

Margaret Chase Smith Library



A Newsletter for Friends of the Library



Vol. 28, No.1

January, 2012

The Square Character by Margaret Chase Smith, December, 1964

“He’s the fellow with feeling whose spine tingles, whose heart beats faster with pride when he hears the song of his alma mater or the national anthem and when he stands at attention as the flag unfurls.”

In today’s growing, but tragic, emphasis on materialism, we find a perversion of the values of things in life as we once knew them. For example, the creed once taught children as they grew up was that the most important thing was not in whether you won or lost the game but rather in “how you played the game.”

That high level attitude that stresses the moral side no longer predominates in this age of pragmatic materialism that increasingly worships the opposite creed that “the end justifies the means” or the attitude of get what you can in any way, manner or means that you can. This perversion of values has

even prostituted our semantics for the meaning of once revered and honored words has even been changed in this glorification of pragmatism. The word “character” used to have an honorable meaning for it indicated intelligence with heart and a high sense of ethics—it meant courage of one’s convictions. Its connotation was determination, integrity, responsibility, honor. But today we hear it used increasingly in a derogatory sense. For many of us will refer to an eccentric or a person who is abnormal or strange as a “character.” The “character” is equated with an “odd-ball”—or he is equated with another formerly honored word that has now been perverted in today’s pragmatic lingo—the word “square.”

The dictionary definitions of the word “square” include: “According with ordinary justice; fair; just; equitable; honest; accurately adjusted; and having debt and credit balanced; even; settled.” When you were “on the square” you were acting in an honest and fair manner. You had paid your debts. You were honest. You were fair. But what is a “square” today? He’s the fellow who has pride in playing a fair game—instead of being

interested only in the result. He’s the fellow who is laughed at because he refuses to take the short cut of cheating or to short change his fellow man. He’s the eager beaver who gives everything he does the “old college try”—who believes the sin is the dishonest act not just in getting caught and not in trying to get away with something dishonest. He’s the fellow who makes his lazy fellow workers mad because he volunteers, excels, puts forth that little extra effort, and is genuinely interested in his job and his responsibility. He’s the fellow whose interest is in doing the best job he can instead of the pragmatic interest of only holding a job.

He’s the fellow with feeling whose spine tingles, whose heart beats faster with pride when he hears the song of his alma mater or the national anthem and when he stands at attention as the flag unfurls. He’s the fellow willing to get “involved” in emotional defense of principles instead of hiding behind a “cool and cozy” silence.

But he’s the fellow who is so derogated these days by the sophisticates who deride the things he stands for—that too many of us remain mutes who do not speak out in defense of the principles he stands for because we fear that if we do, we, too, will be called “squares.” He’s the prime victim of today’s pragmatic materialism. And he is a continuing target of those who debase our fundamental moral principles. Tragically, he is a dying breed—and when the last of his breed has passed on, then so will the moral decay of our country and our civilization have become complete—and the triumph of the pragmatist over the “character” and the “square” have become total.



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Senior College Tour

Joel Karp made arrangements for students from UMaine's Hutchinson Center in Belfast to tour the Library and enjoy a "picnic" lunch. Those attending were participants in the Senior College program. While in the area, they also visited the local New Balance outlet and the L. C. Bates Museum at the Good Will-Hinckley campus.

MCS Public Affairs Scholars Visit

Margaret Chase Smith Policy Center Senior Research Associate Charlie Morris brought UMaine students Amber Hathaway, Katrina Martin, and Miranda Chadbourne to tour the library and learn a bit more about the person for whom their scholarship is named. All three young women are involved in research projects. In order to be eligible for the award, students must be Maine residents; undergraduates with a GPA of 3.0 or better; registered at UMaine for 12 credits or more; and have completed 40 degree hours prior to the semester in which application is made.



L-R: Amber Hathaway, Katrina Martin, Miranda Chadbourne, and Charlie Morris



SVA Begins New School Year with Tour

Students from Somerset Valley Academy toured in October and participated in the first of several visits geared to the original "Skowhegan Girl" program initiated by Vanessa Caron. During this re-introduction to the Library, the boys and girls made name tags. Additional activities focusing on what Margaret Chase did when she was a little girl are in the future for the SVA students.



20s and 50s Topic of Study

Students from the Skowhegan Area Middle School 7th and 8th grade Enrichment Resources classes spent the day at the Library in November. Their research focus was divided between the 1920s for the 7th graders and the 1950s for the 8th graders. They worked diligently going through the scrapbooks, reviewing the files, and copying material. Teacher Carla Burnham required each student to find two to four pieces of information in the research room, timeline display, and home and then to assemble their findings and make a presentation to the class.

Reid Joins Staff

Next-door neighbor Amos Reid has joined the staff as a part-time maintenance man. Working ten hours a week, Amos will handle such things as trash and snow removal, mail delivery, and special projects. He has already tackled the garage and found some interesting items—old license plates, a music stand and an old model 5180 wheelbarrow. His post high school education found him earning his Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Business Administration at Thomas College in Waterville, Maine where he was a member of Sigma Beta Delta and Alpha Chi honor societies. He is also an umpire for the Skowhegan Cal Ripken/Central Maine Babe Ruth League and manages family-owned rental properties.

