



July 21, 2003  
Volume 8, Issue 38  
**SUMMER EDITION**

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<http://www.roch.edu/rctc/about/html/weeklyschedul.htm>

## Attachments

❖ None



**ENJOY THE SUMMER!**

**Last Summer Crossings**  
August 18

Rochester Community and Technical College

# College Crossings

## Memorials and Tributes

Over the past several months, many of our colleagues have experienced the loss of loved ones as well as the sadness of losing one of our own. Through these difficult times, many of us choose to acknowledge these losses by making a memorial contribution to the RCTC Foundation in the name of the deceased.

There are many positive outcomes as a result of taking this action. The mission of the RCTC Foundation is furthered by such gifts. The scholarship program is fortified as well as our ability to support programs and projects for the school.

## You're Invited...

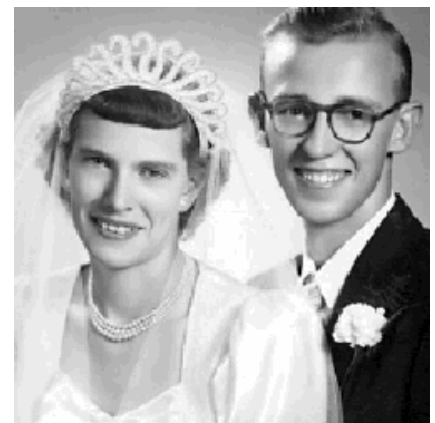
Sherry Lecy has worked close to 30 years at RCTC, with most of her time in Admissions and the last three years at CHOICES.

We are inviting everyone to join us on July 29, 2003, from 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm in HC118 at the Heintz Center to help celebrate her retirement.

So, mark your calendars and we hope to see you on the 29th!

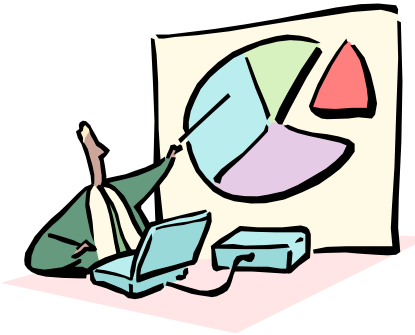
## Former employee news

In case you missed the announcement in the Post Bulletin this weekend, Gene and Mary Sorensen will be celebrating their 50th Wedding Anniversary on Thursday, July 17. For those of you that remember, Gene was a long-time RCC English and Philosophy instructor who retired in 1993 after dedicating 31 years to education.



Congratulations to Gene and Mary Sorensen!

### Supalla's Scribblings



This week the MnSCU Board of Trustees approved a 12.5 percent average tuition increase for Minnesota colleges and universities for each of the next two-years. The RCTC increase totals 15 percent per year and is expected to generate \$1.7 million in annual additional revenue. This years tuition resources will help off-set the \$2.7 million FY04 budget gap. Spending down reserves, using a portion of the Pepsi exclusive beverage contract, and reducing instructional and administrative expenditures will close the remainder of the gap.

Prompted by the Legislature's passage of the conceal and carry law, the MnSCU trustees passed a "Possession or Carry of Firearms" policy. The purpose of the policy is to establish restrictions on possession or carry of firearms applicable to the MnSCU System, in accordance with the Minnesota Citizens' Personal Protection Act of 2003. Employees are prohibited from possessing or carrying a firearm while acting in the course and scope of their employment, either on or off System property. An employee with a reasonable basis for believing an individual is in possession of or carrying a firearm in violation of this policy has a responsibility to report the suspected act in a timely manner, unless doing so would subject the employee or others to physical harm. Students are prohibited from possessing or carrying a firearm while on System property, except in a parking area or parking facility. Because college and university buildings are considered public property, visitors and guests who have a lawful permit to carry a pistol have the right to carry their pistol, exposed or concealed, in parking lots and buildings. More information on this legislation will be shared during August staff development days.

In other Board action, the trustees extended Chancellor McCormick's contract by two years. Chancellor McCormick will serve until June 30, 2007. The trustees gave Dr. McCormick high praise for his work after an annual performance review. The Board appointed Douglas Allen, vice president of educational services at Anoka-Ramsey Community College, as the new president of Ridgewater College. Dr. Allen will replace President Colleen Thompson effective July 28. The trustees approved a new name...Minnesota State Community and Technical College ...for the recently combined campuses of Fergus Falls CC and the three Northwest Technical College sites at Detroit Lakes, Moorhead and Wadena. And finally, the Board of Trustees passed a resolution requesting the 2004 Legislature consider a \$275 million capital bonding request. The top priority on the list is \$100 million in repairs and revitalization of classrooms, labs, and infrastructure at all 53 campuses. The balance of the \$175 million is being requested for 31 capital improvement projects, including \$11.7 million for RCTC's Health Sciences Building (ranked #24 on the priority list).

