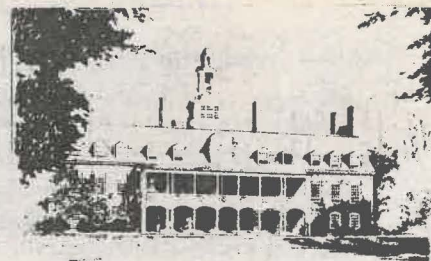


The Commons



VOL. 1, NO. 1

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 1988

BENNINGTON COLLEGE, BENNINGTON, VT 05201

WHAT HAPPENED TO THE STUDENT CONSTITUTION ?

by Robynne Kingham

When I first arrived at Bennington, I was greeted by twelve males with hair longer than my own. After being nailed into the green-phone booth with Peter Cohen (the active house chair in Booth at the time) these twelve guys piled in my room and told me stories of the "good old days" at Bennington. Throughout my stay here I've heard quite a few stories about the "good old days", from Coffee-bong hits to Nick's (the security guard) car

being stolen by students after they tricked him into his own handcuffs (all in good humor).

Now, three years later, I have stories of my own to tell; about fighting to keep students from being unjustly punished; about how the opportunity to repair our own damages was taken away; about how student apathy hit us like a plague. I've seen a turn-over in administration and now I've even seen our Student Constitution disappear. That Student Constitution that gave us

the opportunity to make our own decisions about how we wanted to govern ourselves as a Student Body and let us deal with our own problems within the community.

Last term, I was among several student leaders who fought to exercise our rights as self-governing students and to work with the administration to come up with solutions to the problems we are facing at Bennington. Despite dedicating our time and efforts to come to a mutually agreeable position, the

Student Constitution was left out of our student handbook and was replaced with a paragraph stating that the handbook now overrides any other document pertaining to the Student Body. For all the freshmen who have no other way of knowing, and for you upper-classmen who may not have noticed, we DO have a STUDENT CONSTITUTION. This was the student's contract with the school and our contract has been broken.

(On page two the Student Constitution is printed in it's entirety)

NEA ENDORSES DUKAKIS



On September 8, 1988, the over 1.9 million member National Education Association announced its endorsement of Michael S. Dukakis for President of the United States.

In making the announcement, NEA President Mary Hatwood Futrell noted that Dukakis was the overwhelming choice of the 8,479 NEA Representative Assembly delegates who received mail endorsement ballots. Dukakis received 86 percent of all votes cast.

"No other candidate running for President has ever received more support in an NEA mail ballot endorsement process," said Futrell. "This vote tells us that our members see Michael Dukakis as the most pro-education president in our history."

The NEA presidential endorsement caps a year-long bipartisan process. In early July, 1987, 15 Democratic and Republican presidential candidates were asked to complete the NEA presidential

candidate questionnaire. Shortly after that, President Futrell conducted videotaped interviews with presidential candidates, and the tapes were made available to NEA state and local affiliates.

Futrell has met several times with Dukakis, and, in announcing the NEA endorsement, she called him a man who would work "side by side with the education community to improve American education." Dukakis, Futrell added, is committed to making teaching an honored and valued profession and understands the importance of increasing Federal Government support for local school districts.

The NEA will mount an unprecedented grassroots campaign to help elect the Dukakis-Bentsen ticket. Out of the NEA membership will come thousands of volunteers ready to help elect Michael Dukakis President of the United States.

John Dukakis, the governor's son, and Rosanne Bacon, president of the Massachusetts Teachers Association, joined Mary Futrell for the NEA endorsement announcement. Governor Dukakis is scheduled to address NEA national and state leaders later this month in Washington, D.C.



Banner welcoming freshmen

by Clark Perks

MOMENTS IN EVERYDAY LIFE

by David Pecan

There are moments in everyday life when all of us, regardless of how much money we make or how intelligent we are, find ourselves walking the thin edge between conscious and unconscious motivations. I don't mean sex. We have that relatively under control. I mean, sure it's fun to have sex, even with people we don't know (or care about) but we don't. We wait until we are married or until we are reunited with our lover...

...unless we are savages. The one thing that links all of us to the



savage is the inherent fear of the unknown and the mysterious. To counteract it, we have developed sciences which explain everything we need to know; the thunder, child birth, and the death of television personalities. We no longer have to hunker down in caves, eating raw meat, praying to the tree spirits, and diving into heaps of sweaty, naked people in order to know what it's like to feel accepted by another human being. We are civilized now.

We chuckle at everything from hardcore lyrics to nerve gas spills in India and tell ourselves

that we are fearless now. We go to our little rooms and puff big cigars and kick off our sweat-ridden shoes. We smile at our huge biceps and feel secure; "Fix me some ham and eggs, Maggie!"

Then there are those moments in everyday life: You cross a set of train tracks that you know have been unused for two decades but you still look both ways first; You wake up in the middle of the night and wonder if the lover that you trust is thinking of you, or is he/she naked backstage at the

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STUDENT CONSTITUTION

Article I: House Government

1. The members of each College-owned house shall elect a house chairperson at the end of each spring semester to serve for one year and shall elect a house delegate at the end of each semester to serve for one semester. No first term freshmen or transfer student shall be eligible to serve as a house chairperson or a house delegate.
2. It shall be the responsibility of the house chairperson to execute the regulations and to conduct the business of the house, employing those measures that may be necessary and proper to fulfill the responsibilities put forth in this constitution. The house chairperson shall be responsible for the orientation of the new students in the house at the beginning of each semester. The chairperson shall enforce legislation that has been passed by the residents of the house, by student government or by the community. When enforcement proves impossible, the chairperson shall report offenses to the Judiciary Committee. The chairperson shall be exempt from the financial obligations of the house, except as a member thereof.
3. Each house shall hold weekly meetings of all its members in order to:
 - (a) Legislate on house business,
 - (b) Deliberate and vote on matters of College policy whenever requested by Student Council or members of the house. A motion regarding College or house policy shall be passed when approved by a majority of the students in the house.

