



The barn in winter.

Photo by Tom Lascher

Attrition rate drops

by Laura Ann Basili

Applications are up for the first time in five years and the attrition rate has declined slightly, according to John Nissen, Director of Admissions and Michael Rock, Dean of Studies.

Last spring, only 47 people applied for admission, as compared to 78 this year. Of the 47 who applied last year only 27 actually matriculated. This year, of the 78 who applied, 46 students matriculated.

Nissen characterized the new students as "...a good and interesting group." He elaborated on this further, "Many of the freshmen have been out of high school for a while and have had other experiences."

Some of the 27 transfers came from Franconia College in New Hampshire (which closed), Lawrence University in Wisconsin, University of California and University of Colorado at Boulder. Twelve or 13 of the new students are from California and such states as Tennessee and Texas, which are not usually represented at Bennington.

According to Rock, attrition is also a factor to take into account when considering enrollment. He explained that attrition is the percentage of people who actually graduate within six years at Bennington. Bennington has an attrition rate of 50 percent, which is not unusual for colleges with flexible programs. Rock mentioned Sarah Lawrence and Hampshire as also having this high a rate, contrasted against colleges such as Harvard, Yale and Princeton whose rates fall between 5 and 10 percent. The national

rate is 50 percent.

Rock also talked about the history of attrition at Bennington. Before Bennington went co-ed in 1968 the attrition rate was 50 percent. By the 1971-72 academic year, the attrition rate for women had increased to 62 percent. The attrition rate for men was only 50 percent. Rock explained that one possible reason for the increased rate was men's schools (such as Princeton) had also gone co-ed and attracted many female transfers.

Said Rock, currently 40 percent of enrollment must be replaced yearly. This fact is attributed to problems encountered in the freshman year. Forty percent of incoming freshmen leave within their first three terms.

Rock admits, "We don't do much for freshmen. We don't think about them systematically and we don't help them to adjust. For that reason a freshman counseling committee has been established." Incoming freshmen are now assigned to one of five faculty members who have especially good advisers in the past. They are Dennis Aebersold, Lou Calabro, Jack Glick, Stephen Sandy and Anne Schlabach.

Rock said, "There's also the possibility that we should not do anything for attrition because those who leave are possibly the ones who shouldn't be here. Rock added the most commonly stated reason people leave or transfer is lack of extra curricular activities. He agreed that it is possible recent decrease in attrition may be due to the recent increase in extra curricular activities.

Morrison edges out Elliott in runoff election

by Kevin Farley

With most of the votes tabulated in the runoff election for Student Council President, Micah Morrison has emerged victorious by a slight margin over Sharon Elliott. The runoff election, was held Monday and Tuesday, because no one of the six candidates had 51 percent of the vote. Morrison and Elliott were the two top vote getters.

After his nomination at a mock convention last week, Morrison staged a vigorous campaign. He came out on top of five other candidates with 102 votes. Elliott received 83 votes, Mark Penka 45, Wayne Euster 41, Rick Hogarth 40, and Tom Quigley 27.

Jennifer Gray won the vice-presidential slot with 177 votes to Deborah Holms 62, and Virginia Harrison's 54. Katherine Hays claimed a victory in the Recreation Committee Chairman contest with 121 votes over Randy Witlicki who received 89, and Celina Davis who got 67.

Approximately 57 percent of the student body voted in this election.

The mock convention which preceded the election was marked by some chaos and free beer. Many nominations were put

forth — eleven for president, six for vice president, and six for Recreation Committee Chairman. Some of those nominated were ineligible while others declined.

A debate between the candidates was held in Commons Lounge on Tuesday night between the six presidential candidates and the three vice presidential candidate. Three panelists Amy Spound, Kevin Farley, and Claude Brachfeld gave the candidates a series of questions which each of the candidates were required to answer. After the formal question and answer session, questions were open to the audience.

Other Student Council News

At the first Student Council Meeting of the semester funds were allocated to the Student Educational Policy Committee. They received \$125.00 for the term.

Claude Brachfeld, Chairman of the Constitutional Committee, asked Student Council to pass a resolution stating the Council's intention to support the committee which means carrying out the necessary functions when the new constitution is presented to the community. The resolution passed unanimously.

Bennington no longer in top five most expensive schools

Bennington College is no longer among the top five institutions in the United States on the "most expensive colleges list" for 1977-1978 according to two recent surveys done by major publications.

A list appearing in the September 6, 1977 issue of US magazine published by the College Entrance Examination Board is as follows:

1. M.I.T. (\$7,950).
2. Sarah Lawrence (\$7,815).
3. Harvard and Radcliffe (\$7,650).
4. Brown University (\$7,630).
5. University of Pennsylvania (\$7,555).
6. Columbia (\$7,500).
7. Princeton (\$7,495).
8. Bennington (\$7,465).
9. Dartmouth (\$7,425).
10. Hampshire (\$7,410).

"Mainliner," a monthly magazine published in Los Angeles came up with a

slightly different list in the October, 1977 issue:

1. M.I.T. (\$7,950).
2. Harvard University (\$7,650).
3. University of Pennsylvania (\$7,575).
4. Columbia University (\$7,500).
5. Princeton University (\$7,495).
6. Bennington College (\$7,465).
7. Dartmouth College (\$7,425).
8. Hampshire College (\$7,400).
9. Stanford University (\$7,365).
10. Yale University (\$7,175).

"Mainliner" identified three more schools whose total costs exceeded \$7,000. They are Bryn Mawr College (\$7,165), Skidmore College (\$7,050), and Williams College (\$7,020).

Bennington College has been one of the top 10 most expensive colleges for many years. It was the most expensive college in the country during the early 1970s.

Writers Needed

The New Paper tries its best to put out an interesting and informative newspaper with as much objective news reporting as possible, in addition to reviews, commentaries, and photographs relating to Bennington College and the surrounding community. But our resources are limited. We do not have enough reporters to adequately cover campus events. Nor do we always hear all the interesting rumors that could have important stories behind them.

We would like to emphasize suggestions for stories and reviews are welcome. We encourage anyone interested in occasionally writing for the paper, but who does not want to become a "staff writer" to drop your story or review in the New Paper box in the post office, or in Box No. 153.

The same applies to photographs, drawings, cartoons, poetry and commentaries in the form of letters to the editor. However, we would like to warn that not all contributions can be printed, and that photographs and stories often must be cropped or edited.

A few specifications must be met. Stories and reviews should be typed and double-spaced. Drawings should be written in black ink on white paper, and everything submitted must have a name on it. This particularly applies to letters to the editor.

The New Paper staff plans to put out at least five issues this semester. If a tip or a story you have has a time-value, please contact a staff member. The editorial board meets every Monday in the New Dining Room at 5:30.

