A Look Back...

Thirty-five years ago this month, Viet Rock was the RJC theatrical production. It was directed by Robert Clausen with set design by Ray Mikesh. The production was a pointed view of American foreign policy. The production sought not to convince people of a particular viewpoint, but rather get them to think through their viewpoint. Thirty-five years ago this month President Richard Nixon also visited Rochester.

Weather Emergency Policy

We still haven't seen a flake of snow but dangerous winter weather is coming, and this week marks the beginning of winter hazard week. In this area we've seen mild weather so far but the state Department of Public Safety wants people to be prepared when we start seeing dangerously low temperatures and snowfalls. Homeland Security has developed a web page giving information that will help people stay safe this winter. The site includes explanations of National Weather Service warnings; a wind chill index and even tips on how to safely winterize your home and car. You can access the website at: http://www.hsem.state.mn.us/whaw.asp It is also time to refresh our memories on the Weather Emergency Policy/Procedures and Definitions. Notifications to employees not on duty and students not at the College will be made through the media. At a minimum the following radio and television media will be notified: KROC AM/FM, Y105, KWWK 96.5, KLCX 107.7, KTTC and FOX 47-TV. For those employees and student who live outside the area, you may also access the KTTC and KROC website for closing notifications by going to the RCTC website at: http://www.rctc.edu/policies/html/weather.html

Definitions:

a. CLOSING THE UNIVERSITY CENTER: Closing the University Center means to cease all operations for all three (3) institutions (RCTC, WSU-RC, UMR), other than those operations deemed essential to the protection of life and property. Closing the University Center results in the cancellation of classes, student and staff activities and meetings. All general offices are closed.

b. DELAYED OPENING: Delayed opening refers to opening of all operations for all three (3) institutions at a later time, other than those operations essential to the protection of life and property.

c. CANCELLATION OF CLASSES: Cancellation of classes (off-campus or on-campus) means to cancel one, several, or all classes, of either a single institution, several of the institutions or all the institutions, in the absence of officially closing the entire University Center.

d. CANCELLATION OF NON-ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES: Cancellation of non-academic activities refers to the cancellation of an event such as athletic events, theatrical productions, concerts, or workshops.

To review the entire policy/procedures, please visit: http://www.rctc.edu/policies/html/weather.html
Weekly funny…

Snapshots at jasonkove.com

Another argument to get a dog.

Crossings Classifieds

For Sale: Viking/Pittsburgh tickets, December 18, 12 noon, section 212, row 7, seats 9 and 10, $128.00. (Vikings side line, 25 yard line) Contact Guy Hamernik via email only.

Employee News

Congratulations to Todd and Angela Johnson on the birth of Samuel Wilder Johnson! Samuel arrived at 3:03 am on Monday, November 7, 2005 and weighed in at 7 lbs 10 oz, and was 19” long. Mother, Father and Son are doing great!

Condolences are extended to May Dennison whose father, Ken Ito passed away on Friday, November 4, 2005. Our thoughts are with Mary and her family.

Thank you so much for the plant you sent for the memorial service. It was nice of you to remember him.

-Family of John Kiral

Marketing Fact

Between the fall of 1999 and 2005, RCTC’s headcount has grown over 35% making it among the top three fastest growing institutions in the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities System.

Holiday Scholarship Fundraiser – Basket Challenge

December 1st from 11:30 – 1:00 p.m., SS159

(Deadline for basket donations is November 28th)

Your department is invited to compete in the SSSP Basket Challenge. This is a fundraiser for the Student Support Services Iris Fried Scholarship fund. This year we are having a friendly competition between departments. A PRIZE will be awarded to the department whose basket brings the highest bid. Be creative and have fun…how about a candy bar theme? Bring your basket(s) to SS159 no later than Monday, November 28. All proceeds from the silent auction benefit the SSSP Iris Fried Scholarship fund. SSSP has a supply of baskets if you would like to stop down and pick one out for your department to fill or use other containers of your choice (it doesn’t have to be a basket). See you on December 1 for holiday cheer, good food, conversation and the silent auction. Please R.S.V.P. to Deb at 285-7230 to confirm your department’s participation.

Scholarship Opportunity

The following scholarship application is available in the UCR Counseling center: AFFINITY PLUS SCHOLARSHIP

Four $5,000 scholarships will be awarded to freshmen, upperclassmen, or non-traditional students who are members of Affinity Plus (with their own member number) or eligible to join Affinity Plus (see application for further details). Criteria includes scholastic standing, extra-curricular activities, volunteer activities/community involvement, leadership, and personal essay.