Article II: Student Government and Electorate

1. Individual participation is essential to effective self-government. Therefore:
 - (a) every student shall have the right of suffrage;
 - (b) every student shall have the right to nominate candidates for elective office, provided that constitutional provisions are observed in offering such nominations;
 - (c) every student shall have the right to petition the Student Council on any matter of College policy, and if 15% of the student body shall petition the Student Council in support of specific legislation, Student Council must refer the matter to a vote in the house meetings;
 - (d) in any balloting of the student body the candidate shall be elected who gets the largest number of votes;
 - (e) members of the student community shall have the right to recall officials elected or appointed by the students. A recall election shall be held whenever 15% of the appropriate constituency has petitioned for it, and an official shall be removed from office when a majority of those voting in a recall election or 1/3 of the eligible voters, whichever is larger, have voted for his/her recall.
2. All monies drawn from the College treasury for non-academic activities which are organized and promoted wholly or primarily by students and for student contributions to events promoted by other constituencies shall be considered student funds. Expenditures of such funds shall be provided for by a student budget. One month before the end of each semester there shall be a meeting of the student body to review and pass the student budget for the following semester. The Student Council is responsible for drawing up a proposed student budget and making the proposal public at least one week before the meeting of the student body. The student body meeting will follow standard town meeting procedure.
3. (a) The student body shall elect a President and Vice President of the Student Council at the end of each semester to serve for the following semester. Only students who have served at least one term on Student Council or the Student Educational Policies Committee shall be eligible for the office of Student Council President. Any matriculated student may be elected to serve as Vice President for the following semester. (b) The President of Student Council shall preside over Student Council and student and community meetings provided for in this constitution and shall be responsible for seeing that motions passed by Student Council are carried into effect. In the absence of the Student Council President, the Vice President shall assume the duties of the Student Council President until such time as the Student Council President returns or new elections can be held. The Student Council President shall not concurrently hold the position of Student Council representative. The Student Council Vice President shall serve concurrently as a representative-at-large but

shall not cast a vote in Student Council except to break ties.

(c) The Student Council shall elect a treasurer and a secretary. The secretary shall not concurrently be a member of Student Council, and shall be paid from student funds.

(d) Student Council shall be composed of the house delegates from each College-owned house in addition to representatives of students living independently off campus. It shall be the responsibility of the house delegates to inform residents of their houses about recent Student Council decisions and to conduct house votes on matters of College policy as requested by Student Council. Questions referred to house meetings for discussion by a proper authority shall be discussed within two weeks.

(e) Any student living independently off campus shall be eligible to serve as off-campus Student Council representative with the exception of first term freshmen or transfer. Off-campus representatives shall be elected in a balloting of students living independently off campus conducted within the first two weeks of each semester and shall serve for one semester. Student Council shall determine each semester the number of off-campus representatives needed to provide representation proportional to that of students living in College owned housing.

(f) It shall be the responsibility of Student Council or its delegated committee:

(I) to execute expenditures of student funds as appropriated by the student budget;

(II) to establish regulations governing the allocation of housing space to individual students and to arbitrate all conflicts regarding the administration of such regulations.

(III) to conduct student elections and referenda and to publicize the results;

(IV) to conduct such other business of the student electorate as it deems necessary and proper, with the exception of matters for which responsibility is specifically assigned to other authorities by this constitution;

(g) Student Council shall hold meetings at least once every two weeks. All meetings will be open. Student Council may refer matters of special importance, or where general student opinion is desired to the student body. It may call for discussions of such matters in house meeting or in student or community meeting.

(h) Student Council shall have authority to name standing and ad hoc committees to carry out its executive functions more effectively, provided that:

(I) in establishing such committees the Council shall elect a Council member as chairperson of the committee;

(II) at the discretion of the Council the remainder of the committee members may be chosen from within the Student Council or the student body, or committee membership may be open to all students or other members of the community;

(III) the committee so appointed shall make periodic reports to the Council;

(IV) the members of the committee may be subject to recall by the established process;

(V) Student Council shall compose a charter for each committee describing the duties of the committee and the nature and extent of authority delegated to the committee by Student Council. Committee charters shall be kept on file throughout the duration of the committee's existence and shall, in the case of standing committees, be reviewed annually by Student Council.

(i) The Student Council shall elect a Constitutional Advisory Committee composed of five students serving one-year terms. Elections shall be held in the spring and the fall to fill those vacancies which may occur. The chairperson shall be chosen by the committee each term and shall attend all Student Council meetings in an advisory capacity. The committee shall be available to advise members of the community on constitutional provisions.

(j) There shall be a Judicial Committee composed of seven students elected by Student Council at the end of each semester to serve during the following semester. Any student other than a first term freshman may be elected for the following semester. Voting members of the Judicial Committee shall not concurrently hold other elective positions and no student shall serve as voting member for two consecutive terms.

(k) The Vice President of Student Council shall serve as a non-voting chairperson of the Judicial Committee. The chairperson shall be responsible for promulgating committee decisions and conducting any necessary communications.

COUNCIL NOTES

by Jonathan Stauffer

The Student Council had first meeting of the term Tuesday night and went straight work on several issues of importance to the College.

Clark Perks, the new Council President, made an appropriate dramatic entrance after the Council and their spectators settled down. Wearing his cowboy boots and spurs, Perks down and was the embodiment of this Council—calm, cool collected, but loaded and ready action.

Many people were interested in observing Perks' performance. Elected in what was perhaps one of the most controversial votes in the history of Bennington College, Perks immediately stirred things up and energized the Council.

Despite a few grievances with the Administration of the College, Perks' first impression upon the audience was that he is a man quite capable of taking charge of the most powerful Student Government in the United States.

Role call was taken, and upon the realization that Booth Wooley Houses were not present, Perks stated that any House which was not represented for more than two meetings would be asked to elect a new representative or alternate.

The problem of off off-campus residents was taken on by the Council. A motion was made, seconded and voted into action that as there are approximately 100 off off-campus residents, they will be represented by two council members to be elected by galley.

This decision was based on the Student Constitution, which states that the number of representatives for the off-campus members of the College Community shall be directly proportionate to the number of representatives each on-campus house. There are approximately 30 people in each on-campus house.

The Budget for the Fall Term was the next item discussed. It was decided that the Budget Process for the last two terms was questionable legality, as it did not meet the requirements set by the Constitution. Therefore, a motion was approved that the Amendment be made instituting the previous methods.

An emergency meeting of the Council was to be held Thursday night to discuss the Budget Amendment and make plans for a Campus-wide election. The passage of the Amendment, and to put out a galley explaining the Council's actions.

It was hoped that the Amendment would be passed before the Budget goes to the Houses for approval a week from this coming Sunday.

The Student Council decided to condemn certain statements made in the Student Handbook issued by the Administration for this term.

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**You've got something other people
are dying to have.**



REGISTER AND VOTE

National Student Campaign for Voter Registration

A project of Public Interest Research Groups (PIRGs) in cooperation with student governments and other campus groups

National Campaign Office: 215 Pennsylvania Ave. SE, Washington, D.C. 20003, (202) 547-5860

Photo: Johannesburg, South Africa 1985. AP/Wide World Photos

532 STUDENTS CALL FOR CONFERENCE

by Clark Perks

In mid-August 532 student government presidents, campus newspaper editors, and state student associations, representing all 50 states and the District of Columbia, issued a call to convene a National Student Conference on Voter Participation. The Conference, to be held in Washington D.C. September 30 - October 2, will focus on the importance of youth voter registration, education, and get-out-the-vote efforts nationwide.

