



THE BENNINGTON FREE PRESS

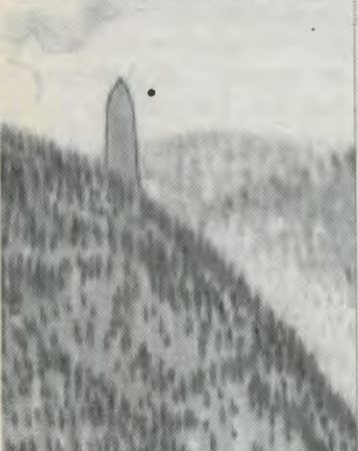
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Campus Green Mission: A Quick Review

By SARAH ST. LIFER '10
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

This Fall marks the beginning of an Environmental Studies program at Bennington College. With a Mellon Foundation grant for \$324,000 over three years, Bennington is capitalizing on an interest that has always existed in the community.

At the annual Clinton Global Initiative University meeting, a three-day event that challenged college students and officials to tackle pressing global problems, Bennington College president Liz Coleman was a panelist and led a workshop titled "Energy and Climate Change: Seeding Climate Solutions on Campus." Coleman mentioned at the conference that Bennington had made a multi-year commitment to developing a curriculum to address global change, most notably focused on the environment and sustainability.

On Vermont Public Radio, President Coleman discussed the \$20 million gift for the construction of the new Center for the Advancement of Public Action, a major new green campus build-

ing designated for Environmental Studies. The addition of Public Action to the curriculum, as well as its presence on the meadow between Jennings and VAPA, "will address great challenges of our time." Simply put by Coleman, "actionable thinking" will take place within CAPA's walls.

In 2007, Bennington committed to converting its primary heating source from a fossil fuel system to a biomass heating system using woodchips – a cleaner, more renewable energy source. In its first year alone, the biomass plant saved Bennington \$500,000 a year and radically reduced carbon emissions—all while heating 85% of the campus. Bennington's mission to go green comes full circle when the dead/diseased/non-native trees that were cut down in order to build CAPA were chipped and used in the biomass system.

Even the Student Center is married to Bennington's incorporation of green technologies and sustainable design. The building earned a seal of approval from Efficiency Vermont, a non-profit agency that addresses energy efficiency statewide, for its incorporation of recycled materials,



Nothing gets past the CAPA cam...

passive cooling methods, and furnishings made by local artisans.

The student-led Environmental Initiatives Committee and the Student Center management agreed on a deal offering discounts to café patrons with reusable mugs. Additionally, the EIC increased the use of energy efficient light bulbs throughout campus and re-instituted campus composting.

The USB sticks you found in your room are a new addition to Bennington's mission to decrease the amount of paper waste on

campus.

If you're thirsty feel free to stop by Admissions. Just remember to bring your own beverage container. The office will no longer provide paper cups for complimentary coffee, tea and hot chocolate.

Longmeadow is now the on-campus "eco" house, reserved for upper-classmen who are interested in living an environmentally conscious lifestyle. It is expected larger campus community about environmental issues.

Pizza Punctuation

By HUGH ELTON '12
ARTS EDITOR

A couple of weeks ago, I was driving with a friend on the main drag in our hometown when traffic stopped us right next to a pizza place with a banner advertisement on the side. It advertised "2 'Extra Large' Pizza's" for some marginal bargain. We got some laughs out of it, first from the quotation marks meant to emphasize "extra large" which, taken for their correct usage, would indicate that the pizzas were extra large only by certain standards, or that "extra large" did not describe the pizzas but was instead their title. Then we got some more laughs out of the idea of thinking that the designer of the ad wasn't trying to make "pizza" plural with an apostrophe-S, but was correctly using the apostrophe to denote ownership in advertising eighteen dollars and ninety-nine cents that belongs to two pizzas named "extra large." We tried unsuccessfully to come up with more scenarios in which the sign would be grammatically correct before moving on to laughing about something else.