### Congratulations are in order...

- Jay Lee joined me at Breezy Point for the Minnesota Association of Ag Educators Conference who honored Vern Bushlack for his 40 years of teaching. Then, RCTC's Horticulture Technology Program was honored as the Outstanding Post-secondary/Adult Ag-Ed Program. John Murray was recognized for his contributions to MnSCU Farm and Small Business Management Programs. RCTC's program and John's name will be forwarded for evaluation in national competition. Kudos to Vern, Robin, John and the Horticulture Technology students!
- The Mayo Medical Secretary students took their employment tests recently and 100 percent passed the test on their first attempt. This is a first for RCTC! Congratulations to Kathy Olson and all those who worked with this special group of students.



**Did you know...**

- Under a unique collaboration, more than 1500 members of the 34<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division of the Minnesota Army National Guard who will be deployed to Bosnia and Europe later this year will be able to go to college at the same time. Under a unique collaboration, the citizen-soldiers stationed overseas can take an array of college courses online from any of nine MnSCU institutions. Among the courses available to the soldiers are English, astronomy, meteorology, math, history, psychology, political science, sociology, economics, ethics, computer science, business, and marketing. Rochester Community and Technical College is one of the participating institutions making the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum available to this special population. The online courses will be offered during two special semesters designed to accommodate the soldiers’ schedules.
- The largest four RCTC programs of study (based on FY02 FYEs) are: Liberal Arts, Nursing, Business and BTEC!
- A national survey conducted in May 2003, regarding higher education quality, affordability, and access found that 72 percent of adults say that higher education in America works pretty well or needs only minor changes, compared to 50 percent who say the same about K-12. A 56 percent majority of the general public award higher education an A or a B for how well these institutions are doing on a whole and only 5 percent gave it a D or an F. However, only 31 percent gave K-12 schools an A or B grade and 15 percent gave them a D or an F. A 57 percent majority of adults say that the nation’s education system is doing very well or well enough at graduating students from college who are prepared to succeed in the work force. Business executives who are in a position to hire recent graduates offer a more upbeat assessment, with 73 percent reporting that higher education is doing a good job of preparing students for the work force. Despite the overall positive evaluations for higher education in America, majorities think that our nation’s education system is coming up short when it comes to offering young people from all backgrounds a chance to go to college, providing financial help to students who are going to college, and especially graduating high school students who are prepared to succeed in college. The public points to rising tuition and other costs as the biggest problem facing colleges and universities, yet it believes that a college education still is an excellent investment.

**Something to Think About...**

**“Some succeed because they are destined to. Most succeed because they are determined to.”**

*-- Anatole France*

The summer continues to fly by. Best wishes for a safe and relaxing rest of the summer.

**Don**

**Minutes – pages 4 through 5**

**Rochester Community and Technical College**  
**AFSCME Labor/Management**  
**Minutes for Thursday, July 10, 2003 – 10:00 a.m. – AT109**

**Present:** Administration: Arntson, Hansmann, Thompson, Supalla, Weber  
AFSCME: Braa, Kiehne, Martin (Business Agent), O’Dea, Tucker  
**Guests:** Erv Berg, Wanda Lunning (Chief Steward)  
**Recorder:** Kingsbury

**ITEM 1 (AFSCME) Budget AND ITEM 1 (Admin) Budget** –Hansmann reviewed the budget materials distributed with the agenda, noting the MnSCU Office of the Chancellor is also implementing significant reductions in the upcoming fiscal year. Supalla added the Rochester Center funds (previously listed as a separate line item) have been added to RCTC’s allocation, hopefully eliminating any potential line item cuts in the future. The Rochester Center funds are allocated for shared services by UCR (including staffing) and are equally budgeted by all three institutions. Supalla also reported RCTC requested a 15% tuition increase each of the next two fiscal years, adding the second year tuition increase will be revisited next year. Hansmann announced some of the administrative gap resolutions include the non-hiring of several vacant positions on campus. Supalla announced serious consideration is being made to the closing of UCR from December 24, 2003 through January 4, 2004 (with the exception of the Sports Center because of city/community commitments and paying customers), and questioned the process that should be followed to implement such a closing. Martin responded discussions would need to be held before implementation and employees need to be informed of their options (i.e. voluntary reduction in hours, vacation, flex schedules, leave without pay, etc). Although a reduction in hours may affect an employee’s top five years of service, legislation did pass that allows employees the opportunity to “buy back” service. Martin requested Administration share a cost analysis of savings for a closing. Kiehne added the faculty would need to be informed of the potential of a campus closing during the holiday break so they may better prepare for prep work time by the support staff. Hansmann also announced the parking fee would increase 25 cents per credit beginning fall semester, equating to a \$7.50 annual increase for full-time faculty/staff. Martin requested financial data supporting the parking increase (reflecting current balance in the account and anticipating revenues and expenses) be reviewed by AFSCME before implementation. Martin suggested the college consider organizing a “Parking Committee” in the future to review issues related to parking, but O’Dea and Supalla responded parking issues currently fall under the responsibility of the Facilities, Safety, Grounds and Security Committee. Action: Administration will prepare a projected cost savings and will meet with AFSCME if a final decision is made to close the campus December 24, 2003 through January 4, 2004. Administration will also distribute a parking account spreadsheet with the minutes from today’s meeting.