"This is going to be a critical election for many issues of concern to students. The next Administration's decisions will set the course for the coming decade and into the next century, so we must mobilize and make ourselves heard this November," declared Rafael Zapata, student body president at the State University of New York at Binghamton.

The 1988 Conference is modeled on the highly successful 1984 National Student Conference on Voter Registration, which attracted 1500 participants and became the largest student gathering of its kind since the Vietnam War. The 1984 Conference, held at Harvard University in Massachusetts, resulted in the registration of over 500,000 new voters and helped make 1984 the first year

that voter participation among 18-24 year olds increased since 1972.

"While only half of the 27 million eligible 18 - 24 year olds in this country are registered to vote, many states make it more difficult for a student to register to vote than to register for the draft. This is a major reason why just 40 percent of young people voted in 1984 and only 22 percent participated in 1986" stated Carolyn Jones, editor-in-chief at The Daily Californian, Berkley's student newspaper. "It's time for us to examine the nation's priorities in regard to our rights and responsibilities, and to start exercising those rights to influence policy makers on important issues."

Both Presidential candidates have been invited to speak to the national gathering of student leaders and activists. Congressional leaders and issue experts will address areas such as higher education, voter registration reform, AIDS, the environment, economic opportunity, foreign policy and arms control.

Workshops, led by many of the largest community voter registration organizations such as project VOTE! and the NAACP, will teach students how to conduct effective voter participation drives. National student leaders will help students develop leadership skills, such as building

effective campus coalitions and utilizing campus and community media. "The Conference will generate the excitement necessary to motivate campus organizers to make a final push to register students before the deadline, which is October 10 in most states. More importantly, we will be educating and training Conference participants on the essentials of effective voter education and get-out-the-vote campaigns," explained Fred Azcarate, president of the United States Student Association.

The National Student Conference on Voter Participation is being organized by the student-based Public Interest Research Groups (PIRGs), the United States Student Association (USSA), the National Student Campaign for Voter Registration (NSCVR), the National Student Education Fund (NSEF), the GrassRoots Organizing Weekends Project (GROW), and the Student Empowerment Training Project (SET).

"With a close election at hand, this Conference will be the most significant youth oriented political event of the campaign season" Catherine Crane, director of the National Student Campaign for Voter Registration, asserted. "We plan to put students and student issues back on the national political agenda in 1988."

**STATUE OF ELVIS
FOUND ON MARS**

Continued from page 2

(l) The authority of the Judicial Committee shall extend to all infractions of non-academic rules and regulations governing student conduct and to infringement by students of the rights or privileges of members of the College community. The authority of the Judicial Committee in these areas shall be limited only by the administration's legal duty to provide for the health and safety of the student population.

(m) The Judicial Committee shall investigate a case only when requested to do so by the plaintiff, by a house chairperson on the plaintiff's behalf or by a member of the faculty or administration. Five voting members of the Judicial Committee shall hear evidence and deliberate on each case. The chairperson shall excuse two members from each case prior to beginning an investigation, including any member deemed by the chairperson to have conflicting interests regarding the case.

(n) The Judicial Committee may follow its own procedural rules, providing that fundamental concepts of process are observed. Deliberations and testimony shall be confidential. Decisions of the committee, including descriptions of any penalties imposed, shall be delivered in writing to the Student Council President and to the College President, along with any dissenting opinions. All decisions and opinions will be maintained in a Judiciary file in the Student Services Office.

(o) The Judicial Committee may impose any penalty which it deems appropriate. Decisions of the Judicial Committee shall be binding unless appealed to the College President. Expulsions and suspensions must be appealed to the College President. Either the plaintiff(s) or the defendant(s) may appeal if violations of due process are alleged or if the penalty imposed is considered unjust.

4. (a) There shall be a Student Educational Policy Committee (SEPC) composed of two representatives from each division serving one year terms and one representative from Student Council serving a one semester term. One representative from each division shall be elected each fall and the other each spring. Representatives shall be elected at meetings of students majoring or planning to major in each of the divisions, such meetings to be called by the incumbent divisional representative within the first two weeks of each term.
- (b) The SEPC shall elect a chairperson for the coming year at the end of each spring term. No student shall be eligible for election as chairperson unless he/she had served at least one term as a divisional representative. The chairperson shall not concurrently hold the position of divisional representative and may vote only to break ties.
- (c) It shall be the responsibility of the SEPC to evaluate and to stimulate the evaluation of the educational aims and policies of the College and its divisions and to

represent the student body in the formulation and assessment of proposed changes in educational policy. In addition, the SEPC shall solicit and present to the Faculty Personnel Committee student opinion regarding the performance of faculty members.

(d) The divisional SEPC representatives shall represent the students in divisional faculty meetings. They shall participate in faculty discussions of all matters other than the academic plans and progress of individual students, and have access to all available information pertinent to such discussions.

(e) Class SEPC representatives shall be elected in each class to act as liaisons between students and teacher and to aid the SEPC in fulfillment of its responsibilities.

(f) SEPC shall have a secretary, who shall not concurrently be a member of SEPC. The secretary shall be paid from student funds.

5. Amendment of Article I and II of this constitution may be proposed by a majority of the Student Council, by a majority in each of three College-owned houses or by petition of one-fourth of the student body. An amendment shall be adopted when approved by a majority of students voting in a special referendum. A referendum on a constitutional amendment shall be valid only if a waiting period of two weeks is observed between proposal of the amendment and its referendum.

Article III: Community Government

1. The Bennington College community consists of the student body, the faculty, and the administration and staff. Each of these bodies shall constitute an electorate. All voting on matters of community concern shall take place in the separate constituencies.
2. The community shall meet as a simple group upon the call of the President of the College, the Academic Council, of the Student Council; upon petition of 15% of the community to the Student Council. In all cases, community meetings shall be presided over by the President of the Student Council or the Student Council's delegated representative. The community meeting will serve as a forum for the expression of views and opinions regarding matters of current concern.
3. Any election or balloting in which less than 25% of the appropriate electorate shall cast its vote shall be invalid.
4. Amendment of Article III of this constitution may be proposed by Student Council, by the faculty meeting or by Student Council, by the faculty meeting or by the administration. An amendment shall be adopted when approved by a majority of voters in each constituency. A referendum on a constitutional amendment shall be valid only if a waiting period of two weeks is observed between proposal of the amendment and the referendum.

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Whitesnake concert; you pass a friend in the hall that smiles at you and wonder JUST WHAT THE HELL DO THEY THINK THEY ARE TRYING TO PULL; or you just feel that far off fear, the kind in the back of your head, and suddenly you're checking the closets and showers for every mass murderer under the sun.

