

Founders Green

Vol. 6 No. 1

January 2007

A Newsletter by Haverford Parents for Haverford Families

IN THIS ISSUE:

What to Watch For

What's Cooking at the DC?

A Meeting with Helene Pollock

Haverford's Vocal Majority

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SAVE THE DATE: COMMENCEMENT

MAY 20, 2007

Have you made your hotel reservations yet? For a listing of nearby hotels, visit the "For Parents" section of the web site.

WRITERS WANTED:

Founders Green newsletter needs contributors. If you are interested in writing for this publication, contact Violet Brown: vbrown@haverford.edu

What to Watch For

by Tom Tritton, President of Haverford College

The fade of 2006 and accompanying arrival of 2007 seem to provoke, at least among us pedantic types, a certain tendency to predictions. The genre is fraught with the obvious peril that one's projections always can be checked for accuracy when the future ultimately arrives. "So it goes," grants Kurt Vonnegut in *Slaughterhouse Five* whenever he needs to concede one point or transition to another. So with that wisdom in mind, I offer three categories of 2007 predictions to Haverford parents, upon whom I will rely for corrections, rebuttals, additions, and witty rejoinders:



Predictions for the College:

- A new president of the College will land, full of vim and gusto, and be immediately embraced by this energetic community.
- Five new faculty members will arrive—in Political Science, Religion, Mathematics, Spanish, and Economics. Harder to predict exactly what their scholarly emphases will be, but surely they too will be full of the same Haverford vim and gusto.
- A plan will emerge to add a couple of dozen new faculty members during the next decade or two. Their arrival will change Haverford in a myriad of predictable and unpredictable ways, almost all of which will be for the good.
- The outlines—only dimly perceived now—of new ways to imagine and act on our Quaker heritage will excite all 'Fords about this most

distinctive dimension of our commonweal.

Predictions for Higher Education:

- The proposal (from the U.S. Department of Education's Commission on the Future of Higher Education) to create a national database of student records will move ahead, despite genuine concerns about confidentiality, privacy, and usefulness.
- The trend toward federalizing the accreditation system will lose steam because it is an abjectly bad idea.

- Accessibility to a college education will be enhanced through scholarships for those who lack the advantages of money and position.

Predictions for the World in General:

- There will be peace Iraq. It has to come someday, so why not 2007?
- And while we're at it, why settle for less than a truly peaceful world in all those shaky places that dominate our nightly newsfeeds: Sudan, Afghanistan, Somalia, Israel/Palestine, India/Pakistan, and the countless other locales where strife is the order of the day.
- We will find the wherewithal to build educational infrastructure at all levels throughout the world. If you believe, as I do, that ignorance and prejudice are the root causes of most human problems, then we do all humanity a favor by increasing educational possibility for each and every one of us.
- Your sons and daughters will be part of bringing peace and education throughout the world. What could be better?

Shaking It Up and Keeping It Fresh

By Joan G. Levenson, P'09

If Haverford's "Go Boards" are any indication, John Francone, director of the college's dining services, is a very popular man. The Go Boards are the online bulletin boards where students find out what's happening on campus, and Francone says he averages 10,000 "hits," or views, a semester. Clearly, students are interested in what's cooking at Haverford's Dining Center, known as the "DC."

Francone's job is no easy task, given that students' tastes, likes and dislikes, and concepts of comfort foods vary dramatically. He takes into consideration their cultural backgrounds, the parts of the world they come from, the types of food to which they have been exposed, and their levels of interest in healthy eating. He also faces the challenge of dealing with students who have food allergies or are vegetarians or vegans. So, while some students would be happy with hamburgers, chicken tenders, tacos, and pizza every night—the foods that are the biggest hits at Haverford—other students make it their mission to eschew those choices.

To try to satisfy as many people as possible, Francone offers daily lunch and dinner specials in addition to the regular six-week menu cycle. The chef special might be a Jamaican-, Ethiopian-, or Asian-style meal created by a cook with a background in that cuisine. The DC also has special theme nights, such as "Breakfast at Dinner," where items such as made-to-order omelets, bacon, sausages, waffles, and pancakes are offered, and "Pastabilities," where students choose a type of pasta, sauce, vegetable, and/or meat and watch it cooked all together in front of them. Other innovations include "Special Sundaes" on Sunday nights, complete with Ben and Jerry's ice cream, toppings, and birch beer; a tailgate party featuring chicken wings, sausages, and nachos after the first men's basketball game of the season; and a slightly decadent, chocolate fondue.

