

Reflections of the Class of 2002

By Paige Odabashian and Wendy Meadows

In the Fall of 1998, RA's and OA's took us swing dancing and PJ parading through the dorms, all around campus, and into our first brush with Lancaster nightlife – the Chameleon! Next stop, college classes 101: just as we began to settle into college life, we soon lamented the long gone days of easy A's . . . we began to understand where F&M got its solid academic reputation and rumors spread of grade deflation. But no matter, we didn't worry, why? Because we relied on Dave Binder's worldly orientation advice: "I'm sorry. I didn't know. I'm a freshman!!" A large majority of us began to ponder our visceral need to go pre-med and through our freshman seminars and Foundation classes, we learned where else our liberal arts education at F&M could lead us. Soon we began to balance our new lives filled with classes, new friends, sports practice, and the theatre. Together we learned the ropes of the dining hall and at which times it was better to visit the Common Ground. We read through the list of cool places to eat in the area in the Nevonian. We coped with friends and loved ones left at home by keeping in touch through emails and AIM – such a new concept back then. And we scoured the pages of the original Facebook to see all of our new classmates. We were learning how to begin our journey as a "Fummer." As soon as Winter Break came, it went. And now we were left to ponder the question of to rush or not to rush, and then to go Greek or not to go Greek. We also learned that F&M never closed for snow, not even when there was two feet on the ground and class was (gasp!) more than 200 meters away. We saw friends adorned with ribbons and pins, dancing away at Rock-A-Like, as others proclaimed their status as GDI. We cheered on our teams on Baker, Williamson, and Mayser, while others raced in our state-of-the-art pool. Mostly, we will never forget dodging the cricket and Frisbee games on Hartman Green, fending off the possessed campus squirrels, playing endless games of Snood, lying out on the Quad, waiting for a washing machine to free up, purple mothers at Skull, the song Ghetto Superstar, the ever so long walk across Harrisburg Pike to the ASFC, pretzel sandwiches at Isaac's, our first dorm lottery, and the alternating smells of manure and twizzlers. As our freshman year drew to a close, we dutifully turned over "borrowed" glasses, silverware, and cups to the D-hall; we hugged good-bye to our new friends, and wondered what the next year would bring. In May '99, as we left F&M for our first summer away, gasoline at Turkey Hill cost 83 cents!

Our sophomore year began as we traipsed back into the dorms; this time without the help of those overly energetic RA's and OA's. Many of us bunked with friends in a suite in Thomas. At least we were finally allowed to bring cars to campus . . . even though we had to park across Harrisburg Pike. We settled back into our Fummer routines, which included selecting a major, snacking on spaghetti pizza, walking to Turkey Hill, heading outside during a fire alarm at all hours of the night, and even watching iMac computers and plastic bottles sail through the sky. The Flapjack festival got us through exams. We also began to learn other things about our campus and that our health center would accidentally diagnose female, and sometimes even male, patients with pregnancy. Our sophomore year, some classes were cancelled for snow, but labs still went on. We cheered on our men's

basketball team as they made it to the Final Four. We sold back what textbooks we could, and tried our best to get into Hildy's or Brendee's.

In our junior year, a majority of us moved off campus into townhouses, apartments, and lofts. Some of us even journeyed outside of Lancaster via a study abroad program to D.C., Australia, England, Italy, Spain, and endless other destinations. Those of us that lived on W. James or W. Frederick quickly learned the woes of street cleaning and the best ways to vie for a choice parking spot. We benefited from the genesis of the College Hill apartments and quickly learned the difference between the old and new "lofts." The sound of horses trotting down College Ave on a random Sunday brought us outside to see the Amish in their buggies heading to their place of worship. Some of us helped others seek political asylum, while others participated in the creativity project, took part in 'Take Back the Night,' gained an editorial spot on the College Reporter or the Dispatch, built a house with Habitat for Humanity, and even broadcasted their own radio show.

In the last year of our time at F&M, we faced common hardships, most notably September Eleventh. We gathered together in our classes, apartments, houses, eyes glued to the news. Together, we struggled to find meaning in the tragedy in front of us, and once again turned to our peers for understanding, compassion, and even growth. We thanked our Franklin & Marshall education for our ability to listen, discern, and cope with the horrible tragedy that unfolded before our eyes. We thanked F&M Admissions for creating diversity within our class so that instead of criticizing difference, we learned to love and incorporate it into our everyday lives. We also learned that life had to go on. As the rest of the year unfolded, many of us received letters of acceptance into graduate school. Some of us who had traveled overseas to attend F&M began to plan the journey home; some of us decided to remain in Pennsylvania, and still others spread all around the country. And of course we still had fun: many of us discovered 2-for-1 Wednesday nights at Blue Star, our last Spring Arts, on-campus movies, last minute trips to the outlets, and Myrtle. Our last official day at F&M ended in the exact same place where our first day began, the ASFC. While we were not blessed with ideal weather that day, we gathered together and learned that our future was so bright, that all would need sunglasses to bear it. Our class had met that standard. Today, we are comprised of teachers, doctors, lawyers, writers, scientists, bankers, entrepreneurs . . . the list goes on and on and we will forever thank F&M for where we are today and for the growth we will continue to experience.