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Dr. Doster cuts ribbon to start new solar energy program.

## ACC Part of Solar Energy Project

By MILTON ROGERSON

Solar energy may soon play a vital role in wastewater and sewage treatment for the City of Wilson if an experimental project now being conducted by the city and Atlantic Christian College proves successful.

Not only would the city be in a position to conserve expensive electrical energy, it could substantially reduce labor and other processing costs. Savings could amount to thousands of dollars per year.

The project involves drying digested sludge in the sewage treatment process through the use of solar energy. While on the surface the process sounds to be of little importance, in reality it is a very necessary and expensive phase of a rather complicated process.

Site for the project is at the Hominy Creek Wastewater Management Facility located two miles south of Wilson. It is a new plant incorporating most of the latest "state of the art techniques," capable of handling 12 million gallons of wastewater a day.

The facility has two methods of drying digested sludge -- sludge drying beds, and sludge dewatering centrifuging.

The drying bed method utilizes artificial layers of porous material upon which digested sludge is dried by drainage and evaporation. This method is used for those months when weather is favorable.

The centrifuging method is utilized during the inclement weather months.

A comparison of the costs of the two systems reveals dramatically why the City of Wilson is interested in the solar experiment. Through the centrifuge method of drying sludge, the

cost is \$169 per ton. The dry bed method costs \$6 per ton.

At an average of 75 dried tons of sludge per month, the comparative costs of the two methods are \$450 for dry bed and \$12,675 for centrifuge, a difference of \$12,275. Any extension of the dry bed methodology into the months when the centrifuge process is necessary would yield significant economy in costs of operation.

In the drying bed method, a solution of 95 percent water and five percent solids in digested sludge is dispersed over beds consisting of a layer of graded gravel under a layer of clear sand. The major portion of the water is drained in the first 15-18 hours.

The problem arises in the further drying process through evaporation and takes an average of three to four weeks under favorable weather conditions.

The rate of evaporation is totally unpredictable during the winter months necessitating the centrifuge process.

If the rate of evaporation can be made predictable by heating the sludge beds, the dewatering centrifuge process would not have to be utilized as often, if at all, and significant economies could be realized.

It is at this point where solar energy would be utilized-- to heat the drying beds from the bottom to speed up the drying process. In the conventional sludge bed, water is evaporated from the top. Through the solar energy process, heating panels and grills on the bottom of the bed would speed the process by literally cooking the bottom portion of the sludge. The sludge could then be removed from the bed somewhat like a brownie.

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## Extended Visitation Passes Test

Dean Gordon Joyner told the Collegiate that there seemed to be "no apathy here," when it comes to extended visitation. The recent events concerning extended visitation have Joyner praising the A.C. on-campus students for showing a real interest in something which concerns them.

Joyner and the Student Center Committee recently completed a study on the extended visitation and the results were turned over to the Collegiate. According to the study, since the trial period of 30 to 60 days went into effect on October 23, almost 52% of the dorm students participated in visitation, over half of these had visitors during the extended period. The only real complaints which were voiced by the students concerned visitation on Sunday night from 8-10 p.m. and on Friday and Saturday from 12 midnight to 1 a.m. A total of 42 students did not like the Sunday night period, while only 14 complained about the Friday and Saturday periods.

The voter response and the participation of dorm students in extended visitation was satisfactory enough to meet two of the three criteria necessary for the proposed extension to go through. According to the agreement made prior to the trial period, it was agreed that at least three-fourths of the on-campus population must vote in favor of the extended visita-

tion proposal. Although on 71.8% of the students did, in fact, vote for the proposal, only 2.8% voted against it, the rest not voting. Joyner felt that this majority was substantial enough to pass the proposal.

The second criteria stated that at least 25% of the students must participate in the extended visitation by visiting or hosting, or the proposal would fail. Since 38.6% (309 students) did participate, this requirement was met as well.

The third obstacle to the plan, though, is very important. It was agreed that the extended hours should in no way cost the college any extra money, such as, for paying R.A.'s to work extra hours. Joyner told the Collegiate that if extended visitation should begin to cost the college, it would have to cease.

So, for now, the students have extended visitation. Joyner urged the student body to make sure that they can keep it, by making sure that any extra costs were paid for, in some way. If not, then the old visitation hours will again come into effect.

Joyner also urged the student body to remain active in campus activities. The Dean of Students told the Collegiate that he hoped the students would follow through in other issues as well. Joyner stated that he trusts the students' judgment, and that he hoped the students would continue to get things out in the open for debate.

New visitation hours are as follows:  
Friday 7:00 p.m. - 1:00 a.m.  
Saturday 1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.  
8:00 p.m. - 1:00 a.m.  
Sunday 1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.  
8:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.



### News Briefs

It's been a month now and still no clues on the whereabouts of S.G.A. president, Don Berry. Wilson police are still investigating the mystery.

It seems as if everything has to happen and is happening between now and Christmas. In the midst of it all you are invited to celebrate Christmas in worship on Tuesday morning, December 12, in Howard Chapel. The service will begin at 11:00 a.m. and will conclude by 11:30 a.m.

**Attention all Christians!**  
Please remember to be in deep prayer for Marilyn Spinale as she is in the hospital this holiday.

Have any good ideas for a theme for Homecoming '79? Your ideas are **needed** for a super start. Please turn them over to Zeb Whitehurst, Director of College Relations, in the Administration Building.

### Here and There

The trial of Betty Lou Johnson continues this week. A leading state Republican, she is on trial for the July shooting death of her prominent husband, Dr. Archie T. Johnson, Jr.

A Rocky Mount policeman was fired Tuesday and thirteen others were reprimanded for their roles in circulating a racially offensive piece of material. The fake high school competency test that the policemen circulated contained slurs against blacks.

**DORMITORYS CLOSE FOR CHRISTMAS BREAK**  
Wednesday, December 20, at 8:00 pm. Dorms will reopen on Sunday January, 7 at 2:00 pm.

Could it be possible gas prices are on the rise before Christmas trips begin? The answer is "yes" according to industry analysts who predict motorists will be paying a couple of cents more per gallon of gas within a week.