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The fuel crisis: How will it affect UNCC?

By Brad Rich

"Good morning," begins the radio announcer, "Temperatures in the Charlotte area dipped into the low teens again this morning putting still more strain on dwindling fuel supplies..."

But here at UNCC, despite rising fuel costs and an extremely cold winter, classrooms and office buildings remain warm.

The unenviable job of keeping the shivers away belongs to Ed Ayers, Director of the Physical Plant. He must keep our oil tanks filled, regulate the hundreds of thermostats on campus and try to eliminate waste.

Ayers statistics show the price of heating and cooling the campus has risen from \$491,000 in 1973-74 to the 1976-77 projection of about \$1,032,000. The month of January has been particularly rough. "Already this month," Ayers said, "We've spent about \$315,000 on oil."

UNCC uses number two fuel oil, which is the same thing most people use in their houses. "For the last three years we have received no natural gas except for start-off...we have an alternate source," Ayers said. "We have three suppliers. Gulf has the state contract, but they can't always meet our requirement, so we've also bought from two local suppliers. It's kind of like gas stations. You like to keep a couple of contacts, so if one runs out, you've got a friend who might be able to help you out," he said. "I will not be hung on one supplier."

Ayers said he tries to keep at least an 18-20 gallon supply in UNCC's tanks. "We have storage capacity for 170,000 gallons, and on a bad day we may use 7,000 gallons. At one point in January, we were down to a ten day supply. We like to keep a steady flow of trucks coming in. In fact, we'd like to keep the tanks so full the trucks would have to wait to deliver their supply."

If a problem did arise, Ayers said the school really has no short run alternative, except to keep several contacts open. "In the long run," he said, "We'd have to consider more storage room. Presently we have the boiler capacity to handle all we've got, plus the addition of the new classroom/office building. But there are plans for more construction; new dorms and a new bookstore building, and for that, we'd need an addition to the boiler."

Ayers said in the short run, rising fuel costs are not likely to affect the students' fees. "However, if operating costs continue to rise, student tuition and fees are one possible alternative. Of course, another possibility is tax income." Ayers stressed that this type of decision would have to be made by the University system.

"For now though," he said, "We do have a fuel shortage whether it's justified or not. We have a responsibility as a University to try to go along with economizing techniques. It's our responsibility to quit wasting fuel. We need to shut all doors, close all windows, and turn off unneeded lights. If we don't, we're courting an obvious problem. Instead of just walking by a problem, call 2155 and report it."

Ayers said at first he tried to keep the temperature in all buildings at 68 degrees, but since the Carter Administration called for a reduction, he is trying to adjust down to 65. "This is a tricky thing," he said, "because when people get cold in their offices, a lot of them start bringing in those little electric

heaters. They are probably the most inefficient means of heating known to man. They do a job, but they're very wasteful."

To keep people from using the electric heaters, Ayers said an administrative directive would probably be necessary, and even that might not work because it's so hard to police. "The simplest and most effective way would be for people to just cooperate," Ayers said.

This year, as in every year, there have been problems with uneven heating in the dorms. Ayers said, "Any system as large as this is very complicated. We have a long way to go before I'm satisfied. In buildings as large as a dorm, library or McEniry, there may be 40 or 50 thermostats, and they have a tendency to fight each other. They have a lot of freedom. If one zone gets too cold, another may try to heat up to make up for it. If this happens, you should call the

housing office. This gives them the chance to keep up with the problem, and keeps us from getting 40 calls from one dorm floor."

Meanwhile, Ayers and his staff are trying to increase the efficiency of the system. Ayers said he has requested a program at a cost of \$350,000 which hire an engineer to "Study all systems and come up with a long term program of energy conservation." The program will consist of three stages, the first of which would study what Ayers called "Quick fix" projects-energy saving practices requiring little or no capital investment and which would utilize only the staff currently employed. This would include such things as dimmer lighting, weather stripping, caulking, closing windows, etc.

The second stage Ayers called "Intermediate." These projects would require the investment of perhaps a few thousand dollars, and purchase of some materials.