Thinking about it now, I no longer find it funny, and I suppose it might not have been in the first place were I alone when I saw the sign. Instead, now I realize that what I saw was a new form, or at least new to me, of

the sort of common idiotic punctuation/spelling mistakes that make me fucking crazy. Things like pronoun ownership written as "it's," or "your" used to mean "you are." I see these everywhere, but always choose to be a silent prick instead of one who points out grammatical errors and typos. This could turn into a rant about the apparent impoliteness of correcting people versus the intellectual obligation to do so, but that's not what we're talking about. Errors like this only seem to get worse beyond these examples, and as frustrating as they are, I feel bad for people who do things like mix up "woman" and "women" because it's the equivalent of a glaring malapropism or totally botched cliché that the person doesn't even notice. This sort of thing totally goes hand in hand with incorrect use of words like "ironic" and "literally."

Are we getting dumber? "Yes!" say the Luddites, "all because of AOL Instant Messenger and texting!" Possible, but that sounds more like the sort of "kids these days" rant that's as old as generation gaps. More importantly, how can the prevalence of spelling and grammar errors be accurately quantified if you're talking more about people's informal day-to-day correspondences than newspapers or major advertising?

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"Fire" In Stokes

By WAYNE GODDARD
CAMPUS SAFETY OFFICER

On Saturday 04/04/2009, at 2AM Campus Safety Dispatcher notified me of an activated fire alarm in Stokes. I responded to Stokes house from Jennings Music Hall. Upon my arrival I noticed heavy black smoke come from the second floor windows over the living room area. I notified Campus dispatch to call the fire Dept. and Rescue Squad that there was a confirmed structure fire on campus.

As I waited for the fire dept. and rescue squad I had all the students that were outside the house go to the living room of Franklin. It was 45 degrees with a light drizzle of rain outside.

The fire dept. arrived at 2:07AM followed close behind by the rescue squad.

There were three fire trucks and about 25 firefighters on campus. The fire fighters worked for about an hour and had to get the fire out and make the house safe to re-enter.

When the fire chief was sure it was safe to enter the house myself and the fire chief and the Campus Safety Director went into the building.

Upon checking the house for damage we discovered there was a male and female student in their rooms. The male was in bed with

a pillow over his head. The female student was on the floor holding a cell phone in her hand. These two students failed to evacuate the building when the fire alarm went off. It was determined they succumbed to smoke inhalation.

A member of Student Life had to contact the parents of these two students and tell them that their children had perished in a house fire on campus.

I am Campus Safety Officer Wayne Goddard. I have worked for the Bennington College since November 2002. I am also a retired volunteer firefighter from Pownal, Vermont.

The preceding story, although fictitious, is what could happen in the event of an actual fire in any one of the student houses on campus. The purpose of this graphic story is to relay the importance of the fire alarm system that is in all of the houses and buildings on campus.

Myself and two other officers will be conducting fire drills in all of the houses on campus at least once a term. It is important that everyone knows how to evacuate your house and where to gather outside and be accounted for.

Safety of all the members of the college community is the number one priority of the Campus Safety Office.

Rules of the Serengeti

BY SAFIYA SINCLAIR '10
VOICES EDITOR

Three years ago, when I told my mother that I'd chosen Bennington College and pointed out Vermont on the U.S. map, her eyes widened with a secret terror—surveying the map, her eyes traveled across the Atlantic ocean, up, up, up towards the small, cold state—and she shivered. 2,754 kilometers. 1,711 miles. That's the distance between Montego Bay, Jamaica and the brisk undulating green of our campus. Even now, three years later, when I prepare to leave for school and her heart feels a dark, cold pinch, she asks: "Why'd you have to go all the way to Vermont?"

