NEWS



Tar Heel/Becky Garrison Working in UNC plant ...brings reflection on job

Working at power plant work is hot, dirty

By DANNY REID Staff Writer

Hot. Noisy. Dirty.

Oh, is it dirty. The boilers burn coal dust. Coal dust is dirty.

The combustion of coal dust produces soot. Soot is dirty.

Put them together and you get black crud. Black crud accumulates in my nostrils and, I suppose, in my lungs. A glimpse of my handkerchief would turn a strong man's stomach.

My first day on the job at UNC's power plant at the western end of Cameron Avenue had me using a vacuum hose to suck up the black crud off boiler number one. Crawling inside the boiler came later.

I sometimes have to go straight to campus after work, without cleaning up. I have gotten a few strange looks. I expect the campus police to nab me for vagrancy, or at least for being a public nuisance.

But, I pretty much like my job. I enjoy learning about the equipment and the power process. It is like a big train set.

rear of China Nite Restaurant



But consider.

The other day 1 was helping replace a valve. I was squatting on steam pipes, and if I had slipped, I would have burned my hands — through heavy gloves — grabbing another pipe, or I would have fallen through the tangle of pipes to a cement floor seven feet below. I had to hose my boots periodically to cool them. The temperature was close to 110 degrees.

Steam hissed, motors roared, and water dripped. The single light cast more shadows than it did light, and as I looked around, I knew what it was like to work in an old, de-

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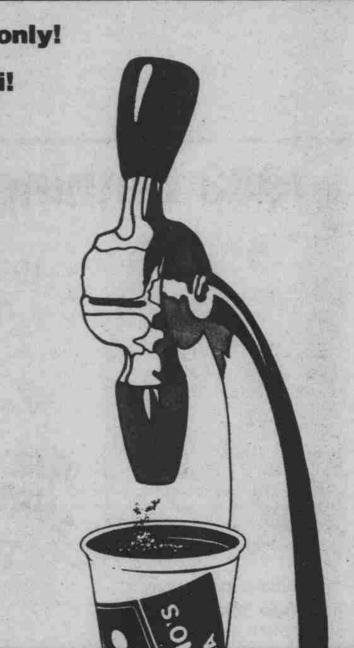


967-0006 209 15-501 Bypass caying submarine. Or maybe the spaceship in the movie Alien.

And consider this: I'm glad this job's only for the summer.

For the record

The Tar Heel incorrectly reported last week that the theme of a Campus Y film and lecture series was "war and aggression." "War and aggression" is the theme of the film series, which begins June 10. The lecture series, which begins June 8 with a lecture on "The New Federalism," has no theme.



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