

## Class of 1973 Reflection

By Ken Kohlmaier

If a college graduate were asked today to look 40 years into their future it would seem like a lifetime. Yet, in retrospect it goes by in a heartbeat. Trying to reflect upon a significant event 40 years ago causes one to realize that with all the changes that occur in our lives, some things remain the same.

For example, today's generation has just weathered two wars, the worst economic disaster since the great depression and an immigration problem that pervades our social and economic fiber. We, on the other hand, protested against racial injustice, tried to extricate ourselves from a war in Vietnam while attempting to perceive our world in psychedelic ways that only Timothy Leary's mind altering experimental methods would have us "turn on, tune in, and drop out".

It is interesting to note that before we would complete our freshman year it was finished for us by the events surrounding the Kent State shootings. It was a very chilling and sobering event that caused many of us to question our government as well as our own values. Whether competing against ourselves or each other, we were always driven to succeed, striving to challenge the conventional wisdom in our quest for knowledge and understanding. It was that F&M experience which taught us to keep an open mind in questioning old ideas while critically evaluating new ones both on the social and scientific stages.

Forty years later, life's experiences have provided us the wisdom to better understand ourselves and the world in which we live, all emanating from our college tutelage. Many of us have had children follow in our footsteps and experience the same culture as we did at F&M. Although the names of the professors have changed, the academic environment remains the same. Glenn Robinson is still screaming at his team to play better defense and the students are still challenged to critically analyze new ideas. Yes, the kids will always be concerned about their GPA and gaining grad school admittance, just as we did. And they will also continue to have their fun at fraternity parties on Saturday night; except they start to pre-game on Wednesday. Unfortunately, however, they will never have the experience of spending a mere \$5 on campus to see great artists in concert like Blood Sweat and Tears, Joe Cocker and Three Dog Night.

Over the years, even though the college campus along with our lives, have changed dramatically, the one constant that remains is the F&M experience that taught us to critically think while developing us into becoming productive members of society. Conflicting as it was; competitive as it is; even more challenging as it continues to be, the F&M experience will always provide its students four of the best years of their lives.