Judith Berman

The Bakke Case

When President Murphy spoke to the American Jewish Committee in Boston this winter on the case of Allan Bakke vs. the Board of Regents of the University of California, he was only one among thousands of liberal educators and activists voicing concern over the possible demise of special minority admissions programs. The Bakke case is one of the few political issues in recent years that has sparked widespread student protest. Yet some arguments advanced against Bakke seem automatic, the product of an instinctive liberal reflex.

Allan Bakke was an aerospace engineer who applied to the medical school of the University of California at Davis (among others). At the time of his first application he was 32. He was rejected despite high admissions scores and a favorable personal interview, and as a result filed a complaint of racial discrimination against the Regents of the University of California. The regents then filed a countersuit asking that the constitutionality of the affirmative action Special Admissions program at Davis be determined by the court.

The Yolo County Superior Court judge determined that Davis had discriminated against Bakke (but did not order that Bakke be admitted to Davis) and ruled that the Special Admissions program, under which "less qualified" minority students were given the same consideration as well-qualified white students, was invalid. On appeal from both Bakke and the Regents, the Supreme Court found the Special Admissions program unconstitutional and ordered that Davis admit Bakke. The case is now on appeal before the U.S. Supreme Court.

David White asserted in an article that appeared in December in "Politics and Education" that the final decision on the Bakke case represents a potential threat to affirmative action, a program established by the federal government six years ago to try to "overcome the effects of systematic discrimination" in college admissions and job hiring. Special Admissions, as part of affirmative action, was set up to counteract the effects of the inferior education minority students received. In particular, "it was an attempt to overcome the cultural biases that medical school admissions criteria — including grade point averages, Medical College Admissions Tests and preferences for prestige undergraduate schools — embody." (Barbara Caress, Health PAC.)

Says White, "Segregated school systems excluded blacks from white schools because they were black. Nominally integrated school systems, in contrast, have excluded minority students from admission because they were less qualified," less qualified according to these culturally biased standards.

Clearly, from this point of view, the Bakke case is, as White claims, "a watershed for American race relations. If Allan Bakke wins... millions of waiting

whites will be vindicated, because their privately held assumptions that racial minorities are inferior will be supported... the social assumption that racial groups differ in intelligence will hold sway... The stakes of Bakke are not symmetrical. Succumbing to racial prejudice is easier than overcoming it."

Yet grades, GRE's, MCAT's, LSAT's and other such tests are designed to predict a prospective students performance in school and in his career. The preference for applicants from prestige undergraduate schools originates in their history of providing successful students. Graduate schools want students who will do well. Selectivity and selective institutions serve both individual and societal purposes. They serve the needs of individuals for quality education, for intellectual and artistic development and provide the means for financial success as well as fulfill society's needs for quality products stemming from that educational process.

Perhaps the traditional admissions criteria are discriminatory and inadequate, but some criteria must be used to separate the wheat from the chaff. But perhaps the fault is not the criteria so much as the inferiority of education available to most minority students, and the fundamental issue in the Bakke case is, as the California Supreme Court decided, one of selection on the basis of merit and not of race.

Public schools, the main educational system available to minority groups, were once said to be the great equalizer of class in America, because they created free access to education for all. Of course, "all" primarily refers to whites, the rich established WASPs as opposed to the poor immigrant Jews, Italians, Irish, and other ethnic groups arriving in American in the early 20th century.

But increasingly public high schools and even state universities are producing "functional illiterates," both white and black, graduates with diplomas but without basic reading and writing skills. Private institutions accessible to the "intellectual elite," on the other hand, still provide and demand high standards. Education in America today is strengthening and perpetuating class differences, widening the gap between the truly and the nominally educated, the "intellectual elite" and the ignorant, TV-saturated masses.

The politics of education occur long before students reach graduate schools. Special Admissions programs are probably not destined to have any real result. When the majority of whites and blacks together are not being educated at the primary level, the solution lies in radically restructuring the public education systems and not in denying qualified applicants the opportunity for study and training in the career of their choice.

Murphy speaks with Globe

"Bennington's future is secure if for no other reason than it is supported and will continue to be supported by people who represent some of the largest fortunes in America," stated President Joseph Murphy in a recent interview (dated Jan. 22) conducted by Al Larkin, Jr. of the Boston Globe.

Larkin touched upon the issue of leadership at Bennington. Murphy responded, "The quality of a good institution is that the faculty assumes fundamental responsibilities for self-

government... I don't think anyone has been able to demonstrate that academics are any less efficient in the operation of their institutions than big businessmen in the operation of theirs. I think generally that at major institutions where academics are strong... that the product has not in any way been inferior to the product produced by General Motors where the workers don't run the institution... The people coming out of Berkeley or Cornell have fewer deficiencies... than Chevis or Fords."

Once again, student apathy

The number of times people have expounded to me on the New Paper's faults during my first two weeks as Editor are uncountable. I am the first to agree the New Paper has faults. However, there is a proper vehicle for complaints, suggestions, and opinions — letters to the editor.

This is a characteristic pattern of behavior at Bennington. Even at Southern Vermont College's Sycamore has a page full of letters to the editor (although we have long suspected many of them were manufactured by the editors themselves.). People here do not like to work through established channels because they feel, and in some cases quite rightly, that any kind of bureaucracy is annoying and insulting.

Yet institutions and bureaucracy exist for a purpose. They provide agreed upon frameworks through which collective action may take place.

Bennington students' framework for collective action is Student Council. For a long time, students have not taken Student

Council seriously. Yet the main problem with Student Council is that those with the most ideas, the greatest concern and initiative share the Bennington students' general scorn for institutionalized activity. For instance when the student body acts at teacher-evaluation time, the action is never well organized and is done outside the framework for recognized student activism.

Bennington student politics are what they are, because, in effect, "the letters are not written to the editor." The ideas are always expressed personally but not in the institutional context. For an institution to function it must serve as a tool in the hands of the concerned, not a road block to be bypassed, not a forum for mutual ego-feeding without real results.

There are aspects of life and education at Bennington to which Student Council could legitimately address its attention and which Student Council could affect.

As long as students fail to make use of the channels intended for collective action, it will be little wonder when cries do occur, the students' voice will not be heard. —JB

'Crest' opens successfully

by Kevin Lawlor Farley

The Golden Crest Restaurant opened in the Green Dining Room on Saturday night, March 18.

Paul Renzi, manager of the Seiler's dining service, stated that the reason behind starting the Golden Crest was to offer the students an alternative to the cafeteria atmosphere. Renzi pointed out that it most definitely was done as a service to the students since Seiler's was not going to make money on the Golden Crest. He said that they hoped to break even but that it would probably receive subsidies from the college.

Seiler's has restaurants at other schools. Bryn Mawr College in Pennsylvania has a restaurant run by Seiler's, it is subsidized.

Renzi said that the discount fare of \$3.40 per meal is offered to students because they will be the principal clientele. He said that it will be a "strictly first class" operation.