I was in Price Chopper one evening; standing in the express line. In front of me were two huge women in mustard-stained, flower-print dresses, and tattered nylon stockings that looked as if they'd been used to strain soup the night before. They laughed and jostled each other as they loaded heaps of bacon, Velveta cheese, whole milk, and Devil Dogs onto the counter. Just as they were about to pay for all of it, the large one swivled and snatched up a handfull of candy bars and gum. "Who're them fer?" said the other, as she smiled and nudged her in the ribs.

"I'll never tell!" she said with a coy, toothless grin. They paid for the grizzly food and vanished out the door into the dark of the parking lot. I was too shaken to pay for my purchase. I just stood there, as my food tumbled continuously at the end of the conveyor belt. The woman could be heard cackling in the distance. I felt like I'd been attacked.

I didn't ask to be taken out of the caves. I didn't ask for Sigmund Freud to attach uncomfortable meanings to my every word. I didn't get down on my friends when they voted for Regan, and I never made fun of anyone who believed in God. I, like you, probably, just want to live without hurting anyone or being driven mad by the noise next door. Why all the extra fear? Why is it so covert in its destruction to our lives? Has man, in the process of building a protected world, reverted to becoming his own Boogieman?

Meanwhile, the lines outside The Last Temptation of Christ grow longer and other people waste their time counting the rings in tree trunks.

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galley concerning the measures to be taken will be available to the Student Body and the Faculty shortly.

Among minor grievances addressed by the Council was the placement of speed bumps outside the Commons Building on the road between the Student and Faculty parking lots and the Security Booth. The Council questioned the legality of the "frost heaves" under Vermont State Law.

This issue was also taken up by the House Chairs Committee on Wednesday night. The Head of House Chairs, who had researched the issue, said she believed that the bumps were legal as they are on private property.

The minutes for the Student Council meeting will be available at the House Meetings on Sunday night. BE INFORMED!



DEAD
NUNS
ON LUNES

WE'RE
GOOD,
PAY US.

CHATTER

JUNK FOOD FOR THOUGHT

by Jonathan Stauffer

Um... Yes, anyway- Welcome to the new Commons! This is the second attempt, in recent memory, to create a weekly paper for our beloved Bennington. Hopefully, this will be more successful than the first. We thank John McManus ('88) for the name and for kindling the spirit of the press on the campus.

If your eyes are working, you'll have noticed that the head of this little section reads "Chatter." This week its purpose is dispelling some old rumors and, with any luck, creating some new ones. Next week it might not be here, so without further adieu...

Our glorious leader and Student Council President, Clark Perks did not shoot himself in the thigh on Sunday night, despite reports published by that well of mis-information, the Banner, but survived an attempt on his life...

A Bennington Police Department spokesman stated that they believe Perks was the intended victim of the College Administration, with whom Perks has been squabbling over his rooming status, or lack thereof...

Perks currently resides in a Winnebago in the Price Chopper parking lot... The would-be assassin, the spokesman continued, is believed to be Mary Ellen Gilroy, the fuher over at the Student Services office, as she would have much difficulty focusing her eyes well enough to hit the target...

There is not currently enough evidence, however, to detain Miss Gilroy...

When asked about the incident, Liz Coleman, President of Bennington College, said she couldn't remember...

Commons is looking for the tapes...

Moving right along...

The Student Council met on Tuesday night and discussed Clark's leg...

And we have the results of the polls regarding the new Freshman. When asked on Monday, the first day of classes, how she felt about being at Bennington, one of the Freshman women replied "Er... um." Thank you very much ma'am...

The word from the Upper Classmen is that they are much better than last year's incoming class, who were really silly but who are getting better as Bennington shapes them into tomorrow's elite...

We have yet to hear from the Sophomores who when asked the same question stated they thought that they were still Freshman...

Note to McCullough...

The music at the first to parties was really awful, please rectify the situation at your party tonight or we'll send Rafe to do nasty things to your genitals...

Booth and Dewey, who had the first two parties, did not apologize- they don't have to...

Sarah Miller, speaking non-apologetically on behalf of Dewey, added, for the record, that she does not pick her nose.

by Michael Severens

I write the way I dance. If you've seen me dance, you might not want to read this. Do you like slamming?

Re-entry is what I think they call it- "Re-entering culture-shock for all returning students."

It took me eight qualudes to finally relax. There, in qualudia, I was a real-life fly-on-the-wall. Accepting, rather passively resisting the scene, or the anti-scene, or the mainstream, or whatever it is you want to call it... Amidst some very confused brain tissue, a passage for Ayn Rand's *The Fountainhead*:

"There was no such person as Mrs. Wayne Wilmont; there was only a shell containing the opinions of her friends, the novel of country squires she had read; it was this that he had to address, this immateriality, which could not hear him or answer, deaf and impersonal like a wad of cotton."

What was I passively resistin'?

My own thoughts concerning the music being played? The mental states of those listening? I think that in the confusion, I bodily removed at least four people from the tape player to preserve the little music that I wanted to belong in my range of hearing. There's a beautiful saying, much in use here, "To each his own." I'm told this a lot. Somehow it seems wrong to accept someone's fisting small animals because of "to each his own."

I have to admit I was afraid to come back this term. It wasn't the Freshmen, they're fresh air, but I'm bothered by a big-city mentality in rural Vermont.

We've all heard the dull thud of the clash between East and West Coasts, specifically New York versus Los Angeles. It is annoying to me to think that either side would boast. I personally love the danger and the excitement attributed to these place but stop myself to remember the over-whelming amount of

garbage produced by both: raus for Fads' sake, people taking things because that is what's given them, lacking opinions of their own.

To hear someone say that he/she loves New York because everything's so close reminds me of a description of a pre-fabricated house that brags the fewest steps from the stove, to the spice rack, to the refridgerator, to the counter... Maybe it's an intuitive tendency towards efficiency? But it's culture in which we're interested, is it not? We are artists, are we not?

Kids from New York and Los Angeles make up the majority of Bennington's Student Body. They are, in fact, cultural centers, perhaps the most cut-throat in the world, but nevertheless, the most influential in the country. This is why I question the "scene" at Bennington.

Last Term, I know of no plays produced that were written by

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FROST HEAVES ?

by Daniel O'Day

Aren't we lucky to go to a school where they put up nice signs to tell us where they've done road repair? It must of been a pretty harsh summer to cause the road to split open, but we need not fear because our school has taken care of the situation. I don't mean to complain but has anyone else noticed that they may have gotten a little overzealous when they were filling in the crack. It seems that there is such an extensive amount of asphalt that I have to slow down when I approach them. In fact this may be useful because in the winter my car gets all covered in snow and ice so now I can speed up and those bumps will shake all of it off... maybe that's what they meant by Frost Heaves?

