

UNION ENDORSES BOARD CANDIDATES

On January 19, 1985, the residents of the NHCC District will elect candidates to three positions on the Board of Trustees. The union is dedicated to the concept that personnel are the College's greatest asset. The professional instructors, counselors, and librarians have a greater impact on the student's education than anyone or anything else. Thus the Board's greatest responsibility is to foster high levels of commitment by the College staff members to their jobs. The present Board has shown some interest in this responsibility, but in many of its recent decisions it has shown more interest in its ambitious program of land acquisition and building construction. The following challengers have earned the union endorsement because of their support for efficient spending, quality instruction, and faculty interests.

DON STEWART (Position 5): Mr. Stewart is an Aldine resident, has a Ph.D. in Spanish from UT-Austin, works as a legal assistant for the firm of Tindall and Foster, and is a member of Northwoods Presbyterian Church.

PERRY HICKEY, JR. (Position 6): Mr. Hickey is a small businessman, a longtime Aldine community activist, a member of The Metropolitan Organization and St. Leo's Catholic Church, and a Boy Scout Master.

BLAINE R. MANN (Position 7): Mr. Mann, a self-employed businessman and a former NHCC student, was a candidate for the Board two years ago. He lives in Spring and volunteers his time for the Muscular Dystrophy Association and Crisis Action Line.

The January issue of THE ADVOCATE will feature the candidates' positions on some specific issues.

TOM LOVELL ON INSERVICE

A specter is haunting the faculty, the specter of inservice! This play on the opening lines of a memorable piece of social criticism is designed to catch the attention of my liberal and radical friends who otherwise would more than likely avert their eyes on catching a glimpse of my byline.

My conservative colleagues, on the other hand, are asking what a nice guy like myself is doing in a forum like this. The best answer to this has something to do with "giving the devil his due" or perhaps something about politics and bedfellows. But enough of such blather. I'm here to make a point, and the point involves the quality of our inservice programming.

Having been at NHCC almost from its inception, I can truthfully say that these semester-beginning programs -- and I'm referring to the major speaker portion of the programs -- have consistently left something to be desired. I have lingering memories of "motivational" hucksters, psychological soothsayers peddling their latest version of warmed-over Carl Rogers, and who can forget -- certainly not those who were there -- that cracker-barrel philosopher and his guitar?

I don't question the good intentions that brought these speakers to us, but in a very serious way the choice of these people and the group that periodically descends on us from colleges of education goes to the very heart of the identity crisis that more than likely has plagued junior colleges from the beginning: to put it bluntly, are we the last two years of hi-school or the first two years of college? Frankly, I don't think the question will be resolved anytime soon. Perhaps it can't be.

The problem, as I see it, is one of perception. The faculty, or at least the

majority of the faculty, tends to view some of these programs as insults to their intelligence. Part of this is the result of a conceit or hubris which argues that we are too good for our positions as junior college teachers and deserve to be somewhere else just this side of Harvard. To me this is just as wrong-headed as the notion that we must embrace a John Rouselean (by way of William Glasser or maybe John Rawls) position of equality of condition when it comes to imparting knowledge to our students.

But I think a more fair-minded criticism of these programs is that they detract from a spirit of professionalism and dedication to our disciplines and our overall calling as teachers. By this I don't mean that these programs purposely neglect that aspect of our role. I'm only saying that they tend to play this down in favor of some kind of psychological and egalitarian uplift that at best is an exercise in common sense redundancies and at worst panders to an anti-intellectual brand of careerism.

My solution, which I think is well-known to some, is to opt instead for more divisional or even departmental inservice programs which stress development of our own respective teaching fields. On various occasions we in SBS have successfully offered such programs, and we plan to continue along this line in the future.

Finally, it has always been my position that a reputation for quality education in the fundamentals will serve us better both as an institution and in our role of serving the students and the community than anything else we might do. And the inservice I have championed above furthers that end more successfully than anything that we have experienced hitherto.

COLLEGE INCREASES TAX REVENUES

As we all know, the Board of Trustees recently voted to lower the rate of taxation for district residents from 8¢ to 4.8¢ per \$100 valuation. This move was apparently in response to the Harris County Appraisal District's skyrocketing reappraisals which made front-page headlines several months ago, sending hundreds of citizens through the appeals process and sparking calls on the City Council for the resignation of HCAD Director Searcy German.

Amidst all the glowing self-congratulation over the tax rate drop, we think it only fair to point out that the College expects to realize an increase in the volume of tax revenues. The Faculty Senate Benefits Committee reports that the size of this increase will be approximately \$1.25 million and may be as high as \$2.06 million. This increase, moreover, will evidently be borne by the taxpayers already hardest hit by the HCAD's reappraisals: those whose revaluations have risen by 81% or more.

DISTRICT HEADQUARTERS REVIEWED

After a semester of dealing with the separate District Office, how do you like the idea? The NHCC United Faculty wants to know! Please take a moment to evaluate the pros and cons, and send your comments to Olin Joynton, A-217, South Campus. The union hopes to use THE ADVOCATE as a conduit for faculty opinion at this critical juncture before the College spends in excess of \$3 million for its own administrative building.

The prevailing sentiment among union members is not so favorable. All the lavish opulence of corporate-style headquarters with which administrators honor themselves makes us think of ways in which the money (\$6600/month for rent alone) could be spent more directly to benefit the students. Would the taxpayers approve if they knew? What about the problems of access and communication? Does the "fairness to the East Campus" doctrine really silence these objections? We think not, but occasionally the union view does not exactly square with the general will of the faculty. So please let us know if we're out of line again.