

VANDALS INJURE CONDUCTOR

By John Hoyle
Editor

On Saturday September 12, at 11:00 p.m. a train en route from Salisbury to Raleigh had to make an unexpected stop in Burlington for two hours. The train stopped because a vandals conductor had to be brought to replace an injured conductor.

According to Sergeant J.M. Roane, a detective for the Southern Railway System, and PFC Officer Randy Kiser, someone standing in the vicinity of South Trolling Street, here at Burlington, struck the conductor with a rock.

"The train was traveling at approximately 30 miles per hour when it came through Elon," said Roane. "The conductor was in the boose of the train sitting at an open window when someone threw a rock and struck him on the wrist. He had a three inch gash, three-fourth of an inch deep, on his wrist."

The train continued to Burlington and stopped there for two hours before relief came to replace the injured conductor. Roane said, "It costs the railway around 500 dollars an hour when they have to stop like that."

According to Roane, the conductor spent two days in the hospital and is also having to see a bone specialist for his wrist. The conductor was also wearing a 300 dollar watch which was broken in the incident.

"We want to bring this to the students attention and that this is not fun and games," said Roane. "We will prosecute anyone who is caught throwing anything at the trains."

Officer Kiser said, "If someone throws something at these conductors, it could be considered a deadly weapon. The rock that struck this conductor barely missed hitting him in the head."

Sergeant Roane said that a reward is being offered for information on the arrest and conviction of the person involved in this incident. You do not have to be identified because the information

will be kept confidential.

If you have any information contact Elon Police Officer Randy Kiser at the Elon Police Department or J.M. Roane of the Southern Railway System. Phone number: 370-2440 [Greensboro]

Fine Arts, cont. from page 1

the building was unsafe for occupancy by a crowd. "What it boils down to is the building was not safe if an emergency situation occurred," he said, "in my opinion and that of the Fire Marshal."

"My office was not even aware of the scheduled performance until I saw a poster somewhere in Burlington," Rogers said.

Rogers said he was "puzzled" why the college had not obtained the required permits. He said he believed the performance would have gone on as scheduled—unsafely—if he had not intervened.

"However," he added, "the college was most co-operative and no penalties or fines have been assessed."

There were two main electrical products missing from the auditorium which caused the inspection failure. First, there were no exit signs indicating the way out of the auditorium. Second, the auditorium was lacking an emergency lighting system. This system would automatically turn certain lights on in the event of a power failure, allowing patrons to see their way out.

These devices can be life-savers in the event of an emergency such as fire, according to Rogers.

The college had made a desperate offer to Rogers to have security guards stand by the auditorium exits with flashlights for use in case of an emergency in exchange for a temporary occupancy permit. "I just did not feel safe with that," said Rogers.

When asked why these devices were not in place, James Beasley, vice president of Bryant Durham Electric, the electrical subcontractors for the Fine Arts Center, replied the exit signs were stolen from the building during construction and are on order.

"We are waiting on the rigging contractor to get out of our way before we can complete the rest of the work," said Beasley.

This is not the first problem the college has had with the new

building, which was originally scheduled to open last December. The original rigging which supports lights, sound equipment, and scenery was canceled from the building contract because of cost. Vice President of Administrative Services, Robert Poindexter, was responsible for securing new contracts to install rigging devices. "Without rigging, you can't have a production," said Poindexter.

Poindexter commented that there were just too many things to be done for the auditorium to meet final inspection for the Shakespeare performance. Poindexter also commented on several water and condensation leaks which have been discovered.

"I hate to say it, but it's standard," said Poindexter. "Most people who do a job are not perfect."

When asked about the building delays, Alan Jones, a representative for the general contractor Fowler Jones, Inc. said, "There have been several changed conditions extending the completion date."

According to Rogers the Fine Arts Center is scheduled for another inspection this Thursday.

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