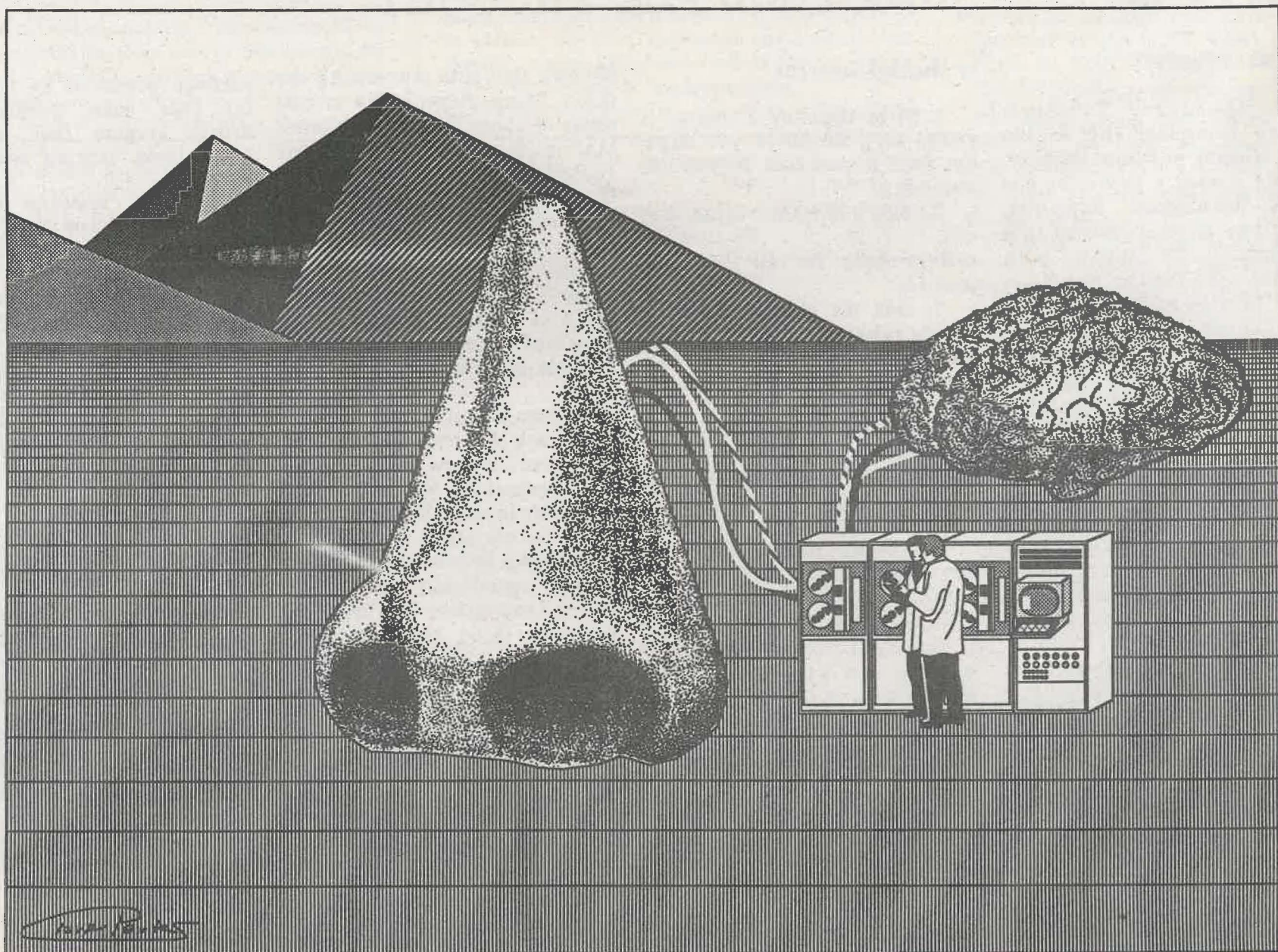
Another thing I like about Bennington is there are no speed bumps. At other schools I always hear stories of people who ruined their car going over these obstacles. I'm glad that hasn't happen here. Oh no! What would happen if someone coming to our

school misinterpreted the Frost Heaves to be speed bumps. Perhaps this visitor would not realize we had an enlightened administration that was only looking out for our best interest and instead think the administration was consisted of a bunch of sick and demented people. Maybe we as students should help the school out by leveling the road there. In the mean time, though as long as they aren't yet fixed we should drive over the lawn. And think, then they wouldn't need those quaint signs.

It is at times like this when I cease to wonder what is happening around here. By this time I think anyone who has been here for more than a term knows what is happening. Our right (whether or not it was god given is debatable but its existence is not) to have a say at what goes on at our own school has disappeared. If someone had told me my first year here that this was going to

happen I wouldn't have believed it. Not even Doug Hennings could pull that one off. But low and behold look at what a team of half-crazed power hungry bureaucratic administrators were able to do.

Did they have a hidden agenda? Well its hard to say since I doubt they are that clever. So then how did this happen? Well did you ever hear of Chamberlain and his "peace in our time" negotiations with Hitler? We have been the English willing to negotiate and they have been the Nazi's pretending to listen, but in actuality just doing what they please. If you think I'm overreacting (which I am but it takes sensationalism to get anything done) just remember the Winter Committee and the Judicial Review Committee. They wouldn't even change one word in the handbook even after AGREEING TO DO SO. I know a backstab when I see one.



Continued from page 5

students or faculty, very little of the music played at the productions given was student or faculty composed, and poetry readings by students and faculty were few and far between. If we are artists, do we behave as such? If we believe so, and then question our own behavior, our existing attitudes to that art which we consume daily, literature and music, is difficult to comprehend. Of what artistic value is the music playing at Booth as I compose this? What artistic merit is exhibited by the novel being read by the girl down the hall? I shall not go into the lack of both these qualities in rap music or dime store horror novels.

Anne Waldman, a graduate of Bennington, who is a successful writer and poet and the co-founder, along with Allen Ginsberg, of the Naropa Institute in Boulder Colorado, taught a course this summer. In it she said "Never forget that you are a writer." Once in a while even Benningtonites need to be reminded to never forget that we are the writers, the sculptors, the poets, the painters, the actors and the musicians. As such, our current cultural state does not become us.



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LITTLE DEBBIE

by Clark Perks

I'll never forget the first time I met her. It was three years ago this summer. My friend Matt and I were doing some skateboarding, skateing hard and getting hungry. Matt stopped and said we should get something to eat. I pointed out that between the two of us we only had about a dollar in change. What sort of food could we buy, with only a dollar, that would satisfy two hungry teenagers? Matt grinned, "Little Debbies," he said.