There have been some problems. Renzi said that getting the restaurant started in such a short period of time was one obstacle. In addition, Bennington may not be large enough to support such a venture.

Renzi said there will be quiet dinner music with a possibility of having live entertainment in the future. The restaurant will try different concepts such as Chinese night or a vegetarian night. He said that it will be difficult to offer a choice on the menu because it may raise the operating costs too much. One alternative, Renzi stated, would be to offer some different choices of menu early in the week and let the diners select which menu they preferred beforehand.

As to the meal on Saturday, they offered a one-choice menu which included fresh fruit cup for an appetizer. For some perplexing reason my dinner companion got fresh fruit while I received the canned fruit cocktail variety. The fruit was placed in decorative hollowed out oranges. The

prime ribs of beef au jus were very tender. The beans with fresh mushrooms and the baked potato were excellent.

The salad bar was good and the strawberry shortcake with fresh strawberries was great, but oh so filling. Fresh bread was replenished if needed. The wine was an American red of the "house" variety, the specific brand remained a mystery. The food was of a much higher quality and preparation than the average cafeteria meal.

The atmosphere was softened with candle and firelight. Some quiet music filled the air but ceased midway through dinner and it was lost for the remainder.

Chinaware with gold borders was rented for the occasion, the service was good and the proper serving rules were, for the most part, observed. For \$3.40, it is an amazing bargain.

—LETTERS— Sun Day Declared

Dear Editor,

Americans all across the country, on Wednesday, May 3 will participate in "Sun Day," a day that has been officially declared by act of Congress as an occasion to celebrate the sun.

It will be a day to go wild, honoring the world's only inexhaustible, predictable, egalitarian, non-polluting, safe, terrorist-resistant, and free energy source.

Bennington College students can use their imaginations to come up with ideas on how to celebrate the sun on this momentous occasion. If anyone is interested in planning for this festival they should contact Dana Hanley, Sun Day Coordinator, Box 308.

Sincerely,
Dana Hanley

THE NEW PAPER

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Photo by Tom Lascher

Allied Maintenance Workers finish up on work on Canfield as part of the aluminum siding program begun before NRT.

Campus gets improvements

New ID cards are just one of a number of changes which occurred over NRT. The decision to change to a new ID system was made in conjunction with Director of Student Services Jean "Short" Aldrich and Director of Seiler's Food Service Paul Renzi.

According to Iser the new ID's are available immediately whereas the old system took up to a month for the ID's to be completed. Meal validation now can be done at the beginning of each term.

The aluminum siding program which began last fall continued over the winter so that only some of the old student houses have yet to be completed.

Other repairs in student housing included carpeting in Noyes, Sawtell and Fels, and remodeled bathrooms in Booth House.

Svaha is currently undergoing renovation. The Golden Crest Restaurant in the green dining room now offers an "evening out" every Saturday without having to leave campus.

For a trial period, the North Gate will be left open until 5:30 p.m. to accommodate college staff. If the open gate attracts excessive use by North Bennington residents, the earlier closing time will be reinstated.

The college realized savings of about \$31,000 in energy cost cuts over NRT. A saving of about \$50,000 is expected for the year.

Maintenance worked on several faculty houses, including the shingle cottage, while security monitored thermostats around campus. Maintenance is also constructing a "sound baffle" in Green-wall Music Workshop.

Student Services has purchased new

basketball boards and three ping-pong tables. That office will also request money this term to begin a systematic redecoration of the living rooms and other common areas in the student houses when the trustees meet in April.

Student services offers jobs

Listings of summer jobs are now available to Bennington students through the Student Services Office in Barn 40-43. This is the first year Student Services has coordinated summer employment. Looseleaf notebooks of jobs and opportunities are open for student use during normal business hours.

Approximately twenty to thirty students come into Barn 43 daily to peruse the flyers and descriptions which are arriving.

The jobs have been divided into several categories and are kept in separate binders. Students may choose to consider Summer Sessions at other universities and colleges, Summer Study Abroad, Internships, Miscellaneous Jobs and Summer Camp Jobs.

Director of Student Services, Jean Aldrich said, "Overall, maybe sixty percent of the jobs are paid," but adds that one finds it difficult to give exact figures when new jobs are continually being found. About half of the internships available to Bennington students are voluntary, but nearly all of the work in summer camps will include some sort of pay or stipend.

Students wishing to look at the notebooks

Frankenthaler, Bennington alumna, to open exhibit in Usdan Gallery

Helen Frankenthaler, Bennington class of '49, will return to campus April 15 to open a month-long exhibition of her paintings in Usdan Gallery. A famous abstract expressionist painter, Frankenthaler will bring fifteen recent works, including two paintings (as large as 13' x 8') from her private collection.

The show opens in the Usdan Gallery, VAPA, with a reception at 4:00 p.m. Frankenthaler hopes to meet informally with students and faculty before the opening, to discuss her own works and recent visual art. She will be present for cocktail reception from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. to open the show. The public is invited.

The show has been organized by art critic Gene Gossen. Gossen, who once taught at Bennington and is currently on the Columbia University faculty, will provide films from a public television show of Frankenthaler's work during the opening. A catalogue, with color prints of the artist's works, will be on sale during the opening.

Frankenthaler's soak and stain technique had just begun to develop in 1951, when she had her first one artist showing in New York City. She was 31 at the time, with a degree in Visual Arts from Bennington.

After working with Paul Freely while at Bennington, Frankenthaler met art critic Clement Greenberg who introduced her to

many abstract expressionist painters. Among those artists was Jackson Pollock, who strongly influenced her later development.

Frankenthaler did graduate work at Columbia University and then taught at New York University, Hunter College, University of Pennsylvania's School of Fine Arts and School of Visual Arts, and Yale University. She was the only woman artist included among forty three others in the New York Painting and Sculpture 1940-1970 exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. She was again the only woman artist included in the Abstract Painting of the 70's show in Boston. In 1976, the Women's Forum at Yale presented her with the Arts and Humanities Award.

The New Paper now has subscriptions available for alumni and parents. The cost is \$1.50 per semester (five to six issues) needed to cover extra printing and mailing costs.

If you are interested in receiving the New Paper this semester, please mail \$1.50 as soon as possible to the New Paper, Bennington College, Bennington, Vt. 05201.

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Photo by Alex Brown

These five Bennington students performed across the country for the Bennington College Dance Tour '78. Shown are, left to right, Caitlin Corbett, Mary Lyman, Trina Moore, Heidi Stonier, Paul Temple.

NRT Troupe Dances in Martha Hill

The performance of the Winter, 1978 Bennington College Dance Tour began informally. The dancers, in tights and sweat pants, accompanied beautifully by Paul Temple at the piano, stretched and conversed, as if awaiting the beginning of a technique class.

