June 9, 2014

Countdown to Riverside City College’s 100th Anniversary

Over the upcoming summer months, “Countdown” will be taking a look at stories featured in the publication “Riverside City College Reports”. In the words of then RCC President Ralph Bradshaw, it was “designed to inform the community of developments at the college which it supports.” Volume 1, Number 1 appeared in November of 1965. The reoccurring theme in that first issue was “growth”, both in the student body, staffing and the campus.

In “The President’s Corner”, RCC President Ralph Bradshaw (1963-1972) reviewed some of the “highlights” of the previous 16 months of operation since the formation of the independent RCC College Board of Trustees (as discussed in last week’s “Countdown”). The first “growth” Bradshaw mentions was in the student body which showed an increase of 1000 day students over the previous two years. “For the faculty,” Bradshaw spoke of “a corresponding growth to meet the expanding student enrollment, including the addition of thirty-six new full-time faculty members along with a number of part-time evening instructors.” “For the administration,” Bradshaw said, “a growth in the complexity of staffing, equipping and managing a rapidly growing independent college district in a time of crowded facilities, an extensive building program, and increasing demands on education from a variety of sources.” Concerning the newly formed Board of Trustees he said “the past sixteen months have been a time for growth in their understanding of the College and its problems. As a new Board taking over responsibility for an existing collegiate program, they were confronted with numerous decisions on the current operation as well as with planning for the future. On both counts I believe we have evidence of real progress.” The article titled “Building Plans Progressing; Construction Begins in Spring” was accompanied with an architect’s rendition of how the new Physical and Life Science buildings would look like. The property where the building was to take place was occupied by the old Poly High School campus. RCC had acquired the land when Poly High moved to its current Victoria Avenue address. The article mentioned that the Board of Trustees had committed to the demolition of the old Poly High “Classics”, “Science”, and “Applied Arts” Buildings and that the project was underway. Among the other changes that were taking place were: 1.) A remodeling and refurbishment of the old Quadrangle Auditorium to make it suitable as a large lecture hall 2.) The temporary relocation of the bookstore from its cramped quarters off the Tiger’s Den into the choral room of the old Poly Music Building 3.) Construction of an addition to the old Poly administration building and remodeling of the existing structure freeing room in the College Administration Building for the centralization of business services 4.) Electronics and automotive shops taking over areas in the former Poly shop building.
Profiles of the new Board of Trustees were presented:

“A new Board of Trustees took over responsibility for the College only a little more than a year ago, with only one of its members having had any experience whatsoever with the governance of a school district. The veteran was Mrs. Carolyn Differbaugh, who had for several years been a member of the Board of Education for the Riverside City Schools, where she had shown marked interest in the problems of the junior college. She has served as president of the College Board, and has brought to that position considerable leadership in community affairs. Alan Pauw, who was chosen vice president of the Board, is a lawyer and a Certified Public Accountant, and last June received a Ph.D. in history from the University of Southern California. Pauw’s experience has been reflected in a particular interest in the fiscal problems of the College district. Chosen as first clerk of the Board was Dr. Wilfred Airey, chairman of the history department and of the social science division at La Sierra College. He has contributed an intimate knowledge of the ways of four-year colleges and a special interest in the RCC library growing out of his service on the La Sierra College campus planning committee and particularly on its sub-committee on the library. Now serving as secretary to the Board is RCC alumnus Joseph Aguilar. He is a Corona High School Spanish teacher. Before entering the teaching profession, he was a vocational counselor with the State Employment Service. He is an active member of the G.I. Forum. Albert C. Brown, Jr., whose ready wit has enlivened Board meetings but never hidden a serious interest in the problems of the College, has brought to the trustees a wealth of practical experience gained from his years as a partner in a large engine rebuilding company. He has been active in a number of civic organizations, and he served on the 1957 county grand jury. He was RCC student body president in 1939.”
The headlines above reflected the interest in the growing RCC student population. In the “Daytime Students” article, future projections were that RCC enrollment would exceed 4,000 in 1966 and 4,500 in 1967. It was also reported that the (then) current RCC building program was not scheduled to be completed before the fall of 1967 and was designed to accommodate an enrollment of 4,400 to 4,500. The “Extended Day” article reported that that year’s evening enrollment required the services of 171 teachers. Of those, 65 (well over a third) came from the regular college staff. Other schools in the area contributed 49 instructors. 30 came from trade and industry, 16 from the business community and 11 came from such miscellaneous sources as housewives and graduate students. The “Summer Session” story reported that enrollment had increased 7% over the previous year’s number from 1,551 to 1,865.

On the academic side, an article appeared on the 1965 Faculty Lecture of David MacCuish (Associate Professor, Speech & English 1954-1981). The title of his talk was “The Tyranny of Reason”. Another story told of the rank of President and Professor Emeriti that was bestowed upon former RCC faculty members. The ten named were the first to be honored with this recognition by the College. Of those recognized that year, four have been remembered by having their names placed on various sites: A.G. Paul (A.G. Paul Quadrangle), Edmund C. Jaeger (Edmund C. Jaeger Desert Institute @Moreno Valley College), Earl Mc Dermont (McDermont Hall), and Catharine S. Huntley (Huntley Gym).

It is 1 year and 39 weeks 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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