Why indeed—the first time I arrived on campus, my shivering mother in tow, we'd been hit by a wall of wind so cold it struck bone, and had to wrap ourselves in every sweater and jacket we owned. My first look at campus was a dark, winding drive filled with an electric composite of fear and excitement. That first night I shivered to sleep without bed sheets or light, while an off-key sing-along rang out all night. It was a rough welcome. As an international student I knew the experience would always be somehow different, and living in a house without freshmen marked a term of solitude and uncertainty. Where would I fit in?

There were three international students in my class. Yes, there is hierarchy ranked by seniority, and the dining hall is a color-coded Serengeti (I was shocked to know the American movies were right!), but it is the frolick-

ing lamb that is eaten first. But everything was new, somehow refreshing. The fashion on campus was as fabulous as it was odd, but always distinctive. People leave their old clothes in boxes, seen recycled on fellow students weeks later (how resourceful!). There was an art to recycling here that I had not yet learned. I loved that music was blasted out windows as I walked down the street: Bob Dylan or Radiohead, a John Williams movie soundtrack. Bongos echoed down the lawn, and most people knew all the words to 90s rap songs. Birds and barefoot dancers emerge in spring. Rothke went crazy in the orchard, Shakespearean monologue practice boomed through my wall. I didn't have to fit in. I just had to be.

The classes at Bennington always remind me why I came all the way to Vermont. It is here I learned to truly compose a poem, to assemble a self on paper. Here is where most people find a voice, learn to give real weight to an opinion. Now that I'm entering my last year, it sometimes seems opinions are all I have—but once I start my classes, the questions will again come anew, the queries that linger even when classes end. Savor each class, savor it. You will never have it as good as when the world of study opens its doors to you. The academic freedom here is what sets this school apart. You will want your voice heard. As for class discussions—participation is great, but remember the fate of the frolicking lamb—no one wants to hear the random story about people being mauled by mountain lions

in California or some obscure British movie that reminds you of the scene movement of Hamlet and the obscure British director who changed your life. What you say is as important as how much you say.

You will want your presence to be known. Freshman girls—at house parties, please keep your clothes on. Experiment with your new liberal lease on life in your dorm room. No one wants to see that You will be tempted by to show your bra at the faintest hint of a booming bass line; please resist this urge. Fairy wings are discouraged. Unless it's Halloween, you look foolish. If it looks like Rainbow Brite would wear it, just say no. Theatre people are not excused from this rule. I know I waxed sentimentally on being yourself, but you're new, and you're an overeager swarm, so most things you do will be annoying. You're loud, and we don't know you. Don't adopt unearned familiarity. If upperclassmen want to know you, you will know it. Guys—welcome to Bennington. Don't forget there's a real world out there.

On the Serengeti, among the crossing gazelle herd, it is the always the few gazelles bucking forward, heart pounding; the leaping exhibitionists—these are the ones either first served up to the waiting crocodiles, or the ones that cross that rushing river first. The Serengeti is a very perilous but wide-open space. Yes, there is plenty of room to misstep, but also miles of vast fields and white unwritten sky to buck and bark and roam. Welcome.

10 Heroes of the Summer

BY DEVIN GAFFNEY '10
WEB EDITOR

I unintentionally ended up having a super-fucked summer. I got an apartment in just-barely Northeast Portland, OR., where I worked as a programmer at a place six blocks away and, for the other 16 hours of the day sat on a porch overlooking the back lot of a tire center off the main drag. After watching the drama of the divinely talented homeless person theater troupe that inhabited said lot after work every day, I got into the business of looking for the seediest, strangest things around town. Here's a list of people that made my summer, and made for some great stories.

Mike: A guy I met one night when I had some friends over. He told me that he was just passing through town on that early July night, but after he asked for three beers and two cigarettes, I had the distinct feeling that I would be seeing more of him in my neighborhood. After that night, Mike would come to my house in the morning. This started about a week after first meeting him; I think he scoped me out for a while to see if I had the right stuff and the wily characteristics of someone who played hard-to-get. I assumed Mike was an expert at finding me, and well-versed in sleuthing. He would wait like a Green Beret in his foxhole until it was time for me to go to work, and at the perfect moment, when the tension had built to the point that if he had waited one more second it would have been too late, he would stop me and demand a cigarette and coffee over long conversations concerning the homeless communities of the major statistical metropolitan areas on the West Coast. Somehow, Mike also knew whenever I had beers, because he helped himself to those precisely when he knew

my barrage of Molsons were assembled. This went on for several weeks.