Martha Hill was filled to capacity, lights dimmed, and the troupe's five dancers assembled stage center, commencing a whirlwind lecture-demonstration of the basic components and permutations of composition: show-and-tell delineations of space, time, level, emotion, repetition, rhythm, music and pulse. As if to say, "This is our NRT," the lecture, interesting in itself, seemed, in light of the event's billing as a performance, slightly irrelevant.

Informality continued. The sequence of dances, as listed in the program, was not followed. Each piece was preceded by a brief introduction which echoed the show-and-tell of the night's opening. The dances themselves, however, were performed in costume, with music and lighting and bows and claps.

The formal presentation of pieces began with *Untitled Solo*, choreographed by Martha Wittman, danced by Trina Moore, with music by Robert Schumann. *Solo* lengthening and shortening — buddings out, buddings in — from the dancer's pelvis. Few abrupt shifts in rhythm or intent, movement remained constant, fluid. *Solo* is a lyric phrase extended, a pulsating lament danced in a black, embroidered housecoat.

Caitlin Corbett choreographed and performed *Window* in New York, with music by Mary Lyman, Trina Moore, and

Paul Temple. A dance of framed shapes, *Window* is a collage of movement drawing its connective material from changes of energy, breath, and level. Texture emerges through proximity in space and elapsed time of the sundry shapes. Corbett moved with sureness, her own taut concentration seducing us into the choreographed 'windows'.

Market Chariots, choreographed and danced by Mary Lyman and Heidi Stonier, with sound by Caitlin Corbett, Trina Moore, and Paul Temple, was performed in hiking shoes, pants, and vests. With the absence of a narrative framework, the piece explored voicing and moving as ends in themselves — from creaks and mumbles to combination and hair-pulling.

One, choreographed by Trina Moore and danced by Mary Lyman, was the only overtly narrative piece on the program. A pale nightgown the principal prop, Lyman attempted to pull the nightie over her head, failed, succeeded and then exited the nightgown draped over her shoulders, worn now both as cape and badge. Punctuated with anguished cries, the dance stunned; repetition of the cries made witnessing painful. *One* is personal and cathartic, a rite of passage. Miss Lyman, as in all the pieces she performed, was statuesque and hypnotic, the air about her resonating even after gesture was completed. Movement seemed to drape itself about her, and, like all genuine talent, she made what she did appear easy and right.

Of The Opera Boblaba, choreographed, composed, and performed by the whole troupe, with incidental music by Dimitri Shostakovich, employed gaze as gesture, bright colors in costume, phrase-making and breaking, the isolation and framing of

Rarely does an artist the caliber of Merce Cunningham perform in this area of the world. Cunningham's residence at Williams College for a few days afforded students and lovers of dance an exceptional opportunity to observe closely an important dance company in rehearsal. An open rehearsal followed by a performance in the evening clarified the creative process and illuminated the relationship of Cunningham to his dancers.

On the afternoon of March 11 a steady flow of onlookers assembled in the bleachers of Lasell Gymnasium on Spring Street at Williams College. People spoke in hushed tones and yet the combination of so many whispers resulted in a constant buzzing sound reverberating around the rafters which rose and fell whenever the dancers stopped, then started, and then stopped again. When Cunningham himself stepped onto the mat to give directions the crowd fell silent in anticipation.

One would think Lasell Gymnasium to be a strange place for a dance company to carry on operations. But Cunningham's company has danced in even more "unusual" situations. The noise from the stands never broke through the concentration of the dancers. Sometimes one or two of the dancers looked at the crowd but they looked right through us instead of at us. Their business was to work out minor problems with the dance they were to perform that evening. The incessant buzzing was totally inconsequential and the dancers proceeded with the rehearsal as if they were working in relative silence.

Cunningham sat on a bench watching the dancers go through their paces. Occasionally he got up to alter a particular dancer's position on the floor space or consult one of them on what could have been any number of problems having to do with the beginning or resolution of a step or the positioning of a body. As he walked over to a cluster of dancers working on a particular movement one female dancer with dark, thick hair very politely tried to get his attention, "Merce," she called. He

did not hear her. Again she said politely, even somewhat timidly, "Merce." Again, she failed to get his attention. She stood patiently a few feet away from the group of dancers with whom he was quietly speaking. The look on her face was one of absolute respect, resigned to the fact her question would have to wait.

Cunningham appeared to be quite the benevolent and wise master, a sort of surrogate father. Indeed, his dancers are the primary manifestations of his creative offspring. Their faces are somewhat anonymous in that they lack striking or dramatic features which might easily betray extreme emotion. But the total physical presence of each dancer demonstrated the extent to which they are suited to his choreography. One saw a dancer or rather a cluster of dancers moving with flexibility and strength though time and space conveying — even personifying movement. This became especially evident during the performance.

The dance performed that evening was actually a set of complete dances performed without intermission, which Cunningham calls *Events*. A program note written by Cunningham stated, "...These *EVENTS* consist of complete dances, excerpts from the repertory, and often new sequences arranged for the particular performance and place, with the possibility of several separate activities happening at the same time — to allow for not so much an evening of dances as the experience of dance."

Cunningham has long been associated with an impressive array of artists. John Cage, who has worked with Cunningham since the late 1940's, is musical advisor for the company and Jasper Johns, associated with them since 1966, is artistic adviser. Providing music for the *Event* on a tape were John Cage, Martin Kalve, Takehisa Kosugi, and David Tudor. The tape consisted of every type of sound imaginable, some distracting, some undistinguished, most remaining somewhere above the viewer's attention which focused, with a few exceptions on the dancers.

Costumed in light blue unitards the dancers began with a series of "ballet exercises." They worked for a brief time span as a "corps." Gradually, individual dancers left the stage until all that remained was a quartet of women. Thus the pattern was established for the evening.

Cunningham would set up conventional patterns and immediately break them up. Dancers flowed on and off the tarp continuously, with pairs, trios, quartets, and other combinations occupying different parts of the mat at separate intervals or simultaneously. At times a single dancer would perform a solo on one end of the tarp while a cluster of dancers would execute various movements in close enough proximity to the isolated dancer to suggest a potential connection between the two centers of attention and yet far enough away to thrust into doubt any possibility of their being any literal relationship.

Sometimes Cunningham constructed patterns by means of the direction in which a particular group dancers would move. But it was almost dangerous to pick out symmetrical movements or steps, for as soon as the viewer grasped onto a familiar mode Cunningham obliterated it, transforming the movement into a totally new and diffuse series of steps or relationships.

The dancers were amazing. Cunningham's choreography is anything but fluid and predictable and requires of the dancer exceptional strength, speed, flexibility, and timing. Cunningham's movements are sometimes balletic, though most of the time he required his dancers to perform a whole repertory of movements which one would never see in any ballet. Sudden changes of direction, quick, jagged steps, and slow motion

movement, pairings, and singlings, antiphonal and antipodal speaking and singing: The movement was the opera; voicing, the symphony. Time was treated nonsensically; the pleasure was in the moving, in the shifting of tone and color. A potpourri, danced by five.

