

Game room: more than playing games

The controversy surrounding the College game room has centered on whether the best use is being made of the designated space.

By Scott Starnes
Of The Print

In an effort to benefit the total campus community, many departments have expressed their desire to make practical usage of the game room location. Yet, thoroughly criticized since its inception, the game room benefits the faculty and students both directly and indirectly.

There are many positive facets to the game room which many people are not aware of, said Debbie Baker, Student Activities counselor. "A generous portion of the revenues obtained from the game room are allotted to many of the College

students involved in the Association of College Unions International (ACU-I) tournaments," Baker said.

One of the functions of the ACU-I "is to provide a cultural, social and recreational program, aiming to make free-time activity a cooperative factor with study in education." The ACU-I was designed for

students who wish to demonstrate their expertise in chess, backgammon, billiards, table tennis, etc., Baker said. "If not for the funds from game room revenue, many of these students would not be able to continue to the regional tournaments."

But the main purpose of the game room is "to provide a service for students," said Jim Roberts, director of student activities. "It is an academic and social medium in which the student can relax and communicate with other students."

"Many people, when they decide to enroll in College, do so not solely for the sake of going to school, studying, then going home, but to meet new

people, become up to date on current subject matter and make new friends. The game room was designed specifically for this purpose and has proven effective in this way," Roberts said. "Friendship is the key part to the game room environment."

According to JoAnn McCauley, ASG secretary, the game room is a place for the athletic as well as the non-athletic person. "Many students don't care to participate in physical sports and therefore enjoy playing billiards, foosball or chess. The students need this diversification," she said.

Julia Chitty, ASG senator, said that the game room is a great tension release for the students who use it and said that it develops the students' motorskills which will benefit the student in the classroom. "In billiards, various forms of mathematics are used along with skilled hand-eye coordination," she said.

Many outside College activities depend on the game room both financially and

physically, Roberts said. "Jack White, professional billiards player, said that billiards is the second most popular participant sport. He (White) could not have come to the College and set up his tournament if not for the pool tables in the game room," Roberts said.

"We have such a low student input in outside activities that by losing such a show as that of Jack White, there would be little outside of academics for the students to do."

Besides the funding of the ACU-I tournaments, the game room also provides revenue for the bowling team, he added.

Outside sources have expressed their dissatisfaction in the game room and have suggested relocating it. To move the room elsewhere, whether off campus or to another location would be taking away from the total

program, Mike McCarty, president of ASG said. "This is a place for the students to be themselves. By moving, for instance, the game room off campus completely, many students would seek the game room activities elsewhere. This

means that many students would have to go into town to play billiards or foosball which really gives them no incentive to return to the College and attend their classes," McCarty said. "A recent survey of student and faculty opinions of the game room concluded that the game room is a relaxing, competitive atmosphere which acts as a good influence on sportsmanship conduct."

"Students need to be competitive," McCauley said. These students who frequent the game room need to participate in a competitive atmosphere.

The game room is not just attended by the same old students, but by students ranging in age from 16 to whatever, Chitty said. "It is a mixture of all ages."

Problems do exist with the game room as with all departments, but the positives appear to outweigh the negatives in the game room controversy, Roberts said.