While Francone is the one primarily responsible for dreaming up the variety of specials offered by the DC, the regular menu is designed by Haverford and Bryn Mawr food committees, made up of students, and menu production committees, made up of cooks and others who develop the recipes. The committees, Francone, and dietician Mimi Murray meet weekly to discuss whether a particular food is economically feasible, suitable for mass production, and appropriate nutritionally. The final decision is made by the Haverford Dining Services Team, which includes Francone, students, cooks, and other staff members. Throughout the process, the committees are open to receive suggestions. For example, one student recently provided a vegan chocolate chip recipe that was so well received it regularly appears on the menu. "I am always willing to use student/family recipes when I can," Francone says.

Regardless of how the various offerings make their way onto the menu, Francone tries them all. "I have to know what it tastes like. Some days I eat an entirely vegan meal, other days a vegetarian meal. Right now, I am eating a turkey sandwich for breakfast because I need the protein," he says.

The most common complaints from students are that their favorite cereal or a preferred salad dressing is not always available and that occasionally the

quality of certain foods does not meet expectations, Francone says.

But perhaps the biggest challenge for Francone and his staff is dealing with the growing number of students who have allergies to nuts and intolerances to gluten and dairy products. Francone's goal is to offer enough appetizing options so these students never feel left out or struggle to find enough to eat. He gets such recipes from the Food Allergy and Anaphylaxis Network, Murray, peer institutions, and the Internet. Then there are the students who require special diets temporarily. One young woman who is a runner fractured her pelvis and requested more omega-3 fatty acids in her diet. Francone made sure to keep a stash of tuna for her in the kitchen. Another student broke his jaw and was restricted to a liquid diet. Francone made certain that all of the student's nutritional needs were met through liquid foods. In fact, according to Francone, this student actually gained some weight on the diet.

As with many endeavors, trial and error plays a role in what is offered—and what is not. A while back, Francone tried a bean and grain bar, designed to appeal to vegetarians and vegans. It never took off. "We ended up wasting more food than was eaten, so we stopped and have now incorporated it in the menu, instead of in a bar alone." Francone also has experimented with offering comfort foods at every dinner. But that was not as successful as he thought it might be. Although the students like comfort foods, they are learning that such foods are not always the healthiest choice, he says. Uneaten food is reheated once, given to shelters, or thrown out. Francone says he is working with environmental groups on campus to try to set up a composting facility for vegetables.

Francone, who has been the dining services director for the past 18-1/2 years, aims to keep the menu varied, but says he is hampered by the DC's physical layout. He points out that the facility was built in the 1960s to accommodate roughly 600 men who then attended Haverford. Now, however, 925 men and women are on the full meal plan and about 100 others are on a partial plan. Ideally, Francone would like to revamp the DC to create an eatery in the style of a food court, with different offerings at each station. He laments that the way the DC is structured now, his vision cannot be realized.

But there have been some big changes on campus this year. The Coop—the small café where students may buy food in the Whitehead Campus Center—has undergone an extensive makeover. It now has a coffee bar that offers, in addition to regular coffee, cappuccinos, lattes, and espresso drinks—all made with fair-trade coffee. And there is a salad bar and a frozen food section, which includes vegan meals students can pop into the Coop's microwave. In addition, the Coop has increased the seating area and is a good place for students to meet with professors for coffee and conversation.

In Francone, Haverford students have a passionate director of dining services. His goal is to make dining at the DC an inviting experience. To that end, he is always shaking it up and keeping it fresh.



Lunch in the DC.

A Meeting with... Helene Pollock

Assistant to the President

By Pamela Brownstein, P'10

Helene Pollock's responsibilities include working with the president regarding the Quaker-related elements of the College. A Quaker, she is active in many Quaker concerns. She earned a bachelor's degree from Beloit College and master's degrees from Union Theological Seminary and the University of Pennsylvania. She has been in her current position for 15 years. Prior to working at Haverford, she served as an urban pastor and social worker.

Founders Green: What are some of the most noticeable Quaker influences at Haverford?

