



# The STING

Southern Technical Institute  
Marietta, Georgia 30060

**AUG 21,** 1978

## **BEN** talks & talks & talks...

MET Dept. Head Holds Question and Answer Session

On August 17 between the hours of 4:00 PM and 6:00 PM Professor Ben Sparks held a question and answer session for all MET students. He had a good crowd for the event which also included a faculty member or two from the MET Department.

One of the first items discussed was the exit examination that is taken, usually shortly before graduation. The question asked concerned whether or not the students who must take the exam will eventually be required to pass the exam as a graduation requirement. Prof. Sparks responded by stating that the exam is really an evaluation of the MET program more than the student. Basically, the MET exam tells the department staff that a student can either do strength or thermo problems, or he can't. The results of the exam sessions are usually tabulated and passed back to the instructors. Prof. Sparks indicated that he wanted the instructors to look at the results critically and respond to weaknesses in the program.

Teacher evaluations were also discussed. A question was asked regarding who sees the teacher evaluations. This question raised another problem about what the department is doing to hire more replacements to staff the MET faculty which is currently undermanned. Prof. Sparks indicated that he is presently interviewing and advertising for potential instructors. He also said that he was trying to be selective in hiring only individuals who possess the educational as well as the necessary industrial experience requirements to give the person a fair chance at future promotions and at securing tenure.

One item that generated a great deal of interest was the use of the shops. The question concerning usage also came up as a result of another question concerning the offering of a general metal working class. Prof. Sparks responded by saying that he is facing a two-horn dilemma. He must justify shop activities and projects to the school. The shop usage situation needs recognition, it needs to be an educational benefit, and it needs budgeting. The current situation is such that there is a lot of unaccountability for jobs being done in the shops. Prof. Sparks termed these projects "little government" jobs and indicated that they are really not seen as educational. He said that there is a need to show that the materials used are put to good educational use, rather than being used for students' personal uses. He mentioned that there were several untrained individuals using the machine shop without authorization, although he declined to name names at this time. It is a question of using taxpayers' resources for commercial purposes. Currently, the rules for using the shop require that a staff member be present.

Another side to the shop usage problem that was brought out concerned competing with commercial concerns. Prof. Sparks said that this was treading on thin ice. He emphatically stressed that he did not want to hear that "Dean Carlson is running an auto repair shop" or "an electrical repair shop." He said that he knew who Dean Carlson would come looking for if such remarks were made by an individual complaining of competition between his private business and Southern Tech. The whole thing boils down to the fact that the taxpayers' resources cannot be used for commercial purposes. If the machine shop can add to the student's education and further it, then it is a good idea, but permission should come from the department head and not the technician who may be in charge of the shop. Prof. Sparks indicated that he did not feel that the technician should be responsible for major shop use decisions.

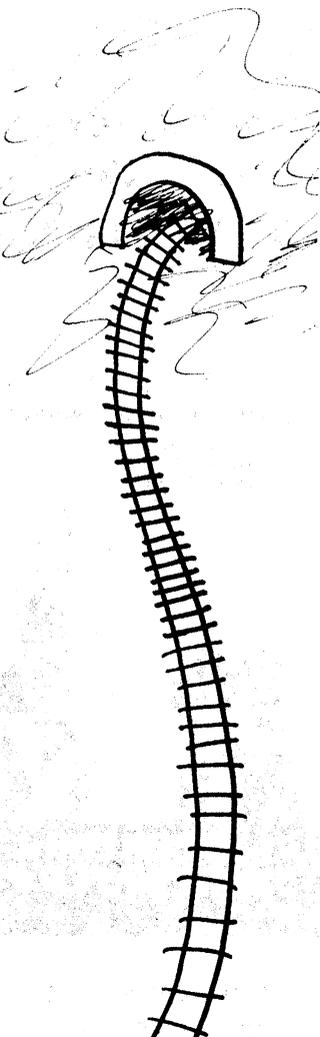
The comments concerning use of the machine shop opened up another area of concern: the use of the shop as a source of furthering education in the case of the Bathtub Race situation. At this point, Prof. Sparks referred to an article published in a spring issue of the STing which implied that the department's resources were open to the unrestricted use of bathtub racers. He made it very clear that such an implication did not make him very happy. He posed a hypothetical suggestion that the shop could become a production shop for turning out bathtub racers only, which would not necessarily be educational.