Choreographed by Corbett, Lyman, and Moore, with music by Stonier and Temple, the last piece in the program was a variation, danced with four, of *Boblaba*. Composed exigently, due to the illness, whilst on tour, of Mary Lyman, *Boblaba II* was presented to the audience as a piece evolved into something other than a variation. Not, however, significantly different from the original, I felt the inclusion of variation on the program to be an error in judgment, indulging the dancers' desire for inclusiveness ("This is our NRT") and straining the audience's attention.

—O—

I enjoyed myself, finding the program generally focused and strong; but something nags. By way of contrast, the movement of *Untitled Solo* begins internally, slowly extending outward; while in *Boblaba*, movement is external, merely gesture. Any meaning latent in the movement must be activated by the audience. *Untitled Solo* is choreographed for a human being moving; *Boblaba* gives us movement manipulating body. If *Boblaba* is the modernist text, an offspring of "the medium is the message," *Untitled Solo*, by contrast, becomes a throw-back to something older and, in this instance, more humanistic, something, unlike the clever *Boblaba*, which is not soon forgotten.

— Joe Kaufman

Williams

balances, combined with Cunningham's positioning of dancers in seemingly arbitrary spaces on the mat gave one sense of absolutely ceaseless motion.

Cunningham himself danced in several places during the Event. While he never performed anything terribly difficult his presence was riveting. He appeared only three or four times throughout the piece but each time one had the feeling he was omnipresent. This is not just because he choreographed the work but also because he appeared at strategic moments and projected in those moments a feeling that he was both master of himself and his dancers who danced at times as if they were motivated by an unseen, unidentifiable force.

The dancers conveyed everything but emotion. But one did not miss the usual emotional element. Instead, Cunningham made motion, time, and space his primary tools, obliterating narrative, and re-evaluating the relationship of music to dance. This sufficed in making a totally absorbing dance experience.

However, I question somewhat the contention that music and dance can be totally independent entities within the context of a dance performance. During the Event, the music often melted into the background. Was the music meant to be merely subordinate? At other times certain sounds implicitly suggested concrete interpretations for a given moment. (For example, at one point during the performance I said to myself, "The positioning of the dancers in space and their movements reminded me of fish in an aquarium.") At that moment the dancers were spaced so as to give one an impression (at least from my vantage point) of distance. Upon focusing on the music I realized that a bubbling or gurgling sound was coming through the loudspeaker. So much for the separate but equal status of music and dance.

Cunningham and his dancers left the audience with a genuine feeling of excitement. He certainly challenged the audience without constructing any intellectual barriers which might foster alienation. While the dance was free of theatrical trappings (i.e. narrative, elaborate costume, set design, emotional expression) the most important attributes, movement, time and space, remained. Naked movement replaced the traditional elements. This made the dance all the more aesthetically profound. Undoubtedly, many people in the audience searched for some hidden meaning. Cunningham merely wanted us to enjoy dance for its own sake and for the power it possesses to move us without explicitly conveying a specific set of feelings.

— Amy Spound

Grad student, Swan, displays work in Usdan Gallery

The opening exhibit for the year 1978 at the Usdan Gallery currently features paintings and sculpture by Margie Swan who has been an MA candidate for the past two years. The exhibit ends April 1.

Swan, who attended Syracuse University before coming to Bennington, has developed a fluid style of painting that occasionally belies its own level of virtuosity. Her teacher at Syracuse, Darryl Hughto, uses a severely reduced composition (his trademark image for a few years was a perfect diamond whose points touched midway on each edge of the picture, thus filling precisely 50 percent of the surface) which he then embellishes using a vast range of technical twists and turns that produces a tension between reading the painting as a figure-ground composition and one that is much more contemporary, the color field. A formalist at heart, Hughto's teaching consisted primarily of development method and clarity in his students.

It is much to Swan's credit, though little of the technical training was lost on her, she has gone the way of many younger abstract painters and developed her visual vocabulary of form, color and composition, not so much to refer back to painting as a medium as to produce art that conveys its beauty both personally and traditionally (meaning, in the tradition of older abstractionists like Frankenthaler or Boxer, though her work resembles neither of these). To watch the evidence of her hand at work on her canvases is to be the recipient of language, that irreducible common denominator of all art that extends beyond its style.

Beyond technical considerations, what her work mostly conveys when seen in the context of a mini-retrospective like this is an unwillingness to ride with a method of producing a painting simply because it has proved satisfactory. One of the most recent, and I think one of the strongest, paintings, is titled Uccello, in which the recurrent "flags" of subdued but expressive color do not rest in a thinly-applied and unobtrusive sea of pigment like some of the earlier work, but rather assert themselves through a thick dark green whose frontality is intensified dynamically by the suggestion of a contour created by a swath of fleshy-orange that moves horizontally across the bottom of the picture plane.

In all, this is a worthwhile exhibition to see, if for no other reason than to witness the transition from a talented art student to a strong, young artist. The gallery is open from 12:00 to 4 on weekdays and at random moments on the weekends.

— Dan Cameron

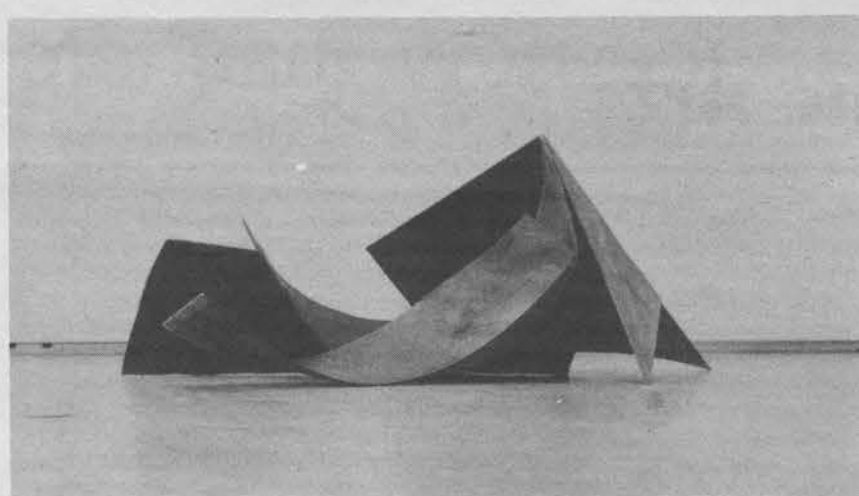


Photo by Tom Lashier

Swados, Bennington grad, gains recognition by Times

In 1969 Elizabeth Swados' photograph appeared in the New York Times Magazine. The story said she was, "the first woman at Bennington to celebrate its new found co-education by moving in with one of the six new men." In the March 5, 1978 edition of The New York Times Magazine she appeared in a lengthy article this time by Mel Gussow about her new theatrical collage "Runaways," which she wrote, directed, and produced under the auspices of Joseph Papp at his Public Theater Cabaret.