Beanie-Guy: There was a profound mystique that surrounded this crackhead who resided in the semi-truck trailer on the lot of the tire center. Beanie Guy seemed to know everyone around the neighborhood; Mike told me to stay away from him, but I had already figured that out the night I watched him smoke crack behind the dumpster in the lot. I must say, this is where the theater of my neighborhood really came on best. The dumpster was just far enough away from the wall that provided a perfect space for acting. Every time he smoked crack he would stand at the dumpster, assemble his tools, then fall slowly to the ground as if he were in an elevator. A few seconds later I saw the beautiful spotlight flickers of flame lighting his crack as he smoked it. Pure theater, real to the streets stuff that you just can't find anywhere but off-Broadway. Every night, he would pass by, and I would say "hello," and he would give me a look not unlike the scowl of someone who knew my type: a bourgeois through-and-through bona fide honk straight out of the cities that exist purely as a result of white flight.

LeRoux: He loved two things: weed and the blazers. Well, I guess three things: apparently he also loved violence. LeRoux was a regular on my street, but the day I met him, he was with John. We'll get to him in a second. LeRoux waffled between being an all-around considerate stoner, being mean, and being kind of dangerous. He always talked with me about his ex-girlfriend, who he wanted to beat up. He would ask me if I knew what he meant, and would halfway agree, but as they say, you give an inch, they take a mile. He would go into great detail about what sort of specific

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Dear reader,

The BFP is a student-run, school-sponsored publication whose purpose is to inform, represent and entertain the members of Bennington College and the surrounding community about issues relevant to the diverse readership in as fair and accurate a manner as is possible by the staff.

News and opinion content in the BFP aims to be accurate, balanced, readable, relevant and significant to readers. With that, we welcome any feedback: criticism, praise or suggestions. Letters must be typed and signed by the author and submitted to contact@benningtonfreepress.com or in the editor's mailbox at Commons. All letters submitted to the staff of the BFP become property of the staff and will not be returned. Additionally, the BFP reserves the right to edit any letter submitted for length, grammar, punctuation and clarity.

Sincerely,
Sarah St. Lifer, Editor-In-Chief

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Eating With Emily

BY EMILY TAREILA '10

THE GIST:

The past nine months, have been as Alice Waters puts it, a delicious food revolution for me. Taking Greg Stroud's Histories of Food class last spring in addition to living in North Bennington this summer has seriously changed my lifestyle and the way I think about food. Eating 'good' food not only makes your body feel better, but it is a totally emotional experience as well. Being connected to your food, either directly through a home garden or CSA (community supported Agriculture) can positively change your priorities of time, sense of self and community-as well as being super fun and gratifying!

This column is not meant to be transformative or preachy, but here in hopes to make you pause and think about what you're eating and how it makes you feel. Sunday Sundaes are awesome but shouldn't Tuesday night Asian crusted chicken be a pleasure, too? Just because we eat in the Dining Hall doesn't mean we should indulge in empty, flavor-enhanced, modified food; and, the Town House in North Bennington should not be the only option for people who want to eat well. I want to share some tips and tidbits on how to make food a more present and participatory experience on this campus.

Here's the breakdown for the column:

Delicious Dining in the Home and Hall

First, a recipe to be made in the home.

Second, a version of that recipe that can be made in the Dining Hall at the wok station.

Salad Dressing Central

A new salad dressing every issue; an easy way to make a meal new & tasty

Re-Vamping Regulars

How to make some of our staple hot food dishes into something new and totally dope.

