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THE SPARK

Kevin Clifton: the new Vice-President

Nov 3, 79

Kenny Goldstein

Senior Kevin Clifton has become, in a sense, the Gerald Ford of S.G.A. Kevin was recently appointed, by an executive committee of the S.G.A. to fill the vacated Vice President position. That position is usually voted in the spring by a majority of the students, but since in this case a time-saving method of selection was used, few members of the College Community have had a chance to know Kevin's ideas and goals for Connecticut College.

Kevin came to Conn. at the beginning of his Junior year from Indiana University. He considers this previous experience to be an asset, claiming, "I thought I could bring a new perspective to student government."

Kevin appears very intent on bringing positive change. He stresses the importance of trying out new things and is critical of hesitancy to change, particularly among the students. "I really think changes can and should be made," he says, "even if there is some risk involved. The administration wants to hear what we have to say but sometimes we come across as wishy-washy." He points to recent S.G.A. scuffles over changes in the dorm lottery system as evidence of student reluctance. The newly adopted system gives special preference to those students who have spent two consecutive years in the complex, Larrabee, or Lazarus. Kevin states that "At first people were hesitant, afraid of changing. Finally it was realized that (the new system) would be fairest."

Kevin cites another instance of student resistance

to change in the implementation of the new housefellow selection process. He commends Dean Johnson for taking action when faults with the old system became clear.

"Still," Kevin says, "a lot of people didn't think it should have been changed so close to this year's selection... Some people felt their toes were being stepped on. Theoretically the new selection process will be a much more objective system. Whether or not it works we'll wait to see next year." It is clear that Kevin approves of such decisive action to implement change.

Although Kevin Clifton seems to like the way the administration and trustees have handled changes in the past, he warns that "things are going to be changing in the next ten years. The administration is going to have to realize that not as many people will be going to college in the coming years. Thus, if we are going to keep up our standards we may have to cut certain departments and concentrate on others. It's something

that student government should find out about. Just what are the administration's aims?"

I asked Kevin about his own ideas for change and was impressed by his answer. As Vice-President, one of Kevin's important duties is as chairman of the Finance Committee, which appropriates money for various student activities. He describes one reform he hopes to bring: "We're going to look into how clubs have spent their money. Before we weren't keeping close enough track. If the recipients know that we're checking up on them they'll be more careful."

In sum, Kevin Clifton is clearly worthy of his office. Although election by the vote of the student body is still the only really fair and proper way to fill a Vice-presidential post, it appears the S.G.A. acted swiftly and responsibly in choosing Kevin. His stated preference for positive innovations is surely what S.G.A. needs to make it a better functioning representative of the students.



Editorial:

housefellows

Perhaps the best way to describe the former selection process is to compare it to rush week for the favorite fraternity/sorority at a typical Southern school. Each March Marg Watson and her twenty housefellows get together and decide who will or will not receive the coveted position, with all its benefits, for the next year. Complaints have always been lodged, generally by those who have not been chosen, that the system is elitist, self-perpetuating, and is to a large degree less than objective. Few will totally disagree with these charges. It is not uncommon during the first and the beginning of the second semester to see many members of the junior class modifying their behavior to create favorable impressions.

Yet this year a large step has been taken to change the selection process, and hopefully encourage more objective choices for those who must run the dormitories. Possibly due to some of the horrendous choices made in the past, Dean Watson and her housefellows have been replaced from making the final decisions, and only give their opinions on applicants. With their advice, a nine-person committee, chaired by Dean Watson, will make the final decisions. This committee includes a good mix of students, faculty, and administration. It includes Deans King, Watson, and Johnson, Reverend David Robb, Psychologist Laura Hesslein, SGA President Janice Mayer, JB Chairman Joel Mishkin, and housefellows Barry Gold and Trish Cutler.

Though this new system will of course need improvement and revision, it represents a much needed step towards a fairer selection process. The deans are still included, a variety of students have been added, and two important faculty members have been included. We commend this new system, and hope that it makes for good choices for next year.

However, THE SPARK feels that the addition of the JB Chairman and the SGA President to the committee might have some negative results. This is not to say that these people are not capable of making responsible choices; they undoubtedly are. Yet, since they are juniors, they will be here next year with their decisions, and there are bound to be students who did not make the cut who will have a grudge against the committee, and manifest it in Janice and Joel. It is not fair for their own sakes to place students in such a difficult position. And what type of precedent is being set for the following years? If a junior SGA President wishes to run for the position next year, the system must again be modified. Restricting the committee to only seniors would alleviate this, but what if these positions are not held by seniors? We hope that only minor problems are incurred this year, and that these can be readily worked out.

