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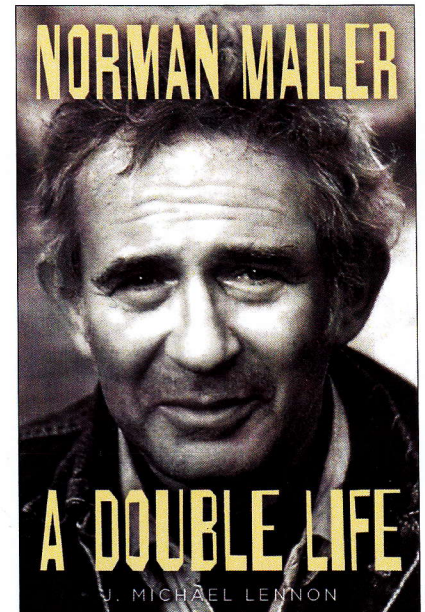
As Mailer's authorized biographer, Lennon was given access to thousands of letters, interviews and other materials. Integrating the streams of material became the most difficult part of the biography project for Lennon.

Included in the plethora of papers were over 45,000 letters written to and by Mailer, unpublished journals and interviews with Mailer, his friends and family. One of Lennon's chief challenges was ensuring that Mailer and his private life were accorded as much exposition and analysis as the public man. *The Wall Street Journal* says that Lennon "marshals an impressive amount of research and deploys it deftly."

Lennon describes how he got to know the late author. "In 1971, right after he got into a tussle with Gore Vidal on the *Dick Cavett Show*, I wrote him a letter of support, and also passed on some of my theories about his recent nonfiction books, which were changing the way major events were reported," Lennon says. Mailer was one of the leading voices of the New Journalism during the 1960s. This literary genre is a writing technique that combines fictional story telling with reportage.

After corresponding, Lennon and Mailer met in fall 1972 at Western Illinois University. Mailer had presented a reading from his account of the 1972 elections. Over time, they grew closer as Lennon began editing books by and about Mailer. In 1986, after reading Lennon's book, *Critical Essays on Norman Mailer*, Mailer asked him to serve as one of his literary executors.

By Bill Schneider MA '13



## FIRST-YEAR ORIENTATION A TEAM EFFORT FOR STAFF, FACULTY

When Wilkes freshmen come to campus for Welcome Weekend at the start of the fall semester, they've already had a glimpse of life at the University. First-Year Student Orientation during the summer months is a time when incoming freshmen come to campus, often for the first time, to get a taste of what the next four years will be like.

But few may be aware of the planning done by staff in Student Affairs and University College to prepare for the two sessions in late June and early July.

For University College Coordinators Mary Beth Mullen and Gretchen Yeninas, work begins in early spring when they confirm students are registered for a session, have selected a major and class preferences. Next, they contact departments to see which faculty members are serving as advisers for incoming freshmen. Approximately 75 faculty and staff work at orientation.

"Once we have advisor names, Gretchen and I split the list," Mullen says. "Gretchen takes the humanities, business and education. I have all the College of Science and Engineering, nursing and pharmacy."

Dean of Student Affairs Mark Allen says orientation allows students to get to know their advisors.

"Because of our online presence, we're able to populate their courses so that the faculty advisor's role can be to get to know

the student more in terms of who he or she is, why they're interested in a major, what their goals in life are," Allen said.

Associate Dean of Student Development Phil Ruthkosky says orientation also is a chance for current students to step up as leaders, the most notable being E-mentors. This group, supervised by Sharon Castano, student development coordinator, are upperclassmen who work with the incoming class during orientation, Welcome Weekend, and throughout the fall semester. E-mentors coordinate events such as Casino Night, take students to different sessions and community service sites, and answer any questions the incoming freshmen may have.

There is a student coordinator for orientation, a role that was served in summer 2013 by Adoma Yeboah, a junior biology major. Other students work as resident assistant coordinators.

Civic Engagement Coordinator Megan Valkenburg, organizes community service activities. All freshmen participate in service during orientation, working at a variety of assignments, which include packing food at the Commission for Economic Opportunity, planting trees with the Forty-Fort Shade Tree Commission and working at Blue Chip Animal Rescue. Jill Price, adventure education coordinator, also offers activities.



Many Wilkes faculty and staff make first-year orientation possible. Pictured here are staff from student affairs and student development, from left, Philip Rutkowski, student Adoma Yeboah, Melissa Howells, Sharon Castano and Kayla Cauthon.

By Christine Lee