Little Debbies? What on earth were Little Debbies I asked. Matt seemed shocked. "You've never heard of Little Debbie?", he asked, shocked, "Oh man! You haven't lived until you've had Little Debbie!" We took our paltry amount of money and went to the corner WAWA. There Matt picked up a box of what looked like cookies. He paid the cashier and we went back outside and sat on the curb.

He opened up the box and handed me an individually wrapped soft cookie with cream filling in the middle. "Oatmeal Cream Pies," he explained. I inquired as to how many were in the box. "12," he said, as if there were nothing out of the ordinary in this.

12? 12 of these largish cookies for less than a dollar? I was skeptical. At 12 for a dollar they must be pretty bad. But I tried one anyway. What wonder greeted my tastebuds when I took that first bite of my first Little Debbie! It was like manna from heaven. The soft oatmeal, the creamy filling the smooth texture, it was like a dream. I looked at the box and saw my first glimpse of her, Little Debbie herself. She smiles at you from the upper left hand corner of every box of Little Debbies. The curly brown hair, the big blue eyes, the cute little nose and the dimples. She was a vision, a vision of the youth and innocence long lost in us all. We proceeded to devour the box of 12. I have been a disciple ever since. A follower in the cult of Little Debbie.

I do not use the word cult lightly. For among persons my age, people in their college years, Little Debbie has become an object of veneration. The eating of Little Debbie snack cakes is a daily ritual that is performed with almost religious fervor. The truly devout have even purchased the Little Debbie Doll House (advertised on the back of a Little Debbie Box, made of solid cardboard and only \$14.95) for the storage of their Little Debbies.

Many of us in the cult have long wondered, just who was this Little Debbie? Who was this bonnet wearing moppet who captured all of our hearts? Was she still alive today? What was she really like? I have searched and come up with the answer to some of these questions, but in doing so have prompted even more.

To know the whole story we must go back to the year 1905 in Dixon, Mississippi. That was where O.D. McKee, grandfather of Little Debbie and founder of McKee Baking Company was born.

What did O.D. stand for? The McKee Baking Company didn't give that classified information out, it was a secret on the level of the hydrogen bomb. But I was able, through intensive research, to discover what it stood for anyway: Oather Dorris. Now you know why it was a secret.

During the depression McKee was working pulling corn for 50 cents a day. He was married and expecting a child so he was looking for a new line of work. On day he met a man selling cakes. The man seemed to be doing all right for himself McKee thought, "I can do that!" The man told McKee of a bakery in Chattanooga Tennessee that needed some help. McKee started working there delivering cakes from the back of his car. He soon bought a pickup truck and a few weeks later he found out that another bakery that he delivered for was up for sale. The Bakery had heavy debts. Though it was a high risk, McKee jumped at the chance. He had to put up his pickup truck as collateral to get a loan to put a down payment on the bakery. In a few weeks he had the bills paid off and was making money, with no previous knowledge of baking prior to that!

"He just picked it up," said Eva-Lynne Rennard, Communications Manager for McKee Baking Company. "He was real pusher, really inventive." McKee Baking Company was founded in 1934 in Chattanooga. They produced cakes for various companies during the early years. In 1957 McKee Co. moved 15 miles east of Chattanooga to Collegedale, where they still are today. In 1960 McKee started producing his own snack cake, Little Debbie Snacks. His first snack cake was the oatmeal cream pie. McKee was famous for his soft oatmeal cookies, no one had ever made them soft before.

"They were the first in the industry to produce individually wrapped snack cakes," said Rennard. "Back then they sold for 5 cents a piece or 49 cents for 12." McKee Co. grew quite fast and today they are the largest privately owned snack company. In fact, there was an article published a few years ago when Tasty Cake sued Hostess for violating the antitrust law by buying Drake. In that article they had a pie graph showing how the market was divided up. The graph showed McKee as the largest snack cake company by volume with 34.5% of the market. They led Hostess by only a percentage point.

Though largest by volume McKee is not largest in sales, do to the inexpensiveness of their product. How can they make Little Debbies so inexpensive? "Automation," Rennard said. "Mr. McKee is committed to innovation. McKee Co. has its own engineering department which keeps us on the cutting edge of manufacturing technology. We are also very people oriented. We never have strikes or anything like that. We treat all our employees as if we were on big family." I queried Ms. Rennard about Little Debbies variety. It seems as if they come out with a

Continued on page 9



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Elvis story
thus far

Doonesbury

BY G.B. TRUDEAU

WEEK OF AUGUST 29, 1988

THE COMMONS, FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 1988 PAGE 9

Continued from page 8

new snack cake every week. She laughed. "We have a large research and development staff. They are trying new things all the time."

Still, out of the 28 standard Little Debbie Snacks, the three all time greats are pretty much a constant. They are: Oatmeal Cream Pies, Swiss Cake Rolls and my personal favorite, Nutty Bars. They don't give out any information about their annual sales, but they sell Little Debbies in 41 states.

All of this business information is all well and good, but what of the real question; who is or was Little Debbie? "Little

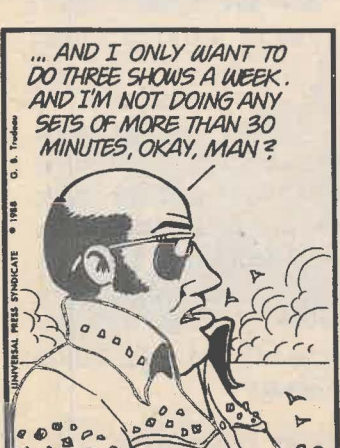
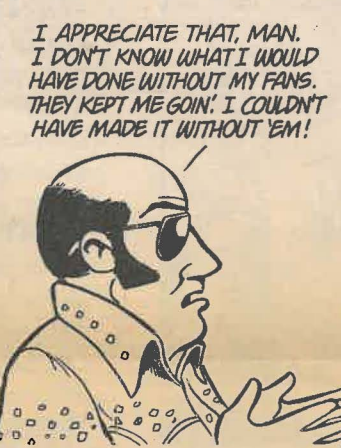
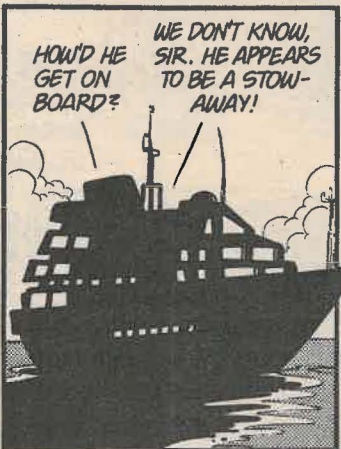


Debbie is Debbie McKee, granddaughter of O.D. McKee. The drawing of her on the box was made in 1960 when she was three or four, which makes her in her early 30's now. She's still alive then? "Very much so. She's still single and she's the Vice President in charge of Human Resources here at McKee. She's on a leave of absence right now though." Little Debbie in her early 30's! It would be possible to actually speak to her! My heart raced at the thought. I asked Ms. Rennard if I could have her phone number. She couldn't give me it. My heart sank. "She's a very private person. She pretty much keeps to herself. You could send her a letter care of the company and maybe she'd write you back." Some light, a glimmer of hope, but still mystery persists.

