Building a Future

by Cathy Moses

One of the characteristics of this school is progress and continual change. Obvious evidence is the constant hammering, building, and noise coming from the areas around Beall and Bryan all in preparation for the years ahead. Construction has been going on at NCSSM from the very beginning when they renovated Watts Hospital and will continue until the school reaches the point where it can comfortably accommodate the maximum number of students. Many things are on the agenda for construction : the top priority is the completion of the biology and chemistry labs which will be located on second and third floors of Bryan Center. Also, pavilions C, D, and E, adjacent to Beall Pavilion, will become residence halls with a laundry to accommodate 96 students. The new library will be on first floor Bryan North with construction beginning in June of 1982 and ending in January of 1983. Construction on the cafeteria begins May of 1982 on ground floor Bryan resulting in a kitchen, dining room, snack bar, and staff lounge. The long awaited observatory will be placed on the roof of Bryan in May. Various planning committees have been meeting to plan for a gymnasium and infirmary, renovation of Watts Hall for administration, Math, and English departments, and a new Art department. We are definitely making progress despite unforeseen delays. Dr Braughn Taylor, coordinator or development, said, "With better and more careful planning construction would proceed more smoothly, but problems always arise."

First Place

On Saturday, April 24, the NCSSM Quiz Bowl Team won the Quiz Bowl state championship which was held at the North Carolina Central University. To reach the state level a team has to win its county competition and place first or second in the regional competition. The NCSSM team won both the Durham County and the regional tournaments for this area. The team had amassed more total points than any other school and were seeded first in the state competition.

A quiz bowl match consists of three rounds. In each round each person on each team is asked one question. A correct answer is worth 10 points in the first round and 10 more in each successive round. A wrong answer allows the other team the opportunity to answer for half-value. Consultation is allowed only in the third round.

The first match pitted the Unicorn team against the formidable team of Hickory High. After two rounds Hickory High had taken a lead of over 50 points. By the third round, NCSSM took the lead and went on to win by 85 points. The next match for the math-science team was a semi-final bout with Westover High. They won this one handily by over 100 points. Then came the state final match between NCSSM and Northeastern High. The team was behind by a sizable margin after two rounds. Again, however, the team pulled it out in the last round to win the championship.

For this win, each team member won a $100 savings bond and a small cup. The school will also receive a large trophy. Team members were Adam Falk, Darryll Hendricks, Eric Roush, and Tommy Yadon. Alternates for the team were Charlotte Chiu and Robin Cunningham. Throughout this trek to victory the team was faithfully sponsored by Mr. Litle, Dr. Wilson, and her husband.

Did You Know?

by Meg Gatling

Remember when your physics teacher told you that the Newtonian physics you'd been learning wasn't quite right because it didn't take relativity into account, and you almost left the room? Well, researchers at the University of Arizona believe that Einstein's theory, which was formulated on the hypothesis that the sun is a speroid, is incomplete; they seem to have evidence that the sun is, instead, oblate. Using the acoustic vibrations of the sun to measure its rotation rate at different depths, they have obtained data suggesting that the sun's core rotates seven times faster than its surface, a difference great enough to cause a "gravitational stretching" of the sun. If the sun were oblate, space-time would be curved differently and another term accounting for solar oblateness would be added to Einstein's theory. However, no one has been able to reproduce this data, so neither you nor your physics teacher should get indigestion over it . . . especially if you eat food subsitutes, like polysugar.

Poly sugar is a sugar substitute made of a poly (vinyl alcohol) and a sucrose. Researchers at the Univ-ersity of Dayton have synthesized nine different polysugars, each having a different number of poly groups attached and a distinctive degree of sweetness. Because polysugars cannot be broken down easily in the mouth, they form organic acids that are too heavy to diffuse into the bloodstream. Imagine being able to inhale your mom's chocolate cream pie without having to worry about all those calories.

On a more practical note, Professor Melvin Calvin of the University of California is convinced that certain plants can provide automotive fuels that will eventually be cost-competitive with gasoline and diesel fuel. These plants are mostly tropical and contain hydrocarbons - the main ingredient of automotive fules - in a milky substance known as latex. Plants belinging th the genus Euphorbia, especially the gopher weed, are rich in hydrocarbons and can be grown on semi-arid land, such as that of the American Southwest. Calvin's goals are to find efficient ways to extract the needed chemicals and to increase the yield per acre of these plants to make their product competitive with imported oil. An acre of gopher weeds now yields not only six barrels of refinable crude oil, but also six barrels of alcohol.

While Calvin studies plants, another researcher at the University of California, entomologist George Poiner, pores over preserved insects. He has identified subcellular structures in the cells of a gnat that got caught in the sap of some ancient pine tree and has mummified over the past 40 million years. This hardened sap, called amber, has preserved insects so well that even chromatin can be seen in cell nuclei. Allen Wilson, also at Berkely, will soon try to extract DNA from gnat cells and to incorporate it into bacteria. Thus, scientists may soon be able to read ancient genetic messages and to learn about the evolution of genes by comparing these

continued on page 3

Student Council '83

by Meg Gatling

The rising seniors of NCSSM have chosen the fearless few who will lead us through the second half of our NCSSM experience. President Dhruva Sen, Vice President/Secretary Doug Graham, and Treasure Adam Falk will undoubtedly turn the 1982-83 school year into the best days of our lives. We can be sure that our ideas and complaints will be considered at Student Council meetings through our six Representatives-at-Large, Kim McLauchlin, Hooman Sabeti, Marty Schwartz, Lisa Shouse, Amy Sturkey, and Simon Verghese.

What qualities do students look for when they select class leaders? A random survey indicates that most voters seek responsible, friendly, dedicated, realistic, enthusiastic and diplomatic candidates. Campaign speeches emphasized the need for greater student interest and involvement in their government. The communication gap between the Student Council and the Administration was also recognized. Plans for next year include establishing a stronger Network, promoting class unity, and informing the students of matters discussed in Coucil meetings.

This year's Student Council,headed by President Chip Tillman, Vice President/Secretary Curtis Adair, and Treasurer Roger Kromer, held weekly meetings throughout the year which other students were welcome to attend. Our new leaders have been working with current officers to ensure a smooth transition. Junior representatives will be elected next fall. We are proud of our present Student Council and thank them for laying the foundations of student leadership.