D. F. B.

THE SPARK

THE SPARK

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the distant Bob Landau
a few others here
and there

THE SPARK is a non-profit organization, dedicated to presenting student opinion on any and every issue relevant to the students here at Connecticut College. Offices are located in the Chapel Basement.

THE SPARK welcomes and encourages letters from its readers on any subject or article from this journal. Letters should be sent to:
THE SPARK
Box 544
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06320

THE SPARK welcomes any creative writing that students or faculty wish to offer to the College Community.

All editorials by THE SPARK staff.

Letters

Dear Editor:

The publication of Mark Spina's article on the Gay Students Group (December 8) deserves applause and congratulations to the author, THE SPARK, the college, and mostly, to the now liberated brave group of students and non-students who comprise the group. It is indeed difficult for most gay people to come out, given the number of ways and times it needs to be done. Each successive time, though, it gets easier, and eventually gets to be downright enjoyable because of the boost it gives your self-esteem. A gay students group that provides support and encouragement eases the way. A similar group at Syracuse University did so for me, and I intend to assist the Connecticut College Gay Community to provide the same opportunity to as many people as can find that first, necessary courage from within to come to a meeting and find out just how good it can feel to be gay.

David Kolch

Dear Editor:

Thank you, Mark Spina, for your courageous article written on behalf of the Connecticut College Gay Community.

M.E.

Dear Editor:

Thanks must go both to your newspaper and to Mark Spina for his article on the Gay Students' Group. We have since renamed ourselves the Connecticut College Gay Community. "Community" was chosen to convey a warm, friendly, social

atmosphere. I am very proud to know Mark; it took a great amount of courage for him to publicly announce on a campus such as this that he is gay. Because Conn. is such a close-knit campus many of us hide our gayness to protect ourselves from the narrow-minded. Mark told me that he wished he had written the article his first year here because he received nothing but positive reactions everywhere on campus.

... I am very disappointed -disappointed at a student body with probably two-hundred gay persons who are staying away from our meetings for reasons beyond my imagination. We are a group with variety- not one of us fits the stereotype so far; it is not a prerequisite- each of us is at a different stage of coming out of the closet. Some of us likemyself are completely closeted except for a few close friends. We do have one thing in common; we are honest with ourselves about our gayness... Since I have only my big toe out of the closet, I must sign just my first name...

Michael

THE SPARK wholly endorses the Gay Community, and is sorry that it has taken until 1978-79 for such a group to be formed. We have, since the article, lost one major advertiser, yet do not miss such a close-minded sponsor. The positive response we have received has been overwhelming, and we are proud to be the publication on this campus to first support gay, as well as all persons' rights.

THE SPARK

Jake Green

Dave Rosenberg

I met Jake Green about two years ago at a Coffee-spoon Poetry reading. A couple years ago on this campus these readings occurred about once a month; anybody could bring their recent work, read it to a captive audience, and get criticism. Back then I wrote real crappy poetry that I was naive enough to think was good. Thinking back on it I'm embarrassed to recall myself proudly reading those silly verses. People were nice enough to make offbeat, complimentary comments about what was obviously terrible. It was the kid that read before me that caught everybody's attention. Understanding him was a problem; maybe it was his heavy Boston accent, or maybe it was his braces, but probably it was a bad case of nerves that hindered his reading. He prefaced himself by saying, "This is the first poem I ever wrote, I wrote it last night on the train back from Boston."

"This is going to blow," I thought to myself. I was just as wrong about this as I had been about my own poem. It was a good poem, despite the odd way in which he read it. A computer could have read it and everyone would have known that the author had a wealth of talent. The poem was typically cheerful Jake, it was about a deformed kid waiting for a bus. Doesn't sound like much of a subject for a poem, but Jake has this amazing way of making words bite the reader. He has a great knack for always picking the perfect word. But this ain't the New York Times Book Review, so I'll try to drift back to what I was thinking about. After he finished the first poem he read another one. He started by saying, "This is the second poem I ever wrote, I wrote it on the same train."

Continued on page 6

Environmental model

Josh Lyons

Our country, along with the rest of the world, is facing an environmental crisis. In the coming months we will directly feel the effects of the abusive way in which we exploit our environment. We will feel the "crunch" at school, as well as in our private lives. The "energy crunch" will not only hit our wallets, but will also strike viciously at our natural resources, environment, homes, and personal health. Now is the time to begin to conserve. If we realize the chaos that the future holds for us and begin to conserve today, then our lives will be that much easier when we really are forced to conserve and find alternative energy sources.