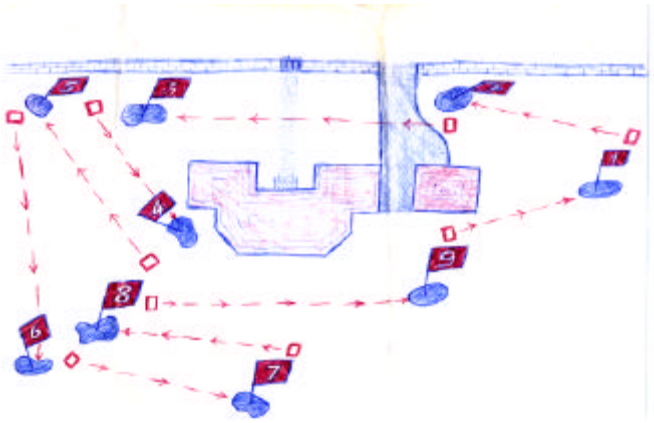
He's not a bad cook either, as he has brought a few home-made baked donuts for the staff. Welcome, Amos!



Girl Scout Troop #865 from the Skowhegan area toured the facility in November with leader Lisa Meacham. Senator Smith has long had an interest in the Girl Scout program and was awarded honorary membership in August, 1992, by the Kennebec Girl Scout Council.

Golf Course for a President

Although it is currently the wrong time of year for golfing in Maine, such was not the case in June of 1955 when Senator Smith invited President Dwight Eisenhower to use her "Pitch-n-Putt" course in her back yard. She offered, "we use practice balls to simulate full strokes used on a regular course with a regulation ball." It was a par 32, 9-hole course which traveled around the entire perimeter of Senator Smith's home for a total of 2556 feet. Although the Eisenhower file contains a photo of Senator Smith wielding a golf club on hole 9, the sketch below was only discovered recently in personal papers which had not been previously catalogued.



Eighth grade students from Blue Hill made the long trek to Skowhegan to further enhance their study of the Cold War.



Sophomore government students from Valley High School in Bingham came with teacher Luke Hartwell to reinforce their curriculum by seeing firsthand the collection of Margaret Chase Smith. Mr. Hartwell had been here himself as a Valley High School student. It is gratifying to know that he wished to carry on Senator Smith's legacy with his own students now that he has become a teacher.



SMCC Student Studies MCS

Southern Maine Community College student Kathy Bouchard has returned to complete her college degree after raising her family. She is a first-year student majoring in Social Work. In the past, she has worked with female prisoners in a volunteer lawyer project and hopes to continue working with young women or families in crisis. Focusing on Margaret Chase Smith for her Introduction to American Government class at SMCC, she was happy to find such an extensive amount of material available at the MCS Library.

"Friends" newsletter is published by the Margaret Chase Smith Library.

Editor: Dr. David Richards; Coordinator: Angela Stockwell, with the assistance of Vanessa Caron and Lynnette King. The Library is a non-profit research center and museum of 20th-century political artifacts committed to bringing the ideals of Senator Smith's career in public service to the people of Maine and the nation.

Hours: Monday thru Friday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Telephone: 207-474-7133; FAX: 207-474-8878

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We Have a New Affiliation!

Readers may have noticed that the first page of this newsletter no longer has Northwood University in its banner. After more than 30 years of affiliation, Northwood University of Midland, Michigan, has exercised the option to decline further administration of the MCS Library. Following a search for a new partnership, it is a pleasure to report that the University of Maine will take over that role. The Library will report to UMaine's Margaret Chase Smith Policy Center and will continue to provide policy programs for the public, museum exhibits for visitors, educational programs for schools, and research capabilities for scholars. During this transitional period, it is the hope that dear friends will continue to offer guidance and support as the MCS Library embarks on a new chapter in its history.

The relationship between Senator Smith and Northwood dates to the mid-70s when co-founders of the school, R. Gary Stauffer and Arthur E. Turner, approached Senator Smith, offering her an honorary degree and chairmanship of its Distinguished Women's group. From that early connection, Northwood agreed to administer and help Senator Smith build the facility. Our sincerest appreciation is extended to all those responsible at the time and those who continued the productive partnership for over three decades.

It was a logical choice for the Margaret Chase Smith Library to become a part of the University of Maine effective January 1, 2012.

The University is already home to the Margaret Chase Smith Policy Center. The existing close relationship between the Library and the Policy Center will increase through joint activities. Senator Smith maintained close ties with the University throughout her career and was proud of the Honorary Doctor of Laws degree awarded to her in 1949.

As part of the transition, MCS Foundation President and Vice-president, Charles Cragin and Merton Henry, respectively, announced in a December 6 letter to Library supporters, that Director Dr. Gregory P. Gallant will retire and become Director Emeritus, and Assistant Director Dr. David Richards will become the Interim Director.

The MCSL will continue to flourish as an archive, as a museum preserving the Senator's home and memorabilia, and as an educational and public policy center. Senator Smith's life and career demonstrated the importance of civic engagement, civility and service in a democracy. The perpetuation of her legacy in these tumultuous times is more important than ever.

We think Senator Smith would be pleased with this latest agreement between the University of Maine and the Margaret Chase Smith Foundation. For those who wish to help with the cost of this transition, tax-deductible donations may be made to the Margaret Chase Smith Foundation at PO Box 4510, Portland, Maine 04112.



THE UNIVERSITY OF
MAINE



Front entrance to the Margaret Chase Smith Library

"Trivia" Answer from October Newsletter—

The October trivia question was: Senator Smith broke the sound barrier in 1957 and another lady was the first American woman in space in 1983. Who was that woman? The answer is Sally Ride and can be found on p.6 in the Herb Paradis article. Congratulations to Jack Goldberg who quickly responded with the correct answer.

The January trivia question is: What was the population of Skowhegan in the year 1900? The answer is somewhere in this newsletter. Be the first to respond with the correct answer and where you found it in the newsletter.

You might win a prize!

