

# The *insider*

A Publication for Employees of William Rainey Harper College  
Volume 12, Number 11  
January 1997

## *inside*

2

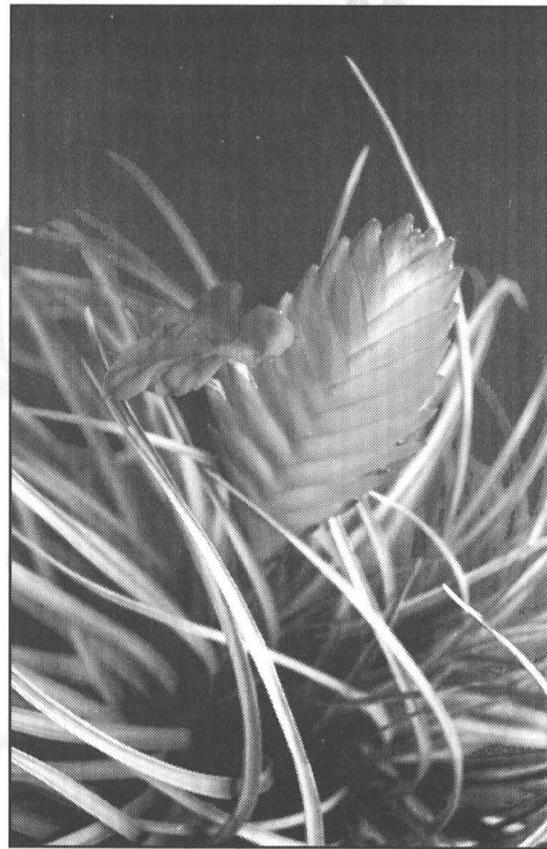
Focus on the  
Mail Center

3

President Thompson's  
Message

4

Departmental  
Developments



## *Winter Garden*

A bromeliad plant sprouts a rare bloom in the north greenhouse of Building V. "Typically, this ornamental plant thrives in tropical conditions, so I was surprised to see it bloom in winter," explains LS/HS lab assistant Marla Daly. "In addition to the beautiful pink spathe it's also shooting purple petaled flowers. This secondary layer of flowers is very unusual. I don't know if it will happen again, so I'm just enjoying the beauty of it while it's here."



## Focus on Mail Center

Perhaps the Postmaster General ought to meet Alan Gann and Dee Collins. Together they have kept Harper's Mail Center running smoothly for the past seven years. Using a system Gann developed, they have been able to handle increasing postal rates and a larger volume of mail while consistently reducing costs.

Al Gann is mail supervisor. His career began in the Army, where he held a "Radar O'Reilly-type" position. As a civilian Gann worked in the mailroom of several large corporations. "At the

time I came to Harper, 99 percent of the mail was processed off-campus and the Mail Center was in the red. I felt it was my responsibility to bring costs down."

The first major change Gann enacted was purchasing a Bryce 10K inkjet printer. "I knew this equipment would be a worthwhile investment. It gave us the ability to verify and imprint addresses and barcodes directly to each piece of bulk mail." The printer was the beginning of Gann's computerized system. Responsibility for bulk

mail was moved from individual departments and commercial mail houses to the Mail Center; a regimented schedule was developed for daily tasks, and the physical layout of the Center was reworked. "Calculating staff hours, postage and other factors, we saved \$60,000 the first six months the system was in place and we've been saving money ever since," states Gann.

Because the end of December is their busiest time of the year, Mail Center is one of the few departments that works

during the winter break. On December 16, when this interview took place, the Mail Center was waiting for three separate mailings totaling 32,000 pieces, all scheduled to go out before the break. "If every department would schedule their mailings carefully and stick to that schedule we wouldn't have such a logjam. Because these mailings will come to us late, my entire staff will work during the break. We have the choice to say 'the heck with it,' but that's not how we operate. We take pride in what we do."

Deanna Collins is Gann's assistant.

"I think this department is somewhat misunderstood around campus. I want them to know that the rules and regulations we give to them come from the Post Office. To save money and time, we have to follow the rules of the Post Office and we have to encourage the Harper community to follow those rules, too."

