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Retirement announced, he reflects on 11 years of change

Chancellor Colvard Looks Back

By Brad Rich

When UNCC Chancellor D.W. Colvard announced his retirement to the school's Board of Trustees two weeks ago, it wasn't a surprise — but it was a shock. To members of the University community and citizens of Charlotte, Colvard's name had become synonymous with class and progress, and his announcement meant the school would have to choose a new Chancellor — for the first time.

In his spacious office in the Reese Administration building last Thursday, Colvard talked about his career in education administration, the growth of UNCC and his future role in the University's development. All the while, he smiled the contented smile of a man who feels he's lived a full and meaningful life, and knows he deserves a rest. Even more important, he's in the enviable position of making the decision to retire himself rather than being forced out of the job.

"The UNC system has a rule that a person must retire from a primary administrative position at age 65. You are permitted to stay on on a year to year basis if requested until you are 70," Colvard said. "One of the gimmicks in my case is that the rule says a person should retire no later than July 1st following his 65th birthday. My birthday is July 10th...I have always felt that it (mandatory retirement at age 65) was a sound policy, so I was reluctant to take full advantage of the accident of my birth. I had originally planned to retire right at 65, but I didn't because of the illness and death of Mr. (Addison) Reese (ex-chairman of the UNCC Board of Trustees). You see, the chairman must assume the responsibility of heading the selection committee. I agreed with Mr. Reese to wait."

Colvard said he doesn't expect to play any part in the choosing of his successor. "The process usually takes about a year," he said. "You advertise in the educational journals and take applications as well as actually search for people. Anyone can be considered."



photo courtesy of UNCC Office of Information

Retiring UNCC Chancellor D.W. Colvard accepting a copy of Dr. Robert Rieke's history of the University.

During his 11 years at UNCC, Colvard has witnessed many changes, and it is those changes that he is most proud of. He said, "I guess one thing that stands out in my mind is that the quality of this institution has risen while we've undergone rapid numerical expansion. Of course, there are a number other focal points, too, like the opening of the first dorms. At that time, many people had argued, and I disagreed, that we'd never need dormitories...But I knew to build

the kind of university we wanted, we'd have to have dorms."

Colvard said when Sanford and Moore Halls, the first air conditioned dorms in the state system, opened, they were not ready.

"I remember one Friday afternoon when the student counselors (later called R.A.'s) were moving in. One girl's mother called me and said, 'Did you know how bad it is over there?' I said, yes I know it's not ready. She said, 'Do you know

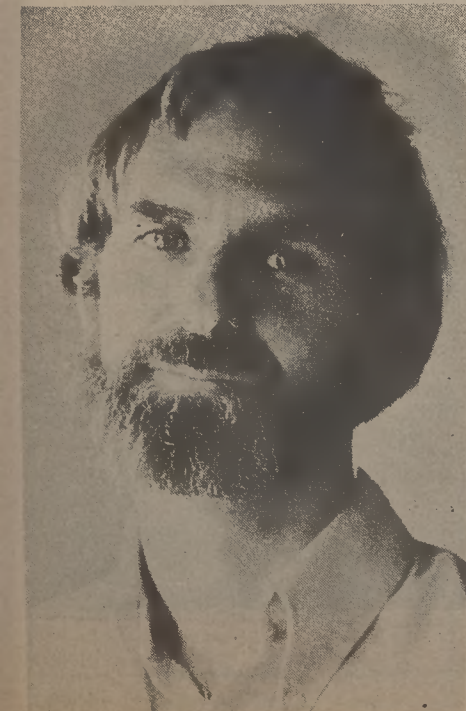
they don't even have showerheads?' " Colvard said he told the woman yes, and that he'd talked to the people in charge and they had said they were scared to put them in too early because the workers might steal them.

"Monday morning," Colvard said, "Someone came in and told me one of the trucks holding the shower heads burned. They had to reorder them, and they didn't come in for a couple of

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Too Hot In Dorm? Take Off Your Clothes!

photo by Jack Greene



Ed Ayers.

By Brad Rich

In a "Scribblings" column which appeared in the *Carolina Journal* last semester, the question of overheating and energy waste in the dormitories at UNCC was raised.

In an effort to get the answers, Physical Plant Director Ed Ayers was interviewed last week. Ayers, the man in charge of keeping UNCC comfortable year round, began by discussing the problem of hot dorms.

"The problem in the wintertime," he said, "is that we have completely eliminated air conditioning in most of the buildings...So when the outside temperature warms to 55 or 60 degrees, it can get uncomfortably warm...It's not because we're still heating but rather because we just aren't cooling."

But what can be done? Ayers said, "Not much except taking off clothes, or opening windows. We have set 80 degrees as a maximum temperature in the winter. In the winter, the state says to try and heat to an air temperature of 68 degrees. We do that, but of course you can't hold it at 68. There's got to be some

variation." (In other words, 68 should be the average temperature.)

"If the temperature goes to 80," he said, "we'll turn on the coolers." Ayers went on to say that in one or two buildings this year the temperature has reached 80. "I can't recall which buildings," he said, "but we just put the coolers on automatic pilot and left them on for a couple of days."

The main point Ayers made was that when it feels too hot in the dorms, it isn't usually because the system is overheating and, consequently, wasting energy. He said, "It's not because the heat is on, but because the air conditioning is off. This is generally the way it is when an entire floor is too hot. If the temperature on one suite or in one individual room is radically different, then the student should call us. Then you have an isolated problem and it may be just a runaway generator."

Ayers said he has formulated a plan which will make UNCC a more energy efficient institution over a four year period. (A summary of this plan will appear in next week's *Carolina Journal*.)

"My requests are over a period of

time that suits me," Ayers said. "If we get them money when I ask for it, we could have an energy efficient system in four years. But we won't get the money when I asked for it, so the things I'm looking for are going to take, instead of four years, probably about ten years."

Ayers said that besides renovating the school's current system, one other thing is needed; cooperation of the entire university community. "Cooperation cannot be legislated," he said. "And we need real cooperation, not just lip service. It means being willing to live with the temperature at 68 in the winter...and not needing the air conditioning man in the summer to 'turn down just my thermostat'...We need a real sense of purpose...we'd have to come out something really coherent."

But Ayers feels that such a spirit is possible, though it will not be easy. "We've got habits ingrained over the years because of the ability to utilize cheap energy. As long as we have fuel supplies, energy supplies that allow us to fudge a bit, we will. It's not malicious or anything, it's just human nature."