Helene Pollock: One very important behavior is respect for others. We have an honor code that emphasizes respect for others and openness to others. Another set of behaviors has to do with respectful dealing with conflicts, supporting each other in coming to terms with the things about other people that bother us or threaten us, which at times can be painful. A Quaker quality within the honor code, within the values of trust, concern, and respect, is the unfailing belief and certainty that we all are people of value. Thus, I refuse to get to the point where I am so angry at the other person that I want them to go away or I feel they have no right to be here. We don't give up on a person's humanity or their basic claim to the same things we care about. One famous story was when Rufus Jones, a very noted figure in Haverford's history and in the history of Quakers, went to try to visit Hitler with two other Quaker leaders because he believed he could convince the Nazis to allow Jews to leave Germany. Jones got as far as a top Gestapo leader, and he did have some success in promoting this idea (although subsequent events nullified their small project). That's an example of the optimism about no person being beyond having a basic humanity.

FG: What are some of the least noticeable Quaker influences at Haverford?

HP: The use of consensus is something that we try to teach the students, and they maintain that tradition as they run the honor code and student government. There is a real effort for each person to think through his or her position and for the leader or leaders to help the group not merely to compromise, as one would do in the routine, non-Haverford version of consensus, but to find a place that is beyond any one position. If you are really practicing what we call "consensus" here, you are so open to the possibility of new truth coming that you would really hear deeply a voice coming from left field. Some of that is rooted in the Quaker optimism about each person being of value. Very few students have any awareness that this is rooted in Quakerism. They just think it's Haverford.

FG: How have Quaker influences changed in recent decades?

HP: In the middle 1960s, Haverford ceased to have a required religious service or exercise. It wouldn't make sense in this day and age to talk about bringing back any kind of a religious requirement. But those of us who have a strong spiritual base want students to see religious practice as an option that is operative in the Haverford of today. It's tricky because some young people are completely opposed to spirituality and we respect that. Some people have specific spiritual practices that they don't want to share with others and that they certainly don't want to have impinged upon.

At times, we Quakers are so respectful of individual preferences that we err in the direction of not modeling because we don't want to offend. And then I'll hear young people saying, "So, hey, you adults, do you ever think about these things? We run around like mad and we get exhausted. How do we renew ourselves? How do we connect with a deeper source of insight? How do we breathe deeply?"

We are also trying to address the diminishment of moral, ethical, and spiritual foundations. That diminishment is going on in this country and in this culture in



Haverford Friends Meeting House.

a very rapid and frightening way, so that parents struggle to give their children an ethical foundation, religious or not. The inherent openness of Quakerism is a good starting point here at Haverford.

FG: Haverford has a working group devoted to finding contemporary ways of expressing the college's Quaker elements. What are some ways of doing so?

HP: The work of this group, the Advisory Committee of the Corporation, is to monitor and come up with new ideas regarding the college's distinctive Quaker elements. Contemporary ways of expressing Quakerism would include more events like Rufus Jones Day, a successful student-led activity this past semester. I am very interested in supporting students' ideas about expressing and exploring their spirituality. Many students are interested in different forms of meditation. Physical expression of one's body energy, such as through yoga and tai chi, is very popular. Supporting that kind of work when students want to do it is very much in keeping with the college's Quaker traditions. Everything we do to support the honor code and student government is part of the college's distinctive traditions. Also important is support for all the religious groups on campus—Hillel, the Christian Fellowship, the Muslim student group, the Quaker group, and the individual students who attend local congregations. So is support for all the student clubs, including groups like Amnesty International, and volunteer service.

FG: Haverford is embarking on a Quaker-related section on its Web site. What questions will be addressed?

HP: Who are Quakers? Is there a Quaker philosophy of education? What is Haverford's Quaker history? How has this college interacted with the Religious Society of Friends in the past and how does it interact now? How does the honor code work and where does the spirit of the honor code come from?

FG: Is a Quaker background a factor in admissions or hiring?

HP: Yes and no. Haverford has an ethos of trust, concern and respect, equality, openness, and seeking, and people from any background who resonate well with that ethos are given consideration, whether it's jobs or admission to the College. We don't hire or admit people solely on the basis of their religious beliefs, but in some situations we recognize that a person's Quaker experience can be a plus for the College.

FG: What is the percentage of Quaker students and percentage of faculty and staff?

HP: It's about 6 percent Quaker students. Among the faculty, I think it is about 5 percent. It's much less among the staff.