**ITEM 2 (AFSCME) Update on GMW four-9 and one-4 Shift** – Martin questioned the status of the one GMW request for four-9s and one-4 (having Friday afternoons off). Berg responded the employee’s request is approved. Supalla questioned what would occur if additional GMWs submit requests in the future. Martin responded that the GMWs were informed of the resubmitted request and shared no interest in pursuing additional requests. Hansmann questioned the 28-day notice requirement. Martin indicated the official letter of response from Administration would have to reflect the 28-days, but it may be waived if mutually agreed upon by both the employee and the agency. Action: The one GMW request for four-9s and one-4 hour day shift (Fridays off) is approved. The official notification letter will be delivered ASAP.

**ITEM 2 (Admin) PAC Proposal** – Supalla shared a proposal to create a President’s Advisory Council, with representation from each major constituency group. The PAC is not intended to replace the contractual meet and confer process, but rather used as another avenue to communicate and collect information and ideas. O’Dea indicated the proposal aligns with the continuous improvement plans that already exist on campus. Action: AFSCME will forward feedback on the PAC proposal directly to Supalla.

**ITEM 3 (Admin) Possession or Carry of Firearm Policy** – Supalla reported the Possession or Carry of Firearm policy has been approved by MnSCU, and training for all employees will be included as a component during the August Staff Development Day activities. Additional training will be coordinated for others with a special need (maintenance, security, etc.) Supalla announced several questions have been raised on posting signs at UCR, however, because UCR is a public institution, the College can not prohibit legally licensed non-faculty, non-staff and non-students from carrying a firearm on campus. Martin suggested the information regarding the new law/policy be distributed to employees as soon as possible. Martin also indicated the reporting piece of the policy appears to be vague. Hansmann responded the “official designated in the applicable policy of the college” will be the Security Officer at UCR, however, any individual that feels their safety is in jeopardy should immediately contact local law enforcement. Hansmann also reminded everyone that the student workers in the Security Department either have received or are receiving special security training. Action: Information about the new Possession or Carry of Firearm Policy will be included in an upcoming issue of Crossings and the Crisis Management Plan will be reviewed and updated to reflect the policy/procedures.

**ITEM 4 (Admin) AQIP Update** – Weber outlined the priority list for the higher learning commission accreditation as established at a recent strategic planning forum. Further discussions were held regarding the need to rectify concerns addressed by The Higher Learning Commission and Minnesota Council for Quality with regard to the aging faculty/staff and diversifying the employee population to meet the diversity of the student population. Hansmann and O’Dea shared the process being followed by the Business Office to define processes. Martin commended everyone for making RCTC a model in the continuous improvement process within MnSCU. Action: Information Only.

**ITEM 5 (Admin) DRAFT Student Communication Procedures** – Weber announced the Student Communication Policy/Procedures do not eliminate traditional mail communications, but rather provide another avenue for distribution of information to the RCTC student population. Weber also noted the process would be a transitional change from paper to electronic communication. Supalla requested any questions or concerns regarding the Student Communication Policy or Procedures be forwarded to either Thompson or Weber. Action: AFSCME will forward comments/concern directly to Weber and Thompson.

**ITEM 6 (Admin) On-Line Evaluation** – Arntson distributed information on a draft procedure and sample questions for an on-line evaluations of employees. Arntson confirmed that the assessments would be generated from the Human Resources Department and those completing the assessments would maintain anonymity. Both AFSCME and Administration agreed to a pilot project on a voluntary basis with at least a 10% participation by those employees with performance reviews due within the next six months. Martin agreed with Administration that a supervisor may obtain information/feedback on an employees performance through other sources, but the actual performance review much be completed by the supervisor and employee and any feedback from others must be supported before it may be used in the review process. Supalla agreed any negative feedback received would be investigated and discussed with the employee during the assessment review meeting. Martin requested that not only generic questions be used, but also more specific questions by departments in order to obtain a true understanding of an employee’s performance with regard to their specific duties/tasks. Action: AFSCME will review the materials and share feedback on the questions directly with Arntson.

**ITEM 7 (Admin) Electronic Timesheets** – Arntson announced the Department of Finance was investigating the creation of electronic timesheets as a component of SEMA4 or web-base (similar to paystubs). During the interim, RCTC is considering a simple Excel template until a statewide process is implemented. Discussions followed on the process and necessity for electronic timesheets and leave slip submissions. Action: Arntson will further investigate the timesheet format possibilities and report back at the next meeting.

Adjourned at 12:15 pm

NEXT MEETING: August 7, 2003 – 10:00 a.m. – AT109