

The Hill News

FREE HOME DELIVERY

PRICE HILL

July 25, 1978

July 25, 1978

Page 7

Students Return Tech College To Correct Time

Remember clock watching during those boring classes in high school or college? It was always a relief to know that there were only a few minutes until class was ending.

Cincinnati Technical College students never watch clocks. At least, they never did. All 200-plus clocks at CTC were stopped, all at different times.

There were no administrative edict declaring clocks to be frozen. No fuses were blown. And sabotage was ruled out two years ago when the clocks stopped.

It seems that in their eagerness to construct the duct work for the college's air conditioning system, construction workers cut and pulled some old wires which seemed to lead no where. The wires were part of the master clock system installed in the building when it was built in 1952.

For two years as remodeling work progressed throughout the building, different sections of the CTC facility were in different time zones, frozen in time. Now, however, CTC is returning to the present with clocks again working.

Two CTC engineering technologies students accepted the task of returning the building to Eastern Standard Time. Stephen Froehle and James McGee applied the knowledge and skills learned in their

electro-mechanical program to work on the clocks for a project in their design class.

What seemed to be an interesting but relatively mediocre project in term of difficulty turned into a gigantic jigsaw puzzle when Steve and Jim discovered that there was no schematic for the system. All they had to work with were a small schematic for the main transformer on the first floor and a primary and two secondary pull boxes in the tunnels under the building.

According to Jim, son of Mrs. Sarah McGee of Mt. Washington, the puzzle became more involved when the pull boxes showed more wires than just the 200 some for clocks. Also included were the wires for the telephones which linked the old high school classrooms to the main office and class bell wires.

"With all the additional wires and no schematic of the system, there was only one way to find the correct wire for each clock — trial and error," Steve explained.

"We kept pulling wires until we found the right one," he said.

Jim added that at times he felt ridiculous because students and faculty thought he was talking to the walls when he was communicating with Steve.

Steve, son of Mr. W.R. Froehle, Delhi, is the smaller of the two young men and worked in the cramped tunnels pulling the wires which Jim was guiding to him from classrooms and halls.

At times, both students would find the correct wire for a certain clock only to end up with each of them holding two ends. The wire had been cut during remodeling. Other times, they discovered wiring patterns which jumped across halls. And it was not unusual to find circuits plastered over when the original clocks were removed.

All in all, the project was completed after 110 hours of work, mostly at night so as not to disturb classes. Jim and Steve redesigned and rewired a new clock system for CTC. They turned over to the college's plant operations staff a schematic of the system and an algorithm for troubleshooting any future problems. As far as cost goes, the entire system was repaired for \$6.39.

Robert Speckert, coordinator of CTC's electro-mechanical program, was impressed with the students' dedication to completing this frustrating and time-consuming project. According to Speckert, the two graduating students received an "A" in their course.

"After all," Speckert said, "the clocks are working." ...And time marches on at Cincinnati Technical College.