Deadline to apply: January 31, 2006
Supalla’s Scribblings

The Governor-appointed Rochester Higher Education Development Committee canceled its November 10 meeting and will meet next on Monday, November 21, 7-10 a.m. at the Edina Realty Office on Salem Road. The agenda indicates that the committee consultant will be available to help write the report. The committee has indicated that they will have a draft of the report available in mid-December with a final draft ready on January 6, 2006. The latest article regarding the committee’s work was authored by Sandy Keith in the MN Journal (publication of the Citizens League). You can read Sandy’s comments on pages 11 and 12 at http://www.citizensleague.net/publications/journal/archives/2005-10.pdf.

MnSCU announced this week that three RCTC Perkins III grant applications were approved. The first was a collaborative curriculum alignment grant…

- Rochester Public Schools to RCTC – Animal Science Program Articulation $8,100
- The other two grant approvals were new program development grants…
  - Occupational Skills Program, Diploma $8,000
  - Enhanced Community Health Worker $2,000

Congratulations to all who participated in writing these successful applications.

Tuition and fees at two-year public colleges increased again this year at a lower rate than previous years, rising 5.4 percent, or $112, to $2191, according to an annual college pricing report by the College Board. In 2004-05, tuition at community colleges increased by about 9 percent, and in the previous year it rose by 14 percent. When comparing tuition and fees for public two-year colleges, Minnesota’s $4,020 average is exceeded only by Pennsylvania ($6,280), New Hampshire ($5,100) and Vermont ($4,990).

The second chapter of the recently published National Profile of Community Colleges focused on “Community College Enrollment.” Community colleges continue to be seen as the portal to opportunity in the United States, offering high-quality educational programs and services that meet the needs of an increasingly diverse national population. The reasons for choosing to attend community colleges are as diverse as the students themselves: ease of access, low cost, excellent academic programs that meet learners’ and employers’ needs, a broad array of support services, proximity to students’ homes, flexibility of scheduling, a welcoming campus environment, and links to other levels of education. Ease of access and low cost are often the factors that first draw students to community college campuses. Currently, the average age of community college students is 29. Since 1985, more than half of all community college students have been women. Students of color have found community colleges to be an excellent entry point into higher education. At present, the majority of Black and Hispanic students in this country begin their postsecondary studies at community colleges. Nationally, about 33 percent of all community college students are minorities, and that proportion is expected to rise as the American population becomes increasingly diverse.

This week SNG Research Corporation shared its survey report with the UCR Council. This is the sixth wave of the survey for UCR and the eighth wave of questions specific to RCTC. The 2005 telephone survey included adults, age 18-49, residing in a 25-30 mile radius around the city of Rochester. Noted below are some of the significant findings specific to higher education. In future issues, I’ll share findings specific to UCR and then RCTC.

- When asked to name the schools that come to mind when thinking of higher education institutions in the Rochester area, RCTC was mentioned by 68%, Winona State by 36% and the University of Minnesota by 29%.
- One-third of the respondents feel that the higher education needs of the greater Rochester area are well met overall.
- One-third of all adults have taken some sort of college or university course, either credit or non-credit, in the past year.
- Nearly half (48%) of adults would prefer to receive information about a college electronically. The most important attribute to respondents if they were going to enroll in a college or university is “the quality of the academic programs.” Other attributes considered “very important” are “courses are offered at a variety of times and days of the week,” “the variety of programs and degree options offered,” “overall value for the money,” and “credits transfer easily to other institutions.”

**Definition: Parent.**

_A human ATM for the use of school-age or college-age offspring._

– Alan Safahi, CEO of Card Express, Inc.
Rochester Community and Technical College
AFSCME Labor/Management
Minutes for Friday, October 14, 2005 2:00 p.m. – AT109

Present: Administration: Arntson, Cram, Hansmann, Supalla, Weber
AFSCME: Clark, Conway, Lunning, Martin (Business Agent), O’Dea (Chair), Staloch, Tucker
Recorder: Judy Kingsbury

ITEM 1 (AFSCME) Filling of Positions (Groundskeeper and Plant Maintenance Engineer Positions) – Hansmann announced the Groundskeeper, Engineer and GMW positions have not been filled due to significant changes in the Maintenance Department, resulting in changes on the search teams. Arntson announced there is a lengthy pool of candidates for the positions, and the process will begin once search team orientation is complete. Hansmann announced the Physical Plant Director has retired, and the positions will be filled temporarily at this time. Tucker stated he did not submit an interest in the interim Physical Plant position because the information didn’t reflect the expectations of the interim appointment. Hansmann responded the position would be a work out of class with supervisory responsibility, perhaps under a building maintenance supervisor classification. Martin suggested the temporary appointment be considered under the building utilities mechanic classification, which already has some lead worker classifications. Tucker questioned whether the building utilities mechanic classification required a license. Martin responded there are four options in that area and one of the classifications does not require a license, adding a temporary assignment wouldn’t require licensing in any of the classifications. **Action:** Information Only.