Bevvy of the Week

A special drink every issue! Spritzers, hot lovlies and more!

Recommended Reading

Cookbooks, food blogs, commentary & more

Also, Baking with Faith will continue along with other delightful articles from that lemon poppy seed sweet pea.



Pizza

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What's more likely is that no one gives a shit anymore— if you use all proper spelling and grammar and capitalization, you're a know-it-all eager to your elitism. Inattention to details in writing can even indicate your coolness by demonstrating how little you care. Furthermore, we can change to meanings of words to suit our incorrect understanding of them through simple, persistent misuse (see "nonplussed"), and come on, I mean, I may have spelled it wrong but you know what I meant, right?

I'd also expect it has something to do with the fact that average people are writing more than they ever did in the past, and that writing lost its individual significance at the same time that it's taken a form that is cheaper and

faster than ever. We no longer have to write a long, well-phrased letter to keep in touch, now that there are over 9000 ways to instantaneously let everyone in the world know exactly what you're up to.

Which is totally cool. And actually, spelling and grammar mistakes aren't war crimes and it's not such a big deal. This isn't meant as a call to arms against anyone who doesn't know which side of the quotation mark the comma goes on. But there are certain rules that we all knew by about third grade that we're somehow un-learning. The punctuation standards of online chat are low, and rightfully so, but let's try to keep the mistakes we allow for the sake of typing ease from spilling over into other areas, if only for the sake of those who freak out over it.

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Heroes

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things he wanted to do to her if he caught her with another man. All-around pleasant.

John: He drank Steel Reserve 211s and those strange drinks (like Sparks) that have uppers and downers in one mini speed-ball trip for purchase at the gas station. He liked to yell at my neighbors, and he could play exactly one song on the harmonica, but he said it was every song. In John's world, the national anthem is "Bad to the Bone." He's a blues legend. He is homeless.

Abused Lady: One night, while I was enjoying my evening cigarette, someone walked up to me from the sidewalk and asked if they could have a cigarette and sit down for a moment. Understanding the need to kill oneself through a crushing addiction with no benefits, I allowed her to sit on my porch, whereupon she lit her cigarette and mumbled to herself about her boyfriend who was beating her. I only heard key words like, "boyfriend," "hitting," "face," "asshole," and "the 715 Club," the local tabernacle for these blind followers of the booze faith. After my cigarette was finished, I tried hard to listen, and even ask for clarification, but she had apparently forgotten that I was there, and continued to look straight ahead, making no signal towards me indicating she wanted to talk. After 20 minutes, I decided I had to go to bed; I went into the house and turned on "This American Life," and lay in my bed, knowing that this lady was mumbling to herself on my porch. After 20 minutes, I got up and realized that she might also be listening to "This American Life," which made me strangely uncomfortable, as one of us was slowly falling asleep and the other was slowly losing their mind.

I peered out the window, and she was lying on my lawn. I gave that activity 10 minutes, then went back to the window. She was on the sidewalk, looking into my apartment. I closed the blinds, shuttered the windows, and tried to sleep, hoping the best for my new friend.

Mail-Order-Bride Man: He lived down the street, in a ridiculously tiny apartment with three other people. He sat on his porch and drank beers. This was the only thing we had in common, though, because he, an aging, silver-haired man who had an affinity for the AAA baseball team in our city that was only rivaled by his love of yelling about it to passers-by, was also married to what must have been a 15-year-old Asian woman with a baby in tow. For three weeks, he had a friend staying with him, and the talk about the Portland Beavers doubled while this poor, quiet and obviously unhappy wife's depression levels doubled as well. I envied him for the in-window A/C unit.