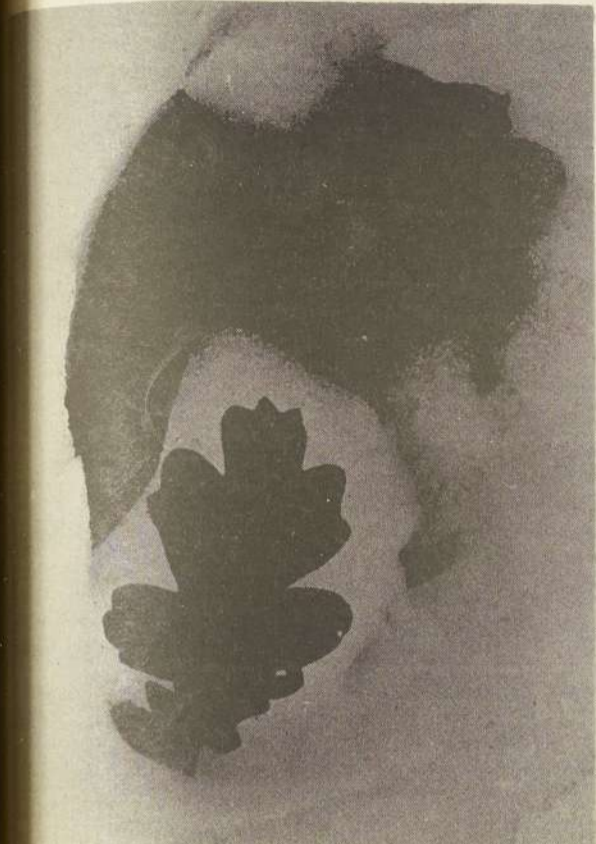


Photo by Kelly Laughlin

The snow last week seemed a pain to many but not to this photographer who found beauty in the beast.

Aid staff feels concern over student response

By Elena Vancil
Of The Print

A light initial response from students, after the recent raise in work study wages awarded during the fall term, concerns members of the College Financial Aid Department.

Dick Thompson, financial aid officer, expressed concern for a "surprisingly minimal" response from students following the recent raise in the work study budget. This raise results in an additional \$100 per term, available for all financial aid recipients.

"My reaction is that, either the need isn't as critical as we thought it was, or it is just too early to expect a response," Thompson said. "More students may decide to take advantage of the available funds in December or January. I am a little disappointed that we didn't draw more interest from the students."

Another topic of speculation and concern is a notable decline in the amount of Basic Educational Opportunity Grants (BEOG) awarded during the fall term, as compared to previous years. According to records, this decline accounts for \$25,000 less than last year given out, Thompson said.

"We have declined 22 percent from what we were, at this time last fall," Thompson said. "This decline is not typical of other colleges, and it is only the basic grant that has decreased. All other forms of financial aid have stayed at the same approximate level."

Confusion and discouragement on the part of the student, during the application process, has been considered a factor to the decline.

According to Thompson, many students encounter problems with the BEOG computer repeatedly writing back to them for additional information. This results in discouragement and intimidation. According to records, 75 percent of the requests for additional information, nationwide, are not returned.

"We have calculated that there are 65 to 75 students on campus that are eligible for funds, and not aware of it," Thompson said. "If students have been discouraged by red tape, or have applied for a BEOG and been turned down, we encourage them to bring their forms to the financial aid department and let us look into

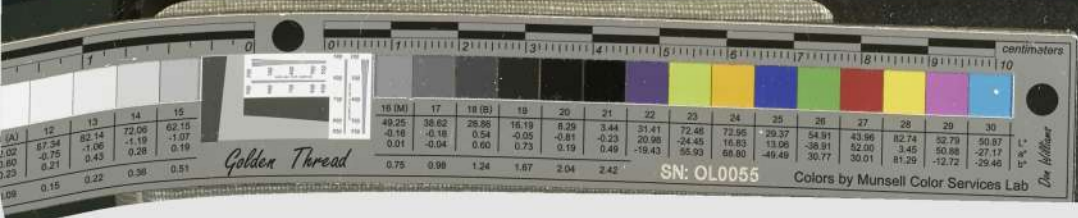
it." On the national scene, the Middle Income Assistance Act, a new program, is "accounting for the biggest influx of financial aid dollars ever," Thompson said.

Effective for the 1979-80 school year, a \$1.2 billion fund was signed by President Jimmy Carter this month. Results will include an increase in the family income limit for BEOG eligibility. The present ceiling stands at \$15,000 a year. It will be increased to \$25,000, Thompson said.

The original \$25,000 a year eligibility limit on student loans is also no longer in effect as a result of this action. Effective immediately, there is no income ceiling on student loans.

"The result of this budget increase, will be greater accessibility for middle income students far beyond most students' expectations," Thompson said. "I would encourage all students to watch for the January applications."

"I want to stress that a student with any problem or question concerning financial aid, bring it to us. We make a special effort to be accessible to students for this purpose."



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