It will not be an easy task for us to begin to save our environment. It will mean added work, high initial monetary investment, and the personal sacrifices necessary to change our present frivolous lifestyles. The most inexpensive, simplest, and important way to conserve is to recycle. As waste builds up we need to find

it takes is to remember to use energy more scrupulously. Use less electricity whenever possible, and turn off lights. Cut down on water use, especially hot water, which must use energy to be heated. Except for the elderly or ill, there is no harm in keeping a thermostat at 60°-65° F. Another important way to reduce energy consumption is to drive more economically built cars, to car pool, and to drive only when necessary. When it is possible to walk or ride a bicycle, one should take advantage of these options. Besides being cheap, they are more fun, and more healthy

The most important steps toward conservation which the College Community must take are major ones. We should begin to use alternate forms of energy on this campus and become a leader in the field of conservation. A few years ago Connecticut College was given a grant by the Conservation and Research Foundation to become an "environmental model". Have we become this model? It is time to tap the resources of our community and save those of our environment.

the years to come. Since we have already passed up one good opportunity to convert to renewable energy, we should keep an eagle eye on future ones and not let them go by.

One type of such energy is wind power. New London, and the College in particular is in an area which has much wind. Why not tap this source of energy? If we were to build three windmills and put them on selected roofs around campus, we may be able to produce enough electricity to support much of the electrical needs of the College. Far-fetched? In New York City there is a building which has a windmill on its roof. This windmill produces enough electricity that Con-Edison is forced to purchase some from the owners of the windmill. By using windmills or photovoltaic cells (which are constantly being improved), we would not have to purchase it from Millstone, and thus we would be boycotting nuclear power.

Converting to renewable sources of energy may not even be that expensive for us. I would like to believe that we have faculty and students here who could design solar panels and windmill generators. Once these systems have been designed, we have 1600 potential free laborers to build them. The only financial investment for the College would be the materials.

With a community effort, conservation and a conversion to such measures could be achieved. This conversion could be relatively inexpensive and very efficient. It is time that Connecticut College decides to take a step to protect the future. This step should be initiated from the academic world, so why not from here? Besides saving money on fuel bills and giving the College recognition and a reputation of which it can be proud, we would be saving our environment and our lives. The environmental benefits which would lead us to a cleaner environment and to a better attitude towards our fellow human beings are there for the taking. Let's take them now.

"We should begin to use alternate forms of energy on this campus and become a leader in the field of conservation."

more and more ways to dispose of it. Our alternatives for the disposal of solid waste are limited. Burning it poisons the atmosphere, landfills destroy the soil, and ocean dumping destroys what is, perhaps, our most important natural resource, the oceans. By recycling, the natural resources used in the production of recyclable goods will not be over-tapped, and it will alleviate much of our solid waste disposal problems.

Another simple way to conserve is to cut down on our energy consumption. The amount of energy consumed can be easily reduced. All

Our community should begin to look towards renewable energy sources. The initial costs may be high, but the money saved in the long run should be substantial. If the school became an "environmental model", perhaps grants would come to us more easily. We would be taking a definite step toward saving the future. We would become nationally recognized as a leader of the conservation revolution.

Our first opportunity has been passed up. If the roof of the skating rink had been equipped with solar panels, we would have saved a great deal of money in

Abortion

Allie Lyons

On January 22, 1973, the United States Supreme Court issued a landmark ruling overturning the constitutionality of the criminal abortion laws of Georgia and Texas. In its decision, the Court left it up to the individual states to conform to the new ruling. Ever since, more and more pregnant women have chosen to have abortions. Last year more than one million abortions were performed in the United States, and some three-hundred thousand of them were on women under the age of twenty.

In spite of society's increasing acceptance of abortions, the abortion procedure still remains a mystery to many men and women. Here at Connecticut College it seems that many students are unaware that a hospital abortion can be arranged through the infirmary, and many of those who do know about abortions prefer to go elsewhere. I talked to the people at the infirmary to find out exactly what the procedure is for an abortion. The following is a general description of the infirmary's procedure for abortion cases.