ITEM 1 (Admin) RCTC Search/Vacancy Filling Process – Arntson requested input from AFSCME on the search and vacancy filling processes. Martin reminded Arntson that AFSCME chooses not to appoint AFSCME members to represent the union on searches for AFSCME positions. Arntson confirmed an AFSCME member interested in serving on an AFSCME search team will only represent themselves as an individual and not as a member of the AFSCME union. Martin noted it wasn’t an AFSCME member’s choice to represent the union or not, but rather a Council 5 directive that says it infringes with laws on fair representation. Martin questioned the process for orientation of search team members. Arntson clarified a mass orientation is conducted in the spring, and if a search occurs during any other time of year, individual orientations are conducted. Arntson also announced once an individual has gone through the search orientation, they would not be required to go through another orientation during that year, even if they serve on a different search. Martin questioned if Affirmative Action is clearly defined in the document. Arntson responded a concerted effort is made to obtain a diverse search team, and affirmative action is also handled throughout the process. **Action:** Arntson will clarify the document to clearly reflect AFSCME members will not represent AFSCME while serving on an AFSCME search team.

ITEM 2 (Admin) RCTC Candidate Expense Reimbursement – Arntson announced candidate expense reimbursements were done last year during the spring interviews, but a clearer process is outlined in the document. Martin questioned if the recommendation for reimbursement is made prior to the search process. Arntson responded last year the recommendations were made before the process began, but the new process will allow the search team to recommend prior to scheduling interviews. **Action:** Information Only.

ITEM 2 (AFSCME) Zoomerang Survey and ITEM 5 (Admin) 360º Assessment – Arntson announced the 360º assessment pilot was conducted on employees with a performance review the last six month, and requested the pilot be dissolved and made a permanent tool. O’Dea stated additional training may need to be conducted for those using the survey. Arntson agreed additional training must be done with supervisors so the assessment is used as a tool and not the only basis for performance reviews. Martin suggested the training sessions include union stewards so AFSCME is equipped with the appropriate information to answer any questions that may arise. Cram suggested additional training also be done with the employees so they realize the survey is not a malicious way to “get back” at employees, but rather a useful tool to appropriately assess the performance of an employee. Arntson agreed, adding the title was changed from assessment to feedback to better clarify the intent. Martin suggested the development portion of the annual performance review be a useful tool for the College so they know what skills and abilities employees have that may be used in other areas of the College. **Action:** Arntson will include a training session at the upcoming November Staff Development Day, which will include a self-appraisal portion.
ITEM 3 (AFSCME) Definition of Flex-Agreement; ITEM 4 (AFSCME) Changing Working Hours; and ITEM 5 (AFSCME) Work Hours (Flex Time) – Conway questioned if an employee had the ability to use flex time in lieu of vacation if they need to be gone for a couple of hours one day, but is willing to make up the hours another day as long as it is in the same payperiod. Arntson clarified as long as it was an employee requested flex of hours in the same payperiod, and it was approved by the supervisor, an employee can flex hours as per the example provided by Conway. Arntson clarified the difference between flex time and flex agreement (flex time is approved between employee and supervisor and flex agreement is an agreement between AFSCME and the appointing authority). O’Dea added he did not believe any flex agreements existed at RCTC. Conway questioned what an employee would have to do to switch their days/hours from five-8 hour days to four-10 hour days, and wondered if it would require posting and jeopardize a position. Martin responded if the change only affected one employee it could be handled between the employee and supervisor, but if others in the area had the same classification, then it would need to be posted. Arntson added the switch to 10 hour days in the summer is different and only affected one employee it could be handled between the employee and supervisor, but if others in the area had the same classification, then it would need to be posted. Arntson added the switch to 10 hour days in the summer is different and relates to specific contract language. Staloch questioned if any consideration was being made to four day weeks in the summer for energy savings (or even personal savings with the rising cost of gasoline). Hansmann responded the UCR campus is too heavily utilized (including the weekends), and with classes being offered by the other UCR partners, it would be almost impossible to close on Fridays. Conway questioned if four-10s would ever be considered campus-wide. Supalla responded requests are considered on a case-by-case basis. O’Dea summarized the discussion by stating a flex in schedule for a couple of weeks can be handled between the employee and supervisor. Action: Information Only.