And what of O.D. McKee himself? "He's 83 years old now and still very much involved with the company. He is the Chairman of the Board and his wife, Ruth, is the Senior Vice President." Mr. McKee couldn't be reached at this time.

My quest is still on. Now that I know Little Debbie is still alive, I must talk to her. To hear her voice would be the Holy Grail of a follower of Little Debbie Snack Cakes. I don't know how I'll get to talk to her. I've sent her a letter care of the company in which I beg her to get in contact with me. I can now only wait. But at least I can lie awake at night and think of her, because I know that she's out there ... somewhere.

Strange dentist
caters only to
vampire patients



Doonesbury

BY G.B. TRUDEAU

HOROSCOPES

by St. Elmo

Safe sex is in the stars!

Beginnings, beginnings - do your duty to your sign this week. Sure you feel anxious, but leave the real doing until we're in Libra. Don't go to far though. It's not just a coincidence that you see condoms everywhere, I'll say it again - safe sex is in the stars!

VIRGO - Get off your bum and do things, anything, the crazier the better! Don't deny something you're dying to do but "wouldn't dare!" Sure you would! And you'll love it! And don't look in the mirror too much. Forget about your face for a while.

LIBRA - You just can't win an argument this week, so don't even try. Keep your mouth closed, listen, and do something else. Play Frisbee, go talk to Mrs. Jennings. Don't be swayed by physical beauty. Right now, they may look unsightly, but they're right for you.

SCORPIO - Try hard to get to K-Mart this week, Scorpios! Bargains are to be had, and you're the ones to get them! Be really careful regarding safe sex, you can get pretty carried away. This is a good time for romance and there are a lot who are ready willing and able.

SAGITARIUS - Throw a party, go to parties, make other people go to parties! Socially, you've got it made. Stick with your friends this week, though, because you've got to watch out for spending lots of money and gambling. You'll lose.

CAPRICORN - Take it easy this week. Don't worry about love or lust, it's a bad time for it anyway. Join a club if you can find one. Maybe, start a club? Spend time with other folks and do something productive.

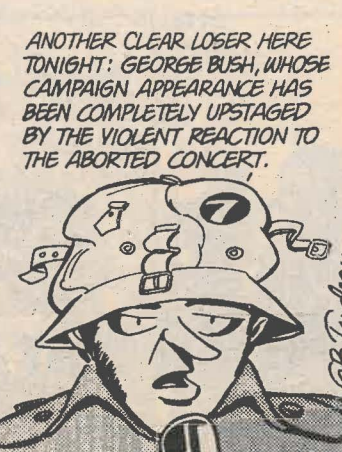
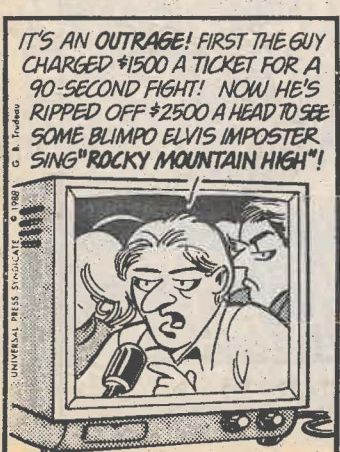
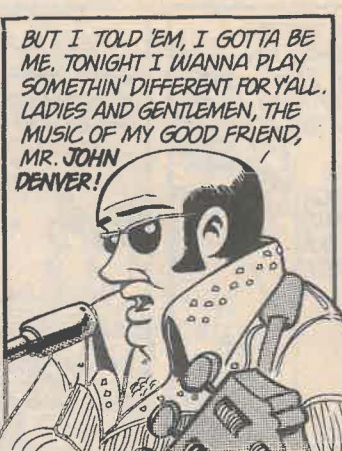
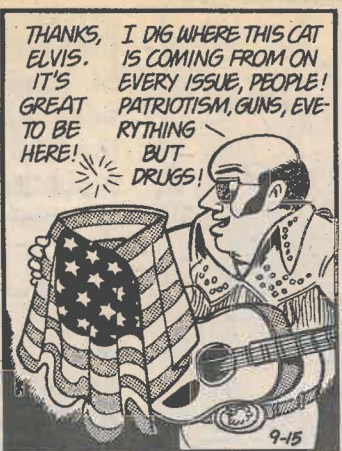
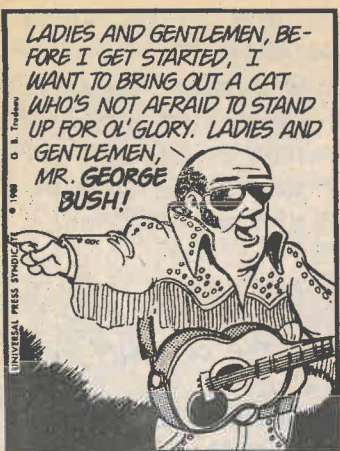
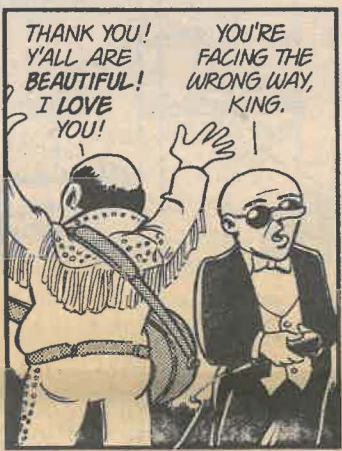
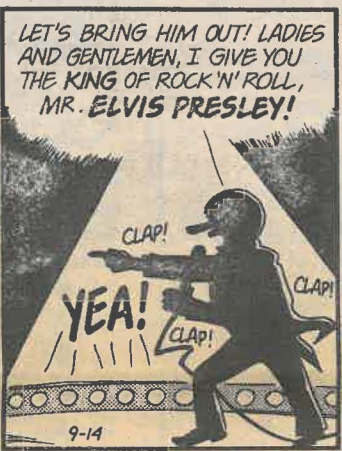
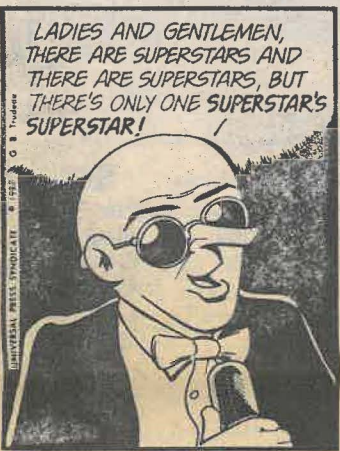
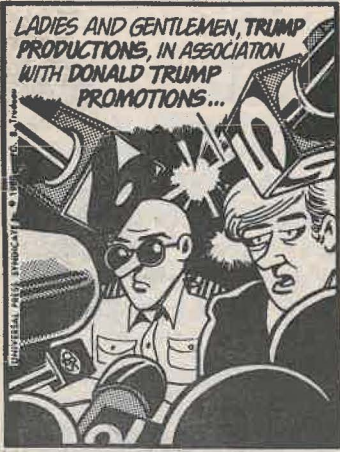
AQUARIUS - Don't dye your hair or pierce your ear, or other drastic things. Bad idea. Instead, hang out with your house, in your house. Find yourself a nice someone, get involved, use condoms. Wait until next week to get a tattoo. Maybe.