Ray from the Fuck House: He is a legend in town, whose reputation precedes him. The user "my name" on Wikimapia had this to say of him: "Yes RAY is a sick old man he tried getting down my pants he try paying 300. dollars i work for him for 4 months then when i let him suck my dick he kick me out and told me never to come back." This is merely a two-dimensional portrait of a living legend, notorious in my mind if only for the fact that he runs an institution in Portland called the "Paris Theater," which provides a place for those of all walks to enjoy the finer sides of erotic behavior; this is not to exclude live sex acts in what he calls the "Paris Playground," where I witnessed perhaps the foulest thing

I have ever seen. If you want to know, you'll have to go. Most times, Ray makes you pay nine dollars for the opportunity to go to his theater, but if he likes you, as he did our friend "my name," you can get in for free, or perhaps he'll pay you to go in. Proceed with caution, as the Fuck House knows no boundaries.

The rats: I packed up the trash on a Sunday morning after an evening of late-night debauchery at the 24-hour Mexican restaurant down the street, Muchas Gracias, with some old friends. They were asleep. As I zipped up the bag, I heard a rustling in the trash can that left me with the impression that something had fallen out. As I looked to the ground to find and replace the piece of trash, I decided that it would be better to just throw away what I had and find it later. I started sealing the bag, and then, a foot-long rat jumped out of the bag onto me, stood on my shoulder, as if to survey the most expeditious way to avoid being killed by the human, and then jumped off and scurried into a vast network of rat tunnels that were previously unknown to me. I screamed, ran into the house, danced around, then shoved a hose into the tunnel hoping to eliminate what (in all reality) posed absolutely no threat to my life, for no other reason than the instinct of a human to kill an intruder. I came to my senses, stopped trying to drown my faithful dependents, and walked away from the situation. Two weeks later, I discovered that the trash can had rust holes in the bottom, and they carefully constructed a new tunnel system with the specific aim of grabbing trash through the holes and devouring it.

Sharky: Sharky had problems back when I was a kid—he played video games at a local LAN cen-

ter, then one day, he was gone. Everyone knew Sharky was 45 and homeless, and didn't have anything in life other than playing video games with kids, getting kicked out of the strip bars, and getting high. I asked the guy who ran the place what had happened, and he said he didn't know. Two years later, we found out that Sharky had gone to work on a weed farm, then he got caught stealing from it, was sent to prison, and we wouldn't see him for a long time. This year, he showed up in town again. Good to see him back on his feet in Chinatown. It sure did miss him.

The Best Stripper in the Universe: Michael Zimmer '10, Sarah McAbee '07, Ryan Biracree '07, and Sarah Crow '07 all know who I'm talking about here. At Mary's Club, the oldest strip bar in town—family-operated since the 50's. This place boasts perhaps the most amazing stripper ever. A voluptuous woman is rarely seen in these places; generally the men that frequent strip bars like to go the full nine with their fantasies and see girls who look like they're 14 and innocent. This woman had many tattoos, was well weathered, and did not play the role as uncomfortably as the others. She owned her lot in life: she could control the muscles in her breasts, and used this frequently as a running gag in her show, revealing the ability by bouncing them about one at a time. She would be doing crazy contortions, and would tell jokes to the crowd as we watched, captivated by the routine. Afterwards, I'm sure she went out and continued to kick ass.

[Copy ed. note: her name is Sitori, and you can find an old picture/interview by Googling "Sitori Portland." Just FYI!

> Skinny

Huh?

The Skinny is a place for quick quips and overall entertaining shorts. So if you see, feel, taste, smell, or hear something you think is Skinny worthy, email the BFP at contact@benningtonfreepress.com!

thongz

While purchasing your text books (does the history of Popeye really count as a text book?) we encourage you to get in the school spirit with a Bennington logo thong! Go team go!

Booth Babes

Booth got new bathrooms. Not to be confused with Booth being a bathroom.