Elizabeth Swados came to Bennington College at the age of sixteen and studied music and creative writing. She made her mark in the Music Division with a symphonic overture in which thirty actors posed as a chorus of Balinese monkeys.

For two summers she played guitar and sang with Pete Seeger on the sloop Clearwater. During her second term she lived with an Appalachian family, tutoring children, starting a newspaper, teaching theater and making a public protest against black-lung disease. In that brief space of time she explored many different directions; drugs, vegetarianism, and communal living. She did everything, she stated in the story, "with the passion of thinking, what's going to become of me?"

She worked at Ellen Stewart's Cafe La Mama in New York while still at Bennington. There she met director Andrei Serban. Serban was beginning work on his version of "Medea" and asked Swados to write the score. She submitted the completed score to Bennington as a sign of her work, and received her degree in absentia, subsequently tutoring Europe and the Middle East with Serban and their company.

While still associated with Serban, Swados spent a year with Peter Brooke's company, traveling through Africa. The group would stop in small villages, trying to communicate with the natives through stories and songs. The birdcalls that are now her musical trade mark are a product of that experience.

The first theater piece Swados wrote and directed was "Nightclub Cantata." "Cantata" featured her in the original cast. Gussow commented it was an electric revue, a pastiche of songs, dances, and sketches celebrating such writers as Sylvia Plath and Pablo Neruda as well as the sheer art of entertainment. "Cantata" was a hit on Off Broadway last season and sent companies to Boston, Washington, and Europe.

In that period, Swados conceived the idea for her current work, "Runaways." Rejecting offered commercial sponsorship for her new project, she chose to work under Joseph Papp, who promised her "time and freedom." Drawing upon her own life and feeling of "fragmentation," "Runaways" is a translation of her experiences with the surrogate families of her acting companies into "a musical metaphor." Using young runaways as a metaphor for leaving home, "the show does not state that it is good to have a family, but demonstrates what can happen

when people don't have a family as a point of identity or place to be. It can lead to danger, exploitation and abuse, — or to something beautiful."

Swados, while not an abused child or a product of a ghetto, was solitary and independent. As she stated in the article she is a member of a family of writers, singers, and musicians, described by her as "eccentric." At twelve she was a performing folk singer and as a teen-ager wrote numerous short stories, collecting a pile of rejection slips from The New Yorker. Her extravagant disorder, such as filling her room waist deep in paper cutouts, precipitated occasional run-ins with her parents.

When she went to Bennington she left home for good. Swados was in Brazil with Serban. She received word that her mother had committed suicide. She said in the article, "A parent leaving a legacy that life is no good, that the solution to problems is to die; the world began to look like that parent."

Reviewing her experiences with Brooke and Serban, she said, "Every time I thought I was putting on a play, I ended up with a family. It always had to do with family — the most interesting repeated message of my semi-adult existence." "Runaways" expresses this and is the result of hours of research spent hanging around playgrounds and schools, talking to runaways, and gathering catch-phrases, anecdotes, street poetry and methods of survival.

(Swados' musical interest was stimulated by two other factors.) The wild adolescent energy of her cast — nineteen young people, few of them professional, chosen from schools, social agencies and community centers around New York City — is tremendous. "These kids," she said, "are like a raw piece of music and you can orchestrate it." Swados regards people as instruments and she sets them to music. Her love of popular music also moves her, despite her feeling that, "If I write a pop song, because of my intellectual literary background, I tend to think I'm slipping... I wanted to do this before I intellectualized myself into oblivion."

"Runaways" opened March 9 at The Public Theater Cabaret, Time Magazine proclaimed the cast was "superbly energetic," but comparisons with previous Papp productions, especially "Hair" and "Chorus Line" were raised, despite the efforts of the company to erase all such reminders. Time Magazine also states, "... the entire case deserves praise for throwing not only bodies into the show, but hearts and souls, which is always a sweet thing to watch."

The New Yorker reported, "About Miss Swados' gifts there can be no question. Every word spoken on that stage... is plausible, and so is every movement; the music, which comes in many varieties, is dynamic and theatrical and sounds like the music of no one else on earth... The company that Miss Swados has assembled and so assiduously trained sings, acts, and dances with a dedication that borders on fervor."



Photo by Alex Brown

David Jaffee, left, Douglas Blow, Lyn Bestles, and Kirsten Vogelsang visited four cities in the west during NRT as the Bennington College String Quartet Tour 1978. The students rehearsed at the college for six weeks, then began a two-week tour near the end of the term. They played chamber music, including classical and romantic impressionistic pieces, and one piece composed by David Jaffee.

Nine new teachers join staff

Nine new members have joined the Bennington College faculty as about 590 students prepared for Spring Term classes which began Thursday, March 9. The 590 students — (close to capacity enrollment) — include 50 students attending Bennington for the first time.

Of the 50 new students, 31 are transfer students from other colleges, while 19 are freshmen. Many freshmen, however, have had some work or other experience following their high school education.

Among the faculty members for the Spring Term is George Barrow, who will be joining the Black Music Division as Hadley Fellow. Barrow has recorded with such well-known musicians as Charlie Mingus, Clark Terry, Thad Jones, Mel Lewis, and Bill Dixon, and performed in the Apollo Theater Orchestra, the Charlie Mingus Jazz Workshop, the Amram-Barrow Quartet, and the Jerome Robbins Ballet on European tour.

Barrow began his music career at the age of 23 on the tenor saxophone, followed soon by the baritone saxophone. He studied at the Hartnett School of Music, and studied clarinet with Leon Russianoff of the Manhattan School of Music, and flute with Paige Brook of the New York Philharmonic Orchestra. He has performed in small groups and large dance bands, as well as doing backup work for singers, playing in Broadway musicals, and teaching in a special New York City schools program.

Annabelle Simon Cahn will join the Visual Arts faculty on a part-time basis. Ms. Cahn, an art historian, received degrees from Columbia University and City University of New York, and has studied in Paris, London and Israel. She has lectured or taught at Yale University, University of Bridgeport, Connecticut College for Women, Quinnipiac College, as well as two schools in London.

Teaching in the Literature and Languages Division will be Hortense Calisher, recipient of two Guggenheim Fellowships and an award from the National Council of Arts. Ms. Calisher has published 14 books, including an autobiography, three volumes of short stories, a book of two novellas, collected short stories and eight novels. Her short fiction has appeared in such publications

as The New Yorker, Harper's, Saturday Evening Post, Evergreen Review, and three of her works have been nominated for the National Book Award. Her latest work, On Keeping Women, was published in November.