Many women find that they have mixed feelings and questions of "morality" when trying to decide whether or not to have an abortion. The first thing that the infirmary staff does is to make sure that the pregnant woman wants to have an abortion. If the woman decides to have the abortion, the pregnancy is verified with a urine test. If the result of the test is positive the woman then goes to the school gynecologist, Dr. Murphy, to discuss the procedure. Dr. Murphy or his assistant Mrs. Sullivan will then call one of three doctors at Norwich Hospital who have agreed to perform all of the abortions that the infirmary handles.

Norwich Hospital is used because Lawrence and Memorial Hospitals in New London do not perform abortions. When the state of Connecticut re-wrote its abortion laws after the 1973 Supreme Court ruling it left it up to the discretion of each individual state hospital. Norwich Hospital voted to perform abortions, and Lawrence and Memorial voted against handling them.

The woman will then go to the Norwich gynecologist to have an evaluation and to make an appointment for the actual abortion. The policy of the Norwich gynecologist is that the abortion be performed with no less than a six-week pregnancy.

Before the day of the abortion the infirmary will do all of the preliminary work, such as a blood test and a general physical.

On the day of the abortion the woman will arrive early in the morning at Norwich Hospital. She must stay at the hospital a minimum of one hour after the abortion is performed to rest, and to have her vital statistics checked intermittently.

Later, she will return to the Connecticut College infirmary with full instructions concerning her case. She can then leave for the rest of the day, but she is advised to return later and spend the night there. Complications generally occur within 24 hours after the abortion, and the staff of the infirmary feels that the woman should have the all-night nurse present in case any problems should arise.

The entire cost of the abortion is \$225.00- \$200 for the hospital abortion and \$25 for the office visit to the Norwich gynecologist. For women who have student insurance, \$100 for the entire fee is covered by the policy. Of course, all aspects of the abortion procedure are kept confidential by the infirmary..

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jake green cont'd

Srambled & homefries

Last night Jake and I went out for a few drinks on Bank Street as we often do. We talked. We didn't talk about writing. We never do any more. I guess it's because I don't write much these days, and it's silly to babble about stuff you don't have a very good hold on. We talked about the usual: sports, we decided that the Yanks better not get Rod Carew and that the Celtics gave Jo Jo away. We shot a few games of pool, I scratched on the eight ball twice. We drank some brews: Bush. Good times. Good friends. Maybe we were drinking the wrong beer. What the hell, the mountains ain't such a bad place for a couple of hours. When the bar closed we climbed back down and headed out the door. We walked down the street noticing the store fronts, the drunken sleeze bags, the whores in overcoats in front of the Hygenic; it was the usual except for the icy wind that knifed through our coats. Jake was wearing a light coat. He was freezing I guess that's why he bolted across the street. The Cadillac didn't see him until the last instant. The tires screeched, and the bumper nudged Jake, who twisted around and fell to the pavement. He didn't break nothing, he just hurt real bad.

THE SPARK also mourns the loss of long-time friend and great writer Jake Green, who left Connecticut College several weeks ago..

Don Goldberg



Dave Rosenberg

Man at counter: Nine hundred and twelve and their shipping them back. I can't get a job and they're spending money to ship them back from Guyana.

Waitress: What do you want?

Man: I want to know where my son is. He's in a commune you know. I want to know why 912 people kill themselves.

Waitress: You going to order?

Man: I want to know why you don't give a fuck about them people in Jonesville?

Waitress: Watch your language, you'r in a diner.

Man: Oh, cook your fucking eggs.

Waitress: Will that be scrambled?

Man: My kid's in a commune in Tennessee. If he dies I'll have to pay to send him back. You can bet the government ain't going to pay. They only pay for stinking Africans after they're dead.

Waitress: Better make that a coffee too.

Man: What the hell are you talking about? My kid's in Tennessee in a God damn commune. 912 bodies are rotting in Guyana because a one of them. All you fucking care about is your fucking eggs.

Waitress: I told you about your language, there's other customers in here. (pause) Here's your coffee.

Man: I don't even know why my kid's down there. What did I ever do to him? They send me up to the farm and he joins up with one of them communes. Then 912 a them kill themselves in Jonesville. If it can happen there, it can happen in Tennessee. (he turns around) All them people kill themselves and all she cares about is her fucking eggs. Cook your fucking eggs, see what I care.

Waitress: I warned you, once more and your out a here.

Other Waitress: Should I go next door? (first waitress nods. Second waitress leaves)

Waitress: Here's your eggs. Now behave yourself, we got other customers you know.

Man: You got a son in a commune? You must got a kid. You got a daughter? Come on you got a have one or the other. How would you like it if your daughter was in a commune. You'd care about more then your fucking eggs.