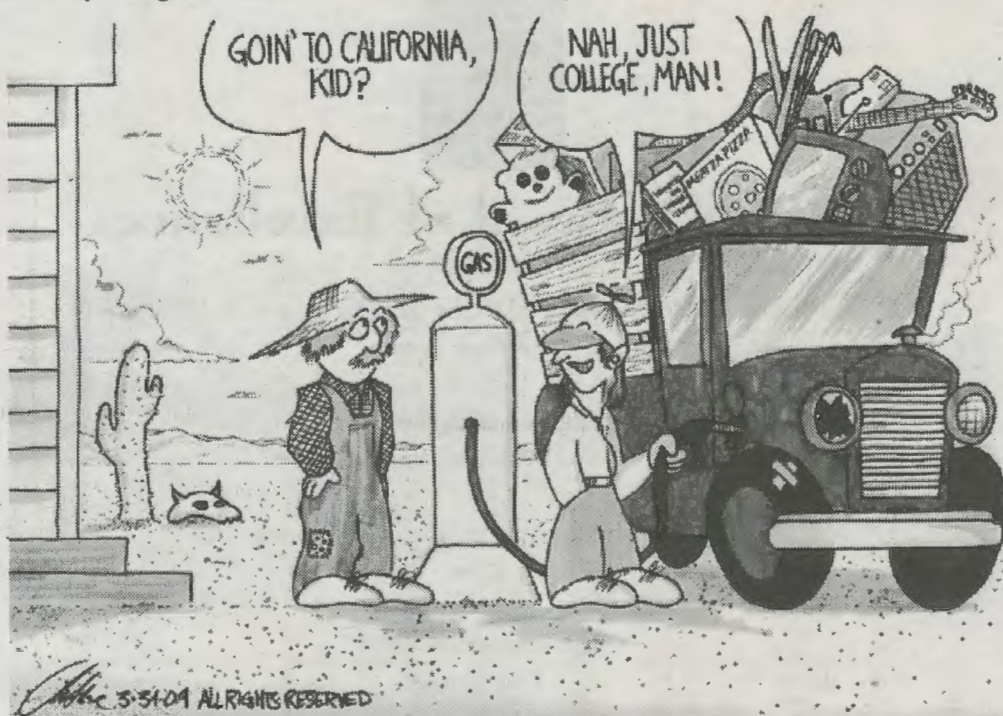
Overheard in

Bennington:

"You only like the Jonas Brothers because you identify with their dark, handsome features and long, flowing hair."

Write us a skinny!

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Jonas Bros complete MFA

By MICHAEL ZIMMER '10

How many Jonas Brothers does it take to complete an MFA program? The answer: three. That's right, Bennington, that dynamic Disney trio spent the better part of the summer working hard in Jennings to complete their low residence study in music. Kevin, Joe, and Nick studied together to bring a fresh approach to their songwriting. "It's amazing what they've accomplished. We brought an experimental approach to their established pop style that brought out new sounds from deep inside their souls. And Joe is soooooo dreamy," swooned Professor Graves.

Despite a few rumored sightings in town, the Jones brothers were able to keep their presence in Bennington under wraps. This, of course, was no easy task. When the news came that Jo-Bro would be applying, Ken Himmelman gave strict orders that the admissions office make a deep cut in their right hands to take a blood oath to the Jonas. Handling the pre-teen wet dreams was none other than Sarah McAbee '07. "The interviews went

surprisingly well. I didn't think they'd be a good fit, but as soon as Nick looked at me with those lost, mysterious eyes, I knew we needed them here."

Jonas acted no different than the usual Bennington student. They worked hard and they played hard. After befriending the group with a long and sweaty jam session, Student Life Assistant Sam Clement was the only witness to the parties Campus Safety now refers to as "The Lost Nights." "I've never seen anything like it," remarked Clement, "after Kevin broke that girls leg I knew the night was going downhill." When asked if they broke their vow not to drink alcohol, Clement informed us that their drink of choice instead is Fresca and the blood of hobos and drifters.

Personally, I am proud that we can add Kevin, Joe, and my favorite, Nick, to the list of celebrity alum. Suck it, Bret E.E. (The completed 'Bennington' album will be released by Disney's Hollywood Records in mid-November.)



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