ITEM 3 (Admin) All-College Committee Structure – Supalla announced a revised committee structure was developed that aligns more with the MnSCU model and the College functions, adding the structure does not affect the contractual committees established by each of the bargaining unions. Martin stated staff development has been an issue raised with the Chancellor, noting it is not solely for staff development day planning. Hansmann agreed, adding she has been encouraging staff to use staff development funds for personal/professional growth. Martin stated the AFSCME Labor/Management description should remove the number of representatives; a chair needs to be determined; the Chief Steward needs to be added; and Martin should be designated as Business Agent. Action: O’Dea will be noted as Chair of the AFSCME Labor/Management Committee, Lunning will be added as the Chief Steward and Martin changed to Business Agent.

ITEM 4 (Admin) 2006-07 Calendar Proposal – Supalla announced the 2006-07 calendar proposal moves the August staff development day to a date later in the semester to allow for staff in the student services areas to participate. Martin questioned if the appropriate notifications have been sent to the staff to determine who will be working on Veteran’s Day. Hansmann responded an e-mail was sent to all non-faculty employees requesting they submit their intent to their supervisors by November 1st. Conway added the employees have indicated their appreciation with the early notification and the opportunity to utilize the day during the winter break. Staloch also shared his appreciation that GMWs on 2nd and 3rd shifts will be allowed to work their normal shifts during the winter break. Staloch suggested employees working in the Sports Center during the break have shirts or other clothing that identifies them as “Event Staff.” Action: Hansmann will investigate the possibility of purchasing shirts or vests to identify staff working at the UCR Sports Center during the winter break.

ITEM 6 (Admin) Smoking Policy – Hansmann announced a draft Smoking Policy was written last year, but never finalized, hence the Facilities, Safety, Grounds and Security Committee has continued discussions to forward a recommended policy for approval. Conway questioned how the policy would be enforced, reminding everyone that the last time it was met with resistance by individuals at the Atrium entrance. Hansmann said the monitoring will not be enforced by Security, but rather everyone is empowered to notify an individual if they are smoking in an inappropiate location on campus. Hansmann also noted the first infraction would result in an oral reprimand and a second offense would result in a written reprimand. Cram responded every student is required to identify themselves if approached, and an individual refusing to show identity may be asked to leave the campus. Cram also added the moving of receptacles away from the entrances may cause a problem for those individuals walking to the buildings. Tucker questioned if appropriate ventilation could be installed, or a room with adequate ventilation designated as a smoking room. A more detailed discussion followed regarding the inability of state funds to be spent on building improvements for smoking, and the inequity of designating a smoking room for employees and not for students. Action: AFSCME supports a smoking policy on campus, with the understanding that if issues arise, a task force will be established to investigate the concerns.
ITEM 7 (Admin) Animals on Campus Policy – Hansmann announced issues have arisen with individuals bringing pets (non-service animals) on campus and refusing to remove them without a written policy on record. Martin questioned if the animals have caused any issues to-date. Hansmann responded nobody has been physically harmed, but complaints have been received and the plan is to be pro-active before something serious occurs. **Action:** AFSCME supports the Animals on Campus Policy.

ITEM 8 (Admin) Children on Campus Policy – Hansmann stated when the Animals on Campus Policy was drafted, it became apparent that a Children on Campus Policy should also be on record to avoid problems in the classroom or workplace. Martin suggested Part 2, bullets one and two be stricken because the third bullet addresses the issue. In addition, Martin suggested the word “only” be removed from the third bullet, resulting in the statement “Children may be brought to work occasionally for the . . .” **Action:** AFSCME supports the “Children on Campus” policy with noted changes.

ITEM 7 (Admin) RCTC Cabinet Title Changes – Supalla announced title changes for the RCTC Cabinet members have been considered for the last several months to better align with MnSCU Office of the Chancellor titles and to differentiate between middle management and administration. After discussion with appropriate MnSCU Office of the Chancellor Staff, effective November 1st, the Director of Finance and Facilities will be changed to Vice President of Finance and Facilities, and the current Cabinet level directors will be changed to chief officer of their functional area (the current vice president titles will remain unchanged). Supalla stressed the title changes do not reflect classification changes or salary increases, but only a title change to align with their level of responsibility. Martin shared his appreciation with receiving the information before it becomes public, hence allowing AFSCME to assist in clarifying to staff that it is only a title change and not range or compensation change. **Action:** Information Only.

Adjourned at 4:10 p.m.

**NEXT MEETING:** January 24, 2006 – 11:00 a.m. – AT109