14 August 1996

Jane Jervis
Shannon Ellis
Art Costantino

Dear friends,

I may have written something like this before, but if I did I can't find it in my files.

The subject of this note can best be described as Evergreen tradition, respect, pride in the institution, and student orientation. As I walk around the campus, I keep noticing disturbing little things that lead me to think, "Now, if we really had a strong tradition among the students of pride in the College, we wouldn't have that." As a paradigm case, I'll use the Dragon Staircase. Right now, it seems to be in good shape. The few little graffiti and political corrections have been cleaned up; I was able to take a visitor through it the other day without fear that I'd have to apologize for its condition. But any day now I expect to see some new little comment or scribble on it.

My ideal for Evergreen is that students consider the Dragon Staircase and other features of the campus almost sacred. The word is not too strong, though I obviously don't mean to imply a real religious feeling. I mean simply that our students ought to develop such a sense of love and respect for the College that they could not think of desecrating the campus. To move beyond my paradigm case, I walk around in the woods quite a bit; we had students in our program this past year sitting in the woods for a few hours each week to observe the flora and fauna, and other programs also use the campus for natural history work. (Jane, you and I talked once about the question of how we use our thousand acres and about pressures from outside on our land; this is an important question, and about a week ago Richard Cellarius and I talked to Steve Trotter, who was preparing some material for the Board.) I see too many places where the land is being treated badly. People have broken many side-trails into the woods off the established trails; there is too much junk lying around; areas are being eroded as the vegetation is trampled away. We can't fill the woods with cops. The only way to keep our land in good condition is by establishing an ethic in our students, so they take pride in the land, have a sense of ownership, and act to preserve the land. (Yes, I'm sure some of the problems are due to outsiders; but if we have 3,000 students running around in the woods, they must do more damage than the relatively few outsiders.)

I could find extensions of these ideas to other matters, such as participating enthusiastically in the proper recycling and disposal of wastes. The general point is that we can improve the College in small but important ways by paying some attention to the shaping of students' attitudes. I am looking at student orientation. Incoming students have to learn our traditions, our ways of behaving in programs and in our interactions with one another, and I proposing that we start to develop some attitudes, some traditions of thought about the College. We enjoy the

Dragon Staircase and show it to visitors with pride; we don't mess with it. We enjoy our beautiful forests, respect their use for natural history studies, stick to the trails, preserve them.

Best wishes,

Burt Guttman