG: How many of your students consult with you?

DT: I am assigned letters A through D, approximately 220 students. About one-third seeks my help, which is about the same percentage as I’ve seen in other schools. They call or e-mail throughout the year, sometimes just to say hello. Ten to 15 students come to see me weekly, and of that group I would say some have to be persuaded to come in. They’re not doing well and prefer to hide out.

FG: What about the other two-thirds?

DT: The second third I might see about three times a year. They don’t need help; they’re just looking for the bureaucracy to work. They need me to sign a room change card or the cards to add or drop a course, or explain how they might major at Bryn Mawr. The last third is doing wonderfully, with no deviations from their progress through the school. I’ll see them once at orientation, when I meet with the group of approximately 50 freshmen assigned to me. The next time I see them again will be at Commencement.

FG: Does a dean track all of his students?

DT: Frankly, no, but we are aware of who’s not doing well because around the time of fall mid-terms, the deans get letters from the faculty stating who is not turning in work or showing up for class, or is in danger of flunking out. Sometimes there’s a warning from only one professor; sometimes the warning is from all four. A student who is having problems academically is then required to see a dean every two weeks.

FG: Do the deans hear from parents directly?

DT: Yes, we do, and I’d say in about 50 percent of the cases, the parents tell me their child doesn’t know they’re calling. In my opinion the child should know, because if there is a problem or issue to be addressed, then all three parties should be at the table. I welcome hearing from parents because they have a stake in what is happening with their children in college. And we should try to foster conversation between parents and children, without repeating anything private that the dean has been told. Haverford parents should know one thing: if your child is in trouble, physically or academically, you’ll hear from us.

FG: How have the deans been involved in helping the students to deal with the events of September 11th and its aftermath?

DT: When the president of the College and I led the meetings with the student body, we made it clear that there are people available at the psychological services, health services, and on the faculty to whom they could go formally. Or they were urged to talk with each other. The staff came together to try and deal with what might happen here. But I must say that following that event, it was eerily quiet on campus. And when we checked with faculty and with the provost, we discovered that academically there was no great change. Faculty reported that in their classes it was either business as usual or the class decided the 11th was all they could, or would, talk about.

FG: Do students change deans?

DT: Very infrequently, I’m happy to say. Almost all of the students have a good comfort level with their deans.

FG: What is the students’ biggest complaint about you?

DT: That’s easy – the big one is that they may want to see me and I’m booked solid for seven days. But you have to understand my schedule. If I see a student, I meet with each one for at least half an hour. However, because I am also dean of the College, my day may include a two-hour meeting with the president and the senior staff, then the next day a two-hour Educational Policy Committee meeting, and there’s college planning, new programs to discuss, construction plans to review. I would do this job a lot better if there were two of me, one to be available to work with students, the other to attend to all the College matters. But if there is any kind of emergency, I will make the time to see that student at once.

And make time for students Joseph Tolliver does. This is one exceedingly busy man, but one committed to carrying out Haverford’s goal of offering students a world in which they can be as independent as they choose. For parents, Dean Tolliver, like the school, provides the perfect balance of supervision; our children take charge of how much or how little but they are supremely well looked after.

DC Is The Capital Of Haverford Dining

For 15 years, Haverford's Dining Services, including its Dining Center (known as the "DC"), the Coop, Skeeters pizza, catering services, summer programs, alumni weekends, certain campus events, and faculty dining room, has been in the capable hands of Director John Francone. A man who takes his job so seriously that a vacation to Disney World ends up as a lesson in efficient cafeteria lines, Francone has one goal: improving food and food services at Haverford. And he has succeeded admirably. When he took over, Haverford food was "really bad"; since then he has labored to create a food service responsive to a generation of mall food-loving, multi-racial, allergic, vegetarian, disordered-eating, picky, hungry, complaining young adults. Alumni, he proudly states, "cannot believe how good the food at Haverford is." And if John Francone has his way, it's only going to get better.

The purpose of the food service is not simply to nourish—Francone understands that eating is a social time and ambiance is extremely important. He would love to redesign what he thinks of as the "institutional" single-line in the servery (where the food is) and create individual stations. The DC, built in the sixties, is a relic of its era and though it has been updated since then, it needs a major overhaul to create a "more intimate" space. The popularity of eating at Bryn Mawr has convinced Francone that it's all about design and flow: create a better space and they will come and enjoy the food more.

Healthy eating is also foremost in everyone's mind. There is Mimi Murray, M.A., R.D., the bi-college dietician who monitors everything prepared and is also available to create special menus or talk with students who have eating disorders. All fried foods are made strictly in canola oil. Ninety percent of the baked goods used at all meals are fresh and baked daily on the premises. As students' tastes have grown more sophisticated, they have also become somewhat healthier. John Francone puts it this way: "We've moved from the era of the fried mozzarella patty to the era of grains and sprouts to where we are today, conscious of what we're eating." He also wants to better organize food stations so students won't have to stand in line too long, or get their hot food first and then have to wait for beverages while their entrees get cold. He's a man with a mission: make it better.

Parents want to know one basic fact about dining at college: are our kids eating? The answer is, resoundingly, yes. Take this simple fact: the single most popular item served at Haverford is fried chicken tenders. At a single meal, Haverford students go through 50-60 cases, around 600 pounds, of this food. Comfort foods, teenage style, are the most popular items on the menu: adults love meat loaf and mashed potatoes; the students give that stuff thumbs down. They want hamburgers, hot dogs, French fries, anything chocolate, and, yes, those fried chicken tenders. Entrees that contain any kind of meat or chicken in a sauce are regarded with great suspicion—the "mystery meat" that we parents recall so well from our college days.

Want to know exactly what your child is (or isn't) eating? Menus may be found at the Haverford website, www.haverford.edu, click on administration, then Dining Services, then menus 2001-2002. Any questions? Contact John Francone, jfrancon@haverford.edu. Want to share a favorite family menu? Send it to him and he might serve it to everybody! Is your child a big complainer? Send your child to see John Francone. Better yet, tell your son or daughter to join the Food Committee, because Dining Services wants student input so they can make improvements. Not enough seasoning? There's a serve-yourself spice rack. Not vegetarian enough for you? There are now dishes specified as "vegetarian with no dairy products." More chicken tenders? The line forms to the right.

"Wish I'd Known That!"

Tips to make your Haverford experience easier.

"I didn't realize that the Parents' Handbook sent by the school at the start of freshman year was going to be my one and only copy . . . and I threw it away!"

Parents, hold on to your handbooks! If you've made this parent's same mistake, you can get a replacement copy by contacting Eileen Haupt, Associate Director of The Parents Fund at: ehaupt@haverford.edu.

"We live in California and would have loved knowing in advance that there are local storage facilities available off-campus to store everything our daughter needs, instead of worrying how to get it back and forth, or trying to find room in the limited on-campus space available."

Robin Doan, Director of Housing, can send your student a list of local storage facilities that will provide rental space over the summer for your child's possessions. She can be reached at: rdoan@haverford.edu.

"It would be wonderful to get to know more about the school when we visit, especially what the students are like, how they think, and how they react to various issues. We just don't have a lot of time to talk to everyone."

A great way to get to know how Haverford thinks and responds to issues at the College and in the world-at-large is to make a point of checking the Comment Board when you're visiting the Whitehead Campus Center. It's a bulletin board located next to the bookstore and reading it is the quickest way to get a feel for Haverford, its students, and their concerns.



A Newsletter by Haverford Parents for Haverford Families

370 Lancaster Avenue | Haverford, PA 19041-1392

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Haverford, Pa.
Permit No. 34