

THE COLLEGE NEIGHBOR

A newsletter from the Campus Community Coalition

FEBRUARY 2007

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There was a great turnout of neighbors for the December 3 holiday concert at the Barshinger Center and the children's cookie decorating event that preceded it in the Steinman College Center. Thanks to all who attended and all who performed, the concert was a huge success and a lovely start to the holiday season. A special thank you to all guests who donated gifts for local children in need, as well as to the F&M students from various clubs and organizations who supplied the Lancaster City Police with dozens of wrapped gifts that the LCPD distributed on Christmas eve to families in the city. Many families in our community are unable to provide any gifts for their children at holiday time and gift drives at the College and in the community play a crucial role in helping these neighbors. Sgt. Bill Gleason recalls visiting a house where a nine-year-old boy gleefully shouted, "They brought presents! They brought presents!" as his surprised and grateful father accepted the gifts.

Are you a culture vulture? Franklin & Marshall College welcomes you to all of its cultural events. The College's cultural events brochure, *Encore*, is published twice a year in September and January and lists art, music, theater, dance, film, and speaker events that are scheduled each semester. It is officially spring semester now at the College and the spring edition of *Encore* is available. To receive periodic *Encore* events e-mails and/or hard copies of *Encore* you can sign up online by visiting www.fandm.edu/arts.xml. Click the "sign up" link to enter your name, e-mail address and/or mailing address (make sure to check the box under "Mailing Info" if you want hard copies mailed). You can also call 291-3981 and ask to have *Encore* sent to you. The current *Encore* is available at the front desk of Steinman College Center on College Avenue (between the Barshinger and Roschel centers) as well.

Check *Encore* to find out about upcoming cultural events, including the February 24 Lancaster British Brass Band performance at the Barshinger Center (8 p.m., tickets \$10, call 358-4858) and the weekend film series (9 p.m. most Friday and Saturday nights at the Green Room Theatre on College Ave., tickets \$3, call 291-4099). The not-too-timid can celebrate Valentine's Day by seeing the award-winning, globally acclaimed play, *The Vagina Monologues*, which is student directed and will be presented at The Green Room Theatre on February 14 (5:30, 8 and 10:30 p.m., tickets \$10, proceeds donated to local and national organizations working against domestic violence, call 358-4858). If you're interested in the College's sports events, visit Franklin & Marshall's official athletic site online: GoDiplomats.com.

The Franklin & Marshall College Toastmasters Club has recently opened its meetings to the community. Toastmasters International is an organization that helps members throughout the world improve their public speaking and leadership skills. The members of the Franklin & Marshall College club felt that extending membership eligibility to the entire community was a natural extension of the College's mission. Franklin & Marshall Toastmasters is a "learn-by-doing" workshop where men and women hone their skills in a supportive, friendly atmosphere. Meetings are on the second and fourth Tuesday of the month on campus (Martin Library of Science, lower level, room 047, Computing Classroom) from noon–1 p.m., and brown bag lunches are welcome. Attending the meetings does not

obligate you to join and you may attend one or more meetings as a guest to see what Toastmasters International is all about. For more info visit the club's web link at www.fandm.edu/toastmasters.xml or call 291-3850.

The College Row housing and retail complex on Harrisburg Pike continues to take shape and by summer's end will be a vibrant new presence in the neighborhood. The College is working closely with the developer to attract a nice variety of quality tenants for the retail venues. Iron Hill Brewery, a mid-price restaurant with a microbrewery, is the first to sign a lease in the project (website: www.ironhillbrewery.com) and other food and retail establishments are soon to follow. Watch for more announcements about College Row tenants over the next few months.