Painter Leonard Dufresne will teach in the Visual Arts Division full time. Dufresne has taught at the Swain School of Design, New Bedford, Massachusetts; the Maryland Institute College of Art and Johns Hopkins University, both in Baltimore, Maryland; and the Bristol Community College, Fall River, Massachusetts. His works have been exhibited at the First Street Gallery, in a one-man show at O.K. Harris, and at the Bowery Gallery, all in New York. He is the recipient of a National Teaching Fellowship and a grant from the Massachusetts Council on the Arts and Humanities.

Roland A. Levy of Albany will teach in the science Division. An assistant professor of Physics at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Troy, he previously was a post-doctoral fellow at Carnegie-Mellon University, Pittsburgh. He received his Ph.D. from Columbia University, and has received fellowships from the U.S. Office of Naval Research, the National Science Foundation and NATO.

Harry Mathews will teach French full-time in the Literature and Languages Division. He is the author of three volumes of fiction, and three volumes of poetry, in addition to works which have appeared in

Paris Review, Hudson Review, Poetry Magazine and Art and Literature.

Edward J. Nell, professor of economics on the graduate faculty of the New School for Social Research, New York, will teach full time in the Social Sciences Division. Nell received degrees from Princeton University and Oxford University, and was a Rhodes Scholar. He has taught at Wesleyan University, University of East Anglia, England, and the New School, and given lectures at a number of other universities in the U.S., United Kingdom, Brazil, Germany, Spain, Canada, Australia and Mexico.

Joining the Drama Division full time will be David Halstead Schweizer, who has five years of professional directing experience in major regional theaters, opera theaters, summer theaters and experimental workshop situations. He has been closely connected with Joseph Papp's New York Shakespeare Festival Theater, and the Williamstown Summer Theater, and has taught at Circle in the Square Theater School and New York University.

Harry Sheppard will teach in the Dance Division half time for part of the Spring Term. A 1969 graduate of Bennington College, Sheppard has studied in New York under Merce Cunningham, Erick Hawkins, Robert Joffrey and Paul Sanasardo, as well as in Washington, D.C., at the National Ballet School, and Brussels, Belgium, at the Theater de la Monnaie. He has taught in Paris; Brussels; Paros, Greece; and at Antioch College in Ohio.



Photo by Tom Lascher

Harry Sheppard, one of nine new faculty this term, teaches a Tech 3 class.

Svaha gains new image

The "new" Svaha Cafe, expected to open by the end of March or the beginning of April, will be "classier and more tasteful" according to Peter Kaiser, Student Coordinator. There will be plants, paper lamps, and waiters. The cafe's seating capacity will accommodate approximately 30 people at red round checkered tables. Once spring arrives the management hopes to serve outside.

Debra Greenblat, a Bennington graduate, will prepare the food. She catered Margaret Swan's art opening and has worked at The Brasserie. The menu will include quiches, soups, deli sand-

wiches, meat and cheese boards, desserts, dessert crepes, and banana nut bread.

The only beverages served will be coffees, teas, fruit juices and soft drinks. People may bring their own liquor, but cannot buy it at the cafe. Commented Kaiser, the cafe received a letter from the Vermont State Attorney warning against selling liquor without a license. According to Vermont law, colleges are not allowed to have liquor licenses but legislation is pending in Montpelier that might change this.

"The cafe will operate on a non-profit basis as before," said Business Manager Debbie Ivie. She stated the cafe will feature "good food at reasonable prices" and "good entertainment" including student and professional jazz, bluegrass, folk music, skits, and one-act plays.

Svaha hours will be from 7:30 to 12:30 on weekdays with additional daytime service on the weekends. Debbie Ivie said they plan to deliver food by bicycle for a nominal fee.

The staff numbers 19 including John Ryan as Kitchen Manager.

Kaiser said the cafe's opening will be celebrated with special discount prices.

Murphy Travels Over NRT

President Joseph Murphy's NRT calendar included lecturing, fund-raising and other official activities.

In March, the American Council of Colleges met for their annual convention in Washington, D.C. President Murphy attended the convention which featured a discussion on means of improving educational standards taking into account financial considerations.

Between numerous trustee meetings, the president lectured in Boston to the American Jewish Committee. He spoke on the Bakke case, which is presently before the Supreme Court. The case concerns the question of "reverse discrimination" and whether a candidate for law or medical school admissions may be denied entrance on the grounds that a school has not fulfilled its minority quota. Murphy concluded that the case was fundamentally unsound because of historical and moral implications.

Murphy also traveled to solicit gifts for the college. According to Murphy an effort is being made to reach a goal of \$9,000,000 by 1981, Bennington College's 50th anniversary.



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New PR director named

Charles Putney, a former editor and reporter for various New Jersey Publications, has assumed the position of Director of Bennington College Public Relations.

Public relations over the past several years at Bennington has been handled by the publications office. Bennington saw a need for a separate position and hired Charles Putney.

Putney's background lies mainly in the field of journalism. He worked as a reporter on Norris County's Daily Record and as a reporter and editor on Today's Sunbeam, both New Jersey papers. For the past three and a half years he has been working in public relations with the International Reading Association, a non-

profit educational association.

What brought Putney to Bennington was an interest in both working in college public relations and in the college itself.

The job of public relations entails getting news releases to both local and major newspapers and television stations, initially getting the "Bennington story" out. Putney will also be working closely with the admissions office.

As public relations director Charles Putney's primary goal is to circulate accurate information about Bennington working through Bennington graduates in metropolitan areas is a possible

Currently, Putney is compiling a brochure on Bennington's summer program and promoting the Helen Frankenthaler exhibit.

Sports program to expand

A busy sports season will commence this Spring at Bennington College for the first time in many years.

A tennis team has scheduled matches with other schools. Another group of students hope to organize a softball team and a basketball team. Soccer games may possibly be scheduled with teams from Marlboro College, Lyndon State College, and Williams College.

The tennis team, coached by David Finnegan, already has two dates scheduled at Windham College on May 4 and at Skidmore College on April 1. Finnegan hopes to schedule matches for both men

and women.

There is a possibility Bennington College could enter the local softball league. To join, the college would have to pay \$125. Director of Student Services "Short" Aldrich has suggested the money be raised by holding a function at SVAHA cafe.

Aldrich stated that all sports ventures at the college have support from the administration. Last term Aldrich almost single-handedly ran the auction which raised funds for the new sports program.

Bill Rudd to leave

Assistant Project Manager and Head of Grounds William Rudd has announced that he accepted the position of Project Manager at the University of Pennsylvania Allied Operation where he will be Head of Janitorial Services and will oversee approximately 150 workers.

Rudd has worked at the college for four years and has served on the Art and Architecture Committee.

Robert Ayres will assume Rudd's position in the near future. Ayres has worked at the Bennington College Maintenance department for twenty years and has served many positions during his tenure. Ayres will be responsible for the 70 plus buildings at the college.