Most people on campus recognize mail messengers Dan Ciechanowski and Rob Szafraniec. As part of the Mail Center staff their day begins at 7:30 am. Ciechanowski and Szafraniec leave for the Palatine Post Office at 7:55 am each morning to pick up the day's mail and return by 8:30 am. The entire staff works together to sort the mail down by 9:30 am, and the morning mail delivery is complete by 10:30 am. By noon all interoffice mail is sorted, packages have been picked up and any 24-hour turnaround copy orders from the Print Shop are delivered. With the exception of a trip to the Post Office, the afternoon routine is very similar. In

addition, they process bulk mailings throughout the day. Last year 4,000,000 pieces of outgoing mail went through their system.

"We are the only department on campus that has a schedule we have to keep everyday, no matter what," boasts Gann. "We handle such a large volume of mail — an average of 30,000 pieces each day — that we can't slow down."

The only time Gann resembles a disgruntled postman is when he feels his staff isn't appreciated. "If it wasn't for Dee, Dan and Rob the Mail Center wouldn't be successful. It's great everyone sends me letters, 'Thank you Al,' but Al couldn't do it without this staff."



## President's Message



Turning the pages of the calendar to January, 1997, brings us into the year we will celebrate our 30th anniversary as a premier institution of higher learning for the citizens of the William Rainey Harper College district.

It is also a year in which we will be visited by peers from other institutions like ours from the North Central region. Our campus planning team will be receiving comments from all of us at the Campus Forum on January 17th. After that session, they will complete a final document to send to the North Central Association and the visiting team members.

It is my desire to use the time between January and the September team visit to address issues that are identified in the draft as needing improvement. I know we can make progress toward eliminating some of the concerns we recognize as critical to our future success.

Any successful steps we take in accomplishing this goal will help all of us to have a Happy New Year!

Paul N. Thompson  
President

## Departmental Developments

In October 1996 **Linda Brinkman**, CORP SRV, and consultant Jane Shuman were presenters at the National Council for Continuing Education and Training. Their presentation was entitled, *Emotional Intelligence at Work: Business and Industry Workforce Training*. As a result of their successful presentation an article by Brinkman and Shuman will be published in the National Council's journal, *The Catalyst*.

Five Adult Educational Development faculty made presentations at the recent Northern Region Spotlight on Partnerships Conference (held this year in Oak Brook). **Pat Best**, **Pat Mulcrone**, and **Kathryn Powell** co-presented *The Next Step: Linking Nonnative Literacy and GED Students to Jobs*. **Liz Minicz** presented *Adult ESL Multilevel Classroom Activities*, and **Jan Phillips** presented *Strategies for Teaching and Learning the MOST Basic Math Skills*. Jan Phillips recently saw the publication of her algebra and geometry teacher's resource guide, *Smart Solutions: Skills, Problem Solving, Tools, and Applications* (New Reader's Press, 1996); Phillips collaborated with **Kathy Osmus** on the publication. Pat Mulcrone had two books published this fall: *Contemporary's Essential GED* (Contemporary Books, 1996), and *Contemporary's Complete Pre-GED* (Contemporary Books, 1997). Jan Phillips and Pat Best were acknowledged as consultants for the *Essential GED* book; Jan Phillips prepared material for the mathematics section of the *Complete Pre-GED*.

Some Harper employees showed their holiday spirit by participating in Palatine's 7th Annual Festival of Trees. **Halina Polakowski**, **Marti Rizman**, **Linda Soto** and **Jim Wertz** of BUS/SS; **Pat Garrett** and **Mary Ann Jirak** of CAR CENT, **Linda Brinkman**, WK/VO DV, **Susan Carlson** and **Dawn Spannraft** of LIB ARTS, **Bonnie Kurth** and **Eugene Snow** of CAD/MFG, **Geri LaBeau**, CEMFG/TMPS, **Evelyn Hopkins**, **Russ Mills** and **Joanne Parke** of CONT ED, **Jacque Blount** and **Caroline Klees**, LS/HS, **Diane Spieth**, **Kathleen Thigpen** and **Amy Vogelgesang**, CORP SER. Each department created customized ornaments (i.e., computer disks for CAD/CAM, miniature sports equipment for WHP).

Congratulations to TM/PS faculty on their new arrivals: **Salah** and **Fanan Falouji** have a new son, Zakaria. Zakaria has a big brother Ali. **Paul** and **Carrie Sipiera** have a new daughter, Caroline Antarctica. Sisters Andrea and Paula will call her Carrie Ann.

