

November 14, 2011

## Countdown to Riverside City College's 100th Anniversary

In the August 22, 2011 "Countdown" we told the story of Riverside Junior College's first "Alma Mater" which was composed in 1925. The words and theme were by H. Norman Spohr (RJC Music Professor 1925-40) with additional harmony credited to student Wesley Flickinger (RJC Class of 1928). By 1948 the song fell into such disuse that a search of the Library archives was necessary when a request was made for it to be played at a football game. In 1957 the current anthem, "Alma Mater Riverside" was written by Donald Stone (Professor of Music and Foreign Languages 1948-64) and RCC student Vince Lawton who was the Associate Editor of the "Tiger Times" student newspaper. An article from the May 23, 1957 "Tiger Times" invited students to attend a special musical assembly to hear the new song and cast their vote of approval or disapproval. The story incorrectly reported that the new song was "the first original Alma Mater the college has had in its 40 years". The article is reproduced in the photo box below. Photos of Lawton (on the left) and Stone (on the right) can also be seen.



The May 29, 1957 "Tiger Times" issue reported a mixed student reaction to the premiere of "Alma Mater Riverside". The feedback ranged from Bill Derryberry's "The song was well very well written and an outstanding contribution to the students of RCC." to Dianne Douglass' "I didn't particularly like it. It would be great at a funeral though".

### Quotable Quips Of Alma Mater

The following question was put to various members of the student body following the singing of the new Alma Mater at Friday's assembly.

"What did you think of the new City College Alma Mater?"

**Bill Derryberry, AMS President** — "The song was very well written and a outstanding contribution to the students of RCC. I would like to know however what FREDIAN means."

**Frank Adams, ASB vice-president** — "The words go with the music just like Adam goes with Eve. The words got me right where it hurts. This song should greatly enhance loyalty to the school."

**Bob Stapleford, ASB vice-president** — "I appreciated the originality while still keeping in the vein of traditionalism."

**Virgil Michaels, AMS president** — "I didn't like it. I think there is room for improvement."

**Loren Smith, Salutatorian** — "DUH, I mean to say it was wonderful and something no good school should be without."

**Dianne Douglass, Delta Chi Delta Sorority member** — "I didn't particularly like it. It would be great at funerals though."

<b>Bill Derryberry</b>	<b>Frank Adams</b>	<b>Bob Stapleford</b>
<b>Virgil Michaels</b>	<b>Loren Smith</b>	<b>Dianne Douglass</b>

Nevertheless, "Alma Mater Riverside" has endured over the years and 2012 will mark the 55<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its debut. Below you can see the sheet music for the song and photographs of RCC song leaders displaying the lyrics at a December 1963 pep rally.

### ALMA MATER RIVERSIDE

Words: Vincent Lawton, Music: Don Stone, 1956-1957

*With Drums*

Do know the pass that lie a-head, but strong-ly we'd one me.

By pre-cepts we shall be led, and take our strength from thee.

AL-MA-MATER Ri-VER-SIDE, glo-ry and our guide,

Far from your hills re-mem-bered with love and pride;

With spi-rits free we hon-or thee, our Ri-ver-side!

It is 4 years and 17 weeks until RCC's 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary on March 13, 2016.

The Riverside City College Instructional Media Center is bringing you this five year countdown to RCC's 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. Our intention is to give everyone a weekly glance at the many people and events that have been a part of the college.

Our thanks go to the RCC Digital Library Archives and the District's Office of Strategic Communications and Relations for allowing us to use their photo and newspaper collections. Thanks as well to all of the RCC students and Faculty Advisors that were a part of the yearbook and newspaper staffs. Thanks also to Tom Johnson and Gilbert Jimenez who wrote "the book" about RCC's history. "Riverside City College 1916-1981- A 65 Year History" is available in the RCC Digital Library.

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