Graduate in show

A steel sculpture by Cam Newell, a Bennington College graduate student, has been chosen for display as part of a two-week revolving exhibit at Avery Fisher Hall in the Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, New York City, beginning March 29.

The sculpture, "Troika," is one of seven pieces selected for the show which is part of a series of constantly changing art exhibits on display at the concert hall. Newell is the College's only graduate student in sculpture. A selection of her works will also be shown in the Usdan Gallery of the College's Visual and Performing Arts Center beginning on May 16.

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Summer workshops planned

by Nate Williams

Bennington Special Projects will offer eleven workshops taught by Bennington College faculty and guest artists this summer.

In addition outside groups such as the International Institute for Humanistic Studies, a Chamber Music Conference, the Green Mountain Fiddlers, a craft show, and a variety of visiting weekend organizations will also use campus facilities this summer.

The workshops, which will run from June 26 to July 23, include Prose Writing, taught by Nicholas Delbanco, Frederick Busch, and Josephine Carson; Non-Fiction, taught by Alan Cheuse and Richard M. Elman; Poetry, conducted by Steven Sandy and Frederick Nims; Playwriting, with Jonathan Levy and David Trainor; Painting, conducted by Carol Haerer and Thelma Appel; Composing, taught by Henry Brant, Louis Calabro and Vivian Fine; Performance Research on Cello and Bass, with George, David, Michael, and Christopher Finkel, Robert Nowak and Lou Paer; Sound-Voice and Listening, with Frank Baker; Teaching Language to Children with Developmental Disabilities, conducted by Sally Sugarman; and Woman and the Law, with Pat Barr and Jill Laurie Goodman.

The International Institute for Humanistic Studies Summer Program will offer three intensive week-long courses for credit, undergraduate credit, and non-credit.

Konrad Lorenz will teach the first course, entitled "The Philosophy of Biology and Foundations of Ethology," which will be held in Vienna and Attenberg, Austria. Erik Erikson will teach the second course, "Psychological Development Reviewed," at Bennington July 9-15, July 23-29. Robert Penn Warren

and Cleanth Brooks will conduct "The Art of Poetry and the Novel," also at Bennington.

Tuition for Bennington College summer Workshops ranges from \$75 to \$400. Board costs \$75 to \$300. Tuition for the courses offered by the International Institute for Humanistic Studies ranges from \$185 for Bennington students to \$230 and \$300 for others. Room and board for the trip to Austria will cost \$700, and for the courses at Bennington, \$115.

The Craftproducers from Readsbrough, Vermont will sponsor a craft show August 25, 26, and 27.

During the last two weeks in August amateur musicians, professional faculty and a resident composer will participate in a Chamber Music Conference.

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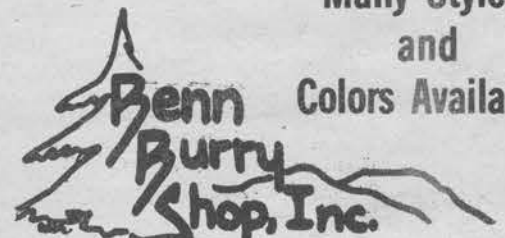
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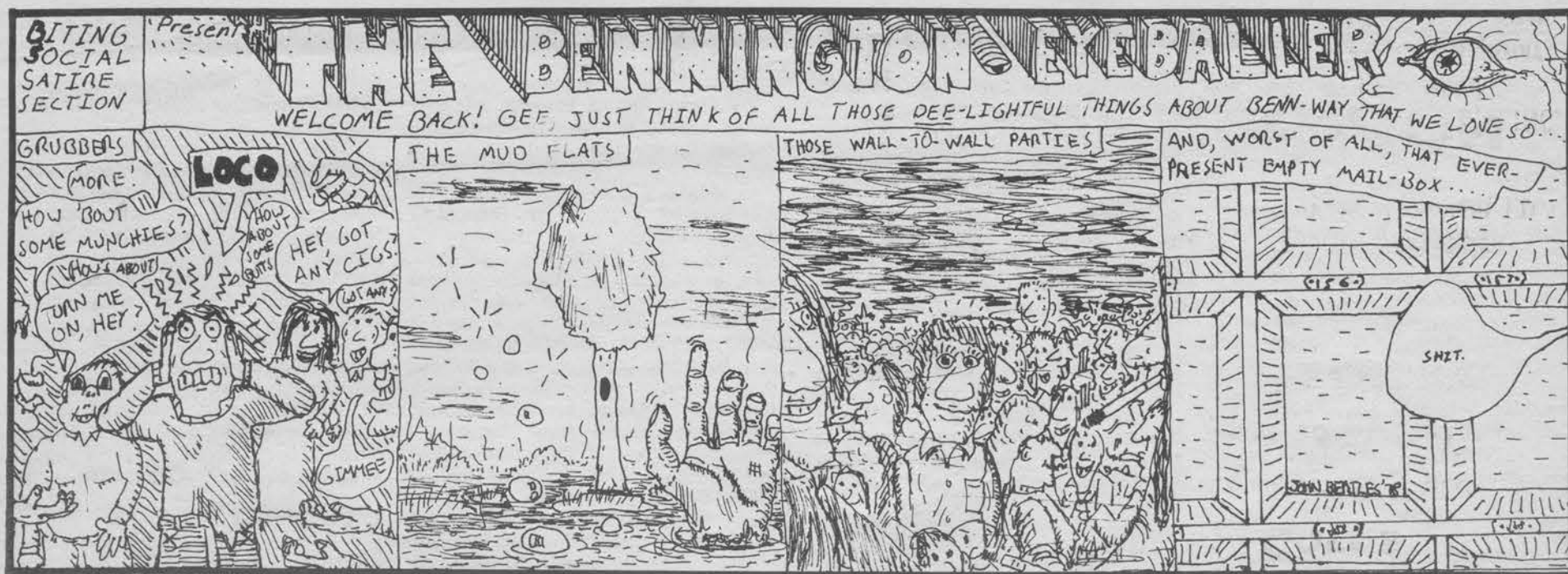
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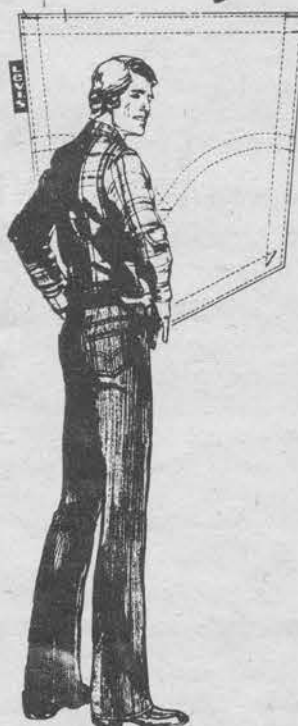
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