March 12, 2012

Countdown to Riverside City College's 100th Anniversary

Last week it was discussed how Riverside City College was first known as “Riverside Junior College” when established on March 13, 1916. The name was changed on June 4, 1945 to “Riverside College” to remove the stigma of the phase “Junior College” which had fallen into disfavor. On March 18, 1957 the name was again changed to “Riverside City College” when complains arose that the previous name was not “distinctive” enough. One of the most significant actions taken by the Riverside Community College District Board of Trustees happened in 1983 when it signed an agreement to annex the Corona/Norco area into the district. Soon thereafter it was also decided to establish a presence in the city of Moreno Valley. On July 1, 1986, “Riverside City College” became “Riverside Community College” to better reflect the District’s expansion into these new regions. It was then that the concept of “One College With Three Campuses” was born.

Nancy Gall (Associate Professor, CTE, Photography part-time 1995-2004; full-time 2004-date) was working as a Public Information Specialist in Public Information Services at the time of the change. She remembered a story about the name change:

“As the publicity arm of the college we couldn't afford to misspeak, so Director of Public Information Paul Rubalcaba decided that we would drop a quarter in a collection can in our office every time we mistakenly said Riverside City College out loud. Money is a profound motivator so we didn't accumulate many quarters – just enough to buy a pizza to celebrate our success in making the transition to the new name.”

The photo below on the left is from the June 1983 “RCC Reports” district publication. The article on the right is from the October 1986 “RCC Reports”.

The name “Riverside City College” had been etched in stone on a marker standing on the corner of Magnolia Avenue and Ramona Drive for many years. This sign became out of date after the 1986 name change. On March 13, 1991 RCC celebrated its 75th anniversary and the opening of campuses in Norco and Moreno Valley. Beginning that year RCC became known as “Riverside Community College-Riverside Campus” or alternately as the “Riverside Community College-
Riverside City Campus”. The marker on Magnolia and Ramona was replaced in the 1990s. The pre and post 1991 markers can be seen below.

By the turn of the century, the concept of “One College With Three Campuses” evolved into “One District With Three Colleges”. In the fall of 2005 the college returned to the name “Riverside City College” and the phrase “Riverside Community College” was relegated to the District. The first physical evidence of this change appeared in 2007 above the gate of the new west entrance to the A.G. Paul Quadrangle that had undergone renovation from 2005-7. An additional sign was added in 2010 during the construction of the “School of Nursing / Math & Sciences Complex”. This sign can be seen on the corner of Magnolia Avenue and Terracina Drive. The two signs described can be seen below.

Tuesday March 13, 2012 will be Riverside City College’s 96th anniversary and exactly 4 years until RCC’s 100th Anniversary on March 13, 2016.
The Riverside City College Instructional Media Center is bringing you this five year countdown to RCC’s 100th 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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