Waitress: Watch it. You don't want to spend the night in the drunk tank, do you? (the second waitress re-enters, followed by two large men. The older man slips into the seat next to the man)

Man: I ain't going there and I ain't going back to the farm neither. (turns to the large man) You know about them 912 dead people in Guyana?

Large Man: (calmly) Sure.

Man: It ain't the dead ones I'm worried about; its the live ones. My son's in one a them communes. Down in Tennessee. They spend all that money to get the stinking dead ones out a Africa, but what do they do for the live ones here. Nothing!

Waitress: Eat you eggs.

Large Man: How old's your kid?

Man: 23. I'm 51. They throw me in the farm and he joins one a them cults. (younger large man moves behind the speaker, and puts his hands on the man's shoulders) He ain't such a bad son. I ain't such a bad father, neither. Now he's down in Tennessee in one a them communes.

Large Man: Did you serve?

Man: Sure did. "45 in the big war.

Large Man: Fight?

Man: Yep. Saw a lot a blood. Never saw 912 people kill themselves.

Large Man: Why don't you go home and get some rest. (the man stands up and stares ahead)

Waitress: Bet you wind up back on the farm.

Man: I ain't never going back there.

Waitress: Bet you a breakfast.

Man: Cook your fucking eggs. (he exits)

Waitress: They'll be on me.

Large Man: Shut up. That's stupid.

Waitress: I'll give him eggs.■

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Garden crown

John Ayers

Morning sun
fills the garden crown
with dazzling light;
gray sharp monuments
to what will be,
year after year;
the common bright green hair
in patches on the rocky skull
that never grows more bald;
rare gem, the violets,
pass so soon
& different every year.

Musky garden smell
rises in my warmth,
an old familiar
of summer days in sweltered sun,
warm dressed up evenings, special nights,
cool naked mornings, lying close,
on a bed of leaves.

In the cruelest month, the old desires mix
with newly germinated memories,
a cool spring rain that stirs
dull roots of painful
long unrealized needs.
The dull plant lifts its weary head
to the warm returning sun,
to one more cycle, one more season,
one more chance to bear
new fruit in a new year.■

AAP

Poetry Prize

This year's contest for the annual "Charles B. Palmer Poetry Award at Connecticut College", featuring a prize of \$100 offered by the Academy of American Poets for the best poem or group of poems by a student, is now open. Manuscripts are being accepted in the English Department, and the winner will be announce in the spring.

The Academy of American Poets University and College Poetry Prizes Program was established in 1955 with ten participating colleges. Made possible by special gifts to the Academy, the Program was conceived to stimulate interest in, and to help support the writing of fine poetry among college and university students. Today 88 colleges and universities throughout the country take part in the program. Beginning its 45th year, the AAP is proud of the program's record. No college prize, once established, has ever been discontinued.

Although the contests are judged locally, they partake of national prestige. Over the years, such poets as Sylvia Plath, Gregory Orr, Louise Glück, Tess Gallagher and Stan Rice have received AAP College Prizes before going on to attain national reputation.

Each contest is sponsored for a five year term. The Prizes are supported by donors particularly interested in sponsoring colleges, by the colleges themselves, or by anonymous gifts made through the Academy. This is the second year for the AAP contest at Connecticut College..

Buried life

John Ayers

Cold and overcast;
a heavy-laden, dead still winter day.

For weeks she wandered through the house,
stumbling, lost, off-balance,
looking for something lost,
growing smaller each day.
One day she sat down to wait,
she didn't move,
she didn't eat,
she had no more use for food.
One morning, she was dead.

In a cardboard coffin
that matched her final shape and stiffness,
I carried her.
Sluggish arms
chopped away the crust of snow,
the icy frozen ground,
pried and banged
the barrier of rocky soil.
In her shallow grave,
I laid on her a cold earthen blanket,
and left a dirty scar
to mark the clean white shroud,
a frozen tombstone of a rotten log.
Burying part of myself,
a stiffened dying part,
I took her death as calmly as she did.
But she was old,
older than a cat's supposed to be.
I wondered how my waiting would end.
If there'd be some distant day
in all my buried life,

that that dreary day would find this moment,
the warm wind nudging at my hair,
sun flashing through the wind-torn clouds,
while I'm making for the dog.
So passive on his chain, so deceiving,
once inside, he bolts about,
his Houdini nose picks at holes,
till he snake-like slithers free:
leaping, bounding,
racing through the woods, dodging close enough
to tease me with his freedom.▪