FG: Do you have any other comments you would like to add?

HP: It is wonderful for me to talk about something that is so important to me. Just because religion can be hard to talk about—because of concerns about proselytizing—doesn't mean we don't try.

Haverford's Vocal Majority

By Richard Curtis, Past Parent '04

The halls are alive with the sound of music. The next time you visit Haverford pause and listen. Presently, you will detect the sound of group vocalizing. Follow your ears to the source until you encounter an assemblage of students clustered in a semicircle singing joyously, passionately, bodies swaying rhythmically and hands punctuating the air to keep the beat. The rhythms are robust and even primitive, the harmonies lilting, the arrangements original.

But here's the odd thing: no strings, brass, winds, piano, or drums are visible. Yet the singers are accompanied by the percussive sounds of snares, traps, tympani, bongos, tambourines, maracas, castanets, clappers, and cowbells as well as some not commonly found in the orchestral repertoire—"pft-pft," "bmm-bmm," "tst-tst," and "chish-chish." After looking in vain for the source of these unearthly noises, you realize to your astonishment that they are coming out of the singers' mouths.

Welcome to the world of Haverford *a cappella*.

More than a dozen groups perform at Haverford as well as at Bryn Mawr—some all-male, some all-female, some co-ed. Perhaps you will see the 'Ford S-Chords. Or the Humtones, Oxford Blues, Outskirts, Night Owls, Extreme Keys, Looney Tunes, 2Fish, Chaverim, or four or five other organized (sometimes) groups. Or it may be just a pickup squad jamming and exploring its vocal identity.

Music suffuses Bi-Co school life. Aside from courses offered in the curricula, many programs are administered by the schools' music departments, such as the Haverford-Bryn Mawr Orchestra, the 100-voice Chorale, the Chamber Singers, the Women's Ensemble, and a musical theatre group called Broadway South. A *cappella* groups, however, are student-run (though a portion of their budgets is underwritten by school funds).

But *a cappella* is more than just another campus activity; it's a complete subculture. Each group has a unique repertoire ranging from pop to rock to oldies. Each has a characteristic singing style and its own distinctive uniform or costume—the 'Ford S-Chords sport white overalls and bare feet, the Humtones ties and white shirts tucked into jeans. Musical numbers are inter-



'Ford S-Chords performing during Family Weekend.

persed with skits whose quality ranges from slick to silly. Some groups achieve cult status, boasting claques of frenzied fans raucously cheering their favorites. "We are the elite," says one student. "We're like rock stars or varsity football players." A number of groups produce CDs; some barnstorm other colleges and high schools.

Rivalry is good-natured but intense, and the competition is hot. Recruitment of freshmen is a serious pursuit. During Customs Week (freshmen orientation), the groups concertize to attract prospective members, and alumni return to impress students with the hallowed traditions of the singing

groups they are considering joining. It's a big deal to be chosen, and induction ceremonies can be Masonic in their solemnity.

On any given weekend you can probably hear a performance by one group or another, frequently in tandem with one from another school. Family Weekend festivities are climaxed by a Saturday night choral and *a cappella* concert.

This explosion of *a cappella* on the two campuses parallels the spread of the phenomenon nationwide. From its humble origins in barbershop quartets and glee clubs, unaccompanied ensemble singing spread steadily in the past century to the point where there are more than 1,000 college groups nationwide, according to the Contemporary A Cappella Society. To get a sense of the extent of the phenomenon, you only have to visit the Web site of CASA, which hosts conferences, presents recording awards, and features a radio show, blogs, reviews, sketches of featured groups, news of upcoming concerts, and even an *a cappella* comic strip. In 1996, another organization, Varsity Vocals, launched the International Championship of Collegiate A Cappella, a tournament culminating in finals held in New York's Avery Fisher Hall, Alice Tully Hall, and Town Hall.

Of course, Haverford's singing groups don't necessarily cherish such lofty goals. For most *a cappellistas*, it's a great opportunity to belong to a team, star in an occasional solo, and fulfill the universal human urge to sing.

For detailed descriptions of Haverford *a cappella* and other singing groups, visit www.haverford.edu/deans/SAO/arts.html



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370 Lancaster Avenue | Haverford, PA 19041-1392

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U.S. POSTAGE
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PHILADELPHIA, PA
PERMIT NO. 5521