PISCES - Hey, Pisces, don't drink and drive, don't drink and anything, don't drink! Go to bed early, find a nice sunrise and meditate! Choose a mantra. Center yourself. If you want fun, find it in class, because now you are pretty much always right.

ARIES - Safe sex, Aries! That's about it - you're walking a fine line.

TAURUS - You can go wild. Don't worry about responsibility for a few days, you need to go crazy. You are actually a crazy person, you just don't know it. Don't make snap judgements. They never work. Not everybody is all bad. Oh, buy a plant. A big one.

Continued on page 11



calvin and Hobbes

by BILL WATTERSON

GEMINI - You can do anything and do pretty well this week, especially in the mouth department. However, there may be some nasty repercussions later for things that you do fine now. Watch some TV and order from Minuteman. Befriend a sofa.

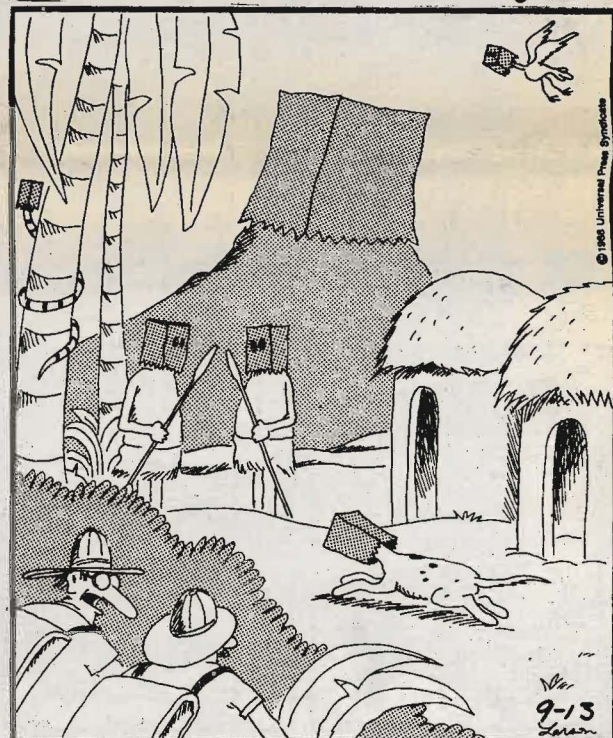
CANCER - Write for your mother! You need it! Now! Spend time with babies, especially your own. You may be far away, but stay in the family mode. If someone criticizes you, don't be afraid to criticize back, you don't need it from them.

LEO - Raid your closet. Dress to impress. Maybe some nice rhinestones. Do the drama things, or start up if you haven't yet. These are necessary also to divert you from drinking to much - you may be a real jerk if you do.

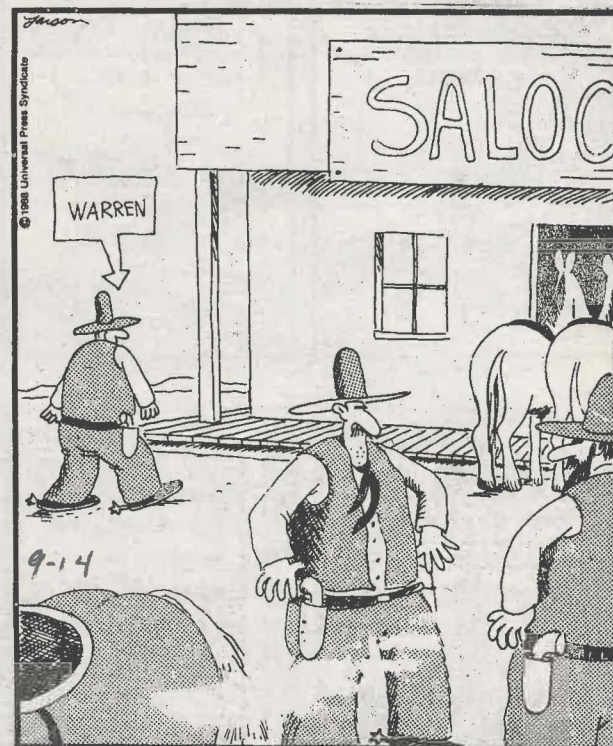
THE FAR SIDE By GARY LARSON



"Well, the Sullivans are out on their tire again."



"This must be it, Jenkins — the legendary Ugliest Place on Earth."



Warren Hc. strom: Professional Western movie background street crosser



THE FAR Side

by GARY
LARSON

"At least I wasn't a draft dodger" says cat

OKAY, THEN... WE LIE,
DISTORT AND THROW

NAH.

COMATOSE

**BRAIN DEAD.
LAZY.**

FOLLOWS
ASTROLOGY.
NAPS
FREQUENTLY

DON'T SAY IT.
AM I
UPWIND
AGAIN,
MADAM?

HEAVENLY HEADS?

2-17

YEAH?
LIKE
WHAT?

BOY,
WE ALL
KNOW HOW
WFUL THAT
NELLS DON'T

Check their papers... they're probably forged!

They'll scratch the furniture... And they'll transmit ringworm!

9-15

A cartoon illustration by Lowen. Three insect-like characters are depicted. Two are seated on a patterned sofa, reading a newspaper together. They have large, round eyes and antennae. A third, larger character with a more complex, segmented body and a single large eye stands to the right, looking towards the seated pair. The background is simple, with a door and a wavy line suggesting a wall or light. The artist's signature 'Lowen' is in the top right corner. The page number '9-16' is at the bottom center.

"Hold it right there, young lady! Before you go out, you take off some of that makeup and wash off that gallon of pheromones!"

THE CUDCHEWER CAFE

Alfalfa Ave

9-17

©1988 Universal Press Syndicate

"Drive, Ted! We've stumbled into some cownown."