Campus housing is one component of Franklin & Marshall's effort to enhance campus life and to improve the neighborhood. Franklin & Marshall has implemented a new four-year residency policy that has four main goals: to enhance the liberal arts experience for students, to improve health and safety, to prepare students to be active citizens in the world, and to strengthen the neighborhood community. The College realizes that it is not ideal to have too many students renting apartments and houses in the neighborhood and that an increase in owner-occupied, well-maintained houses in the neighborhood is an important goal that will benefit both the College and the neighborhood. Beginning in Fall 2008, only about 150 students will be granted waivers to live in non-campus housing and they will be guided towards registered, licensed, and inspected rental properties in the neighborhood.

Prior to the 2007–08 school year and the opening of College Row, Franklin & Marshall has only been able to house about 60% of its students. Most comparable small liberal arts colleges house 80% or more of their students in campus housing, and a rich campus life is an important drawing card for such colleges. Historically, less than one-fifth of seniors and less than one third of juniors at F&M live in campus housing. One impact this has had is that underclassmen as well as professors are much less likely to interact with upperclassmen outside of the classroom, and this creates a disconnection that is unfortunate for all.

In addition to creating appealing campus housing at College Row, the College has restructured the housing in dormitories and introduced the College House system. This groups students and faculty members in a "house" that supports both academic and social interests and thus is a sort of "third space" that breaches the gap between classroom and residential hall and enhances the intellectual and social life of students. The houses are faculty-led but student-governed and students remain affiliated with one of the College houses for all four years of their stay, regardless of where they live. Extensive renovations to the residence halls have already started and will be ongoing, eventually expanding from the current four houses to six. The first of these, the Ware College House at North Ben, will open in late February.

To accompany the new four-year residency requirement for students, the College has implemented a new alcohol/drug policy. The policy is a three strikes policy that clearly outlines specific violation procedures and disciplinary actions ranging from parent/coach notification to mandatory treatment programs to suspension or expulsion. The College works very closely with the Lancaster City Police Department to report and investigate serious student infractions of the Commonwealth's drug and alcohol laws. Incoming freshmen as well as all upperclassmen are made very aware of the policy and it has already proved itself as reflected in the decreased number of alcohol-related infractions.

A wonderful but perhaps unseen and unheard enhancement to both student and neighborhood life is the new shuttle bus system. The shuttles began running in the fall of 2006 and operate Thursday–Saturday nights from 10 p.m.–3 a.m. Students (who must show two ID cards) can ride shuttles that run nonstop between 14 neighborhood stops. What’s in it for us neighbors? Many of us have noticed a marked decrease in loud student foot traffic at all hours of the night, and this is a most welcome change! As part of the College’s ongoing investment in neighborhood safety, the shuttles will continue to run on a permanent basis and thus we will continue to sleep better.

Another perk for the neighborhood and for Franklin & Marshall employees is the College’s City Life program. In June 2003, F&M introduced a home-buying incentive program for its employees who purchase an eligible home within the established area bordered by College Avenue, Orange Street, Arch Street and Harrisburg Pike. City Life offers up to \$20,000 in interest-free loans that are forgiven at a rate of 20%/year for five years. There are specific loans for curb appeal improvement as well as for converting a subdivided house back to a single family home. To date, 30 College employees have purchased houses in the neighborhood, and a number who already lived in the neighborhood have taken advantage of the curb appeal benefit to make exterior improvements to their homes.

Wharton Elementary School is already preparing for its most fun and important fundraiser of the year. Mark your calendars for Wharton’s Spring Festival on Friday March 30, 5–8 p.m. in F&M’s Mayser Gym (adjacent to the football stadium on College Avenue). This year the festival will celebrate Wharton’s rich cultural diversity and there will be games, food, prizes and a great time for everyone. Proceeds help fund Wharton’s field trips, musical instruments, assemblies, extra classroom materials and various student enrichment activities. Bring your friends and family to enjoy an evening of festivities with the Wharton community and help the school fund a whole host of activities that Wharton children enjoy and benefit from.

Thanks for reading *The College Neighbor!* Look for our next issue in early April...

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**E-mail us at:
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or call 291-3981
(College Communications Office)
to add a name to our mailing list.**

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