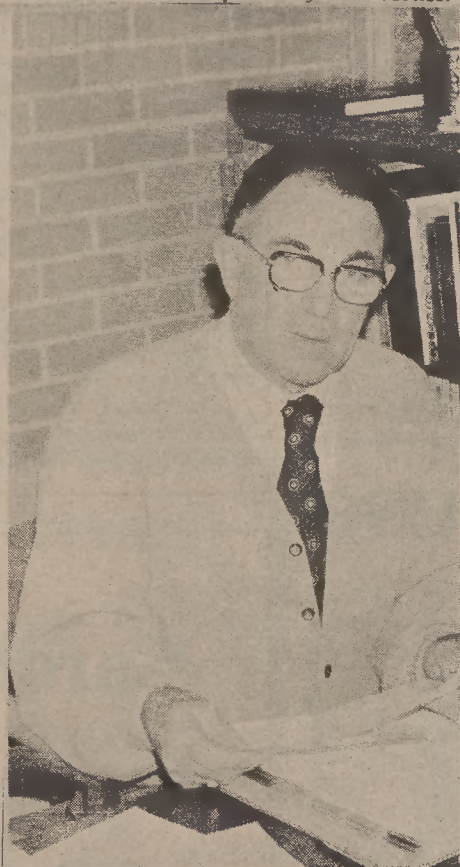
The third stage would be "Long term

paybacks," things that would take three or more years to pay back. Projects of this type would probably require some engineering and design.

The proposed program's second phase would be the implementation of a central monitoring system. Ayers said this would involve running cables to every mechanical room in every building on campus to monitor such things as critical temperatures, malfunctioning machines that waste energy. The cables would feed back to a central control panel complete with alarms and computer printouts. "I expect to recover the cost of the entire program in two years at the most," Ayers said.

"Most of the savings will occur in phase one. We have to start keeping and windows closed, keeping faucets turned off and things like that. We're always looking for the big things that will save thousands of dollars, but the little thing add up."

Carolina Journal photo by Pete Meuser



UNCC bookstore manager Jim Mecredy

Students get first shots

At Sun Belt Tourney tickets!!

By Ron Green

Students will get first crack at tickets for the Sun Belt Conference basketball tournament March 8th and 9th at the Coliseum. They will go on sale February 7 at the ticket office in the gym.

As host team for the event, UNCC gets an automatic spot in the tournament which will include three other teams. Tickets must be purchased, the activity cards do not cover the tournament, and are available for three, four and five dollars per night.

Sun Belt commissioner Vic Bubas has high hopes for the inaugural tournament. He said, "The conference was formed in August and I came on in October but it is really being born March 8th and 9th. We didn't have time to organize a home and home schedule so this is the first time as a basketball organization in front of the public. Since it is in Charlotte, I hope as many students as possible respond to get good tickets."

"We would like for those who want to be close to the court to get in early instead of waiting. The university plans to have a week's period for student tickets. We want people who have supported and given assistance get a chance at the tickets."

"I am fully confident we will sell the place out. I really believe that."

Carolina Journal photo by Pete Meuser



Sun Belt Commissioner Bubas

New bookstore to open in 1978

By Nancy Davis

Growing pains affecting almost every area of UNCC are now being felt by the student Bookstore. "We've long outgrown this building," said Jim Mecredy, UNCC Bookstore manager.

In order to ease the growing pains, construction of a new building should begin by the end of this semester. The building will house the Bookstore, a post office, printing office and a snack bar. After much research, it was decided that the best area for the new building would be between the Smith and McEniry buildings.

The Bookstore is a self-supporting business, but the funds are controlled by the N.C. State Legislature. "Each year,

construction," said Mecredy. They feel that there is now enough money to begin work.

"This is a self-liquidating project," said Leo E. Ells, Vice Chancellor for Business Affairs. "That means it has to pay for itself. The Bookstore is an auxiliary enterprise; it relates to the educational purpose, but is self-supporting."

The projected space needed to accommodate the Bookstore and other offices is 26,000 square feet. The cost of the building will be \$875,000. The expansion of the Bookstore will not cause more job openings, but will "enable the present staff to work more efficiently," said Mecredy. There will also be more of a variety of merchandise

to offer the students.

The new bookstore is in the planning stage, but it should be completed by the 1978 spring semester. "We're fast," said Ells. "I've already told Jim (Mecredy) that I hope he'll spend his Christmas vacation moving in. We'll give him his Christmas vacation later."

When Mecredy became manager of the Bookstore, he said, "It was in a financial situation that bordered on bankruptcy. Ells helped put the new bookstore in gear."

"The money is now available and he owns his own inventory with profits going to scholarships," Ells said.

"If we're to offer these facilities, the students are going to have to support the Bookstore," said Mecredy.