As far as where the department is headed in terms of curriculum structure, Prof. Sparks commented that part of the problem is getting enough people to take a course that is offered. He is currently working on structuring the course requirements into three main areas: design, manufacturing or production, and plant work. He is also working on offering more elective courses.

The question of faculty hiring became an issue again when a question was asked concerning competitive salaries for potential instructors. Prof. Sparks indicated that he felt that the school came out pretty well when looking at recent faculty salary surveys. One area that is causing problems concerns the present retirement system and the amount of money being withheld for it. The current retirement plan is not appealing to many well-qualified potential instructors and is not helping attract the type of persons needed who have current industrial experience.

Several other subjects that were discussed included a comment from Prof. Sparks on the MET fall quarter schedule. When asked about areas of overlap, he openly admitted his weakness in schedule planning, and agreed that the current fall schedule planning is less than the best. But he also assured the students that he was working on a more efficient scheduling plan that could possibly be a two-year tentative plan.

THERE WILL BE MORE IN THE NEXT ISSUE. SEND THE STing YOUR COMMENTS.





**SOUTHEASTERN INTERCOLLEGIATE  
CANOE RACES**

Western Piedmont Community College of Morganton, North Carolina, will sponsor the seventh Southeastern Intercollegiate Canoe Races on Saturday, October 7, 1978, on the Catawba River west of Morganton. The water level is regulated by Duke Power Company which assure an adequate water volume. Much of this section of the Catawba is Class II, with the first mile consisting of almost constant standing waves. The race is open to all amateur boaters 15 years of age or older who have some experience in whitewater canoeing.

Competition is limited to open canoes. There will be competition for C-1 and C-2 in two classes--Intercollegiate and Open. The intercollegiate class will be open to any member of the student body, staff, or faculty of a college or university. The Open Class is open to anyone not connected with a college and who meets the age requirements (15 years of age). The wildwater course will consist of a 2½ mile run for all paddlers.

The Cruising Class will consist of Grumman type boats (minimum beam--35", maximum length--17'2"). All boats failing to meet these specifications will be placed in the Down-river Class. Slalom canoes must have a minimum length of 15' with a minimum beam of 35". All boats must have grab loops or painters on each end. It is recommended that a bailer be provided due to the lack of areas to dump water out of the canoe. All paddlers will be required to wear a life jacket throughout the race.

Entry fees should be submitted at the rate of \$4.50 per person (\$1.00 of which is a number deposit that will be refunded upon turning the number in at the end of the race), and \$1.00 for each subsequent event. Fees should be enclosed with the application and postmarked not later than September 29, 1978. Registration will be limited to two classes per event for a maximum of four per individual.

The races will begin on Saturday, October 7, 1978 at 10:00 a.m. at the Bridgewater Power Plant below Lake James. On the day of the race, entrants may report to the registration desk which will be located near the starting point, between 8:30 a.m. and 9:30 a.m. to pick up numbers. It is recommended that all contestants register early and move their boats to the starting point.

**ORDER OF EVENTS**

Wildwater Races

9:30 a.m.--C-1, C-1W  
11:30 a.m.--C-2, C-2 Mixed

Slalom

1:30 p.m.--C-1, C-2, C-1W,  
C-2 Mixed, C-2

Team trophies will be awarded to the first three college teams. Awards presentations to the first three places in each class as well as the team trophies will be made Saturday night on the college campus immediately following a picnic supper which will begin at 6:30 p.m. at the pond. All competitors are invited as guests of the college to the dinner.

An area of the college will be set aside for competitors to camp Friday and/or Saturday nights. Please indicate on the registration form if you plan to camp on campus.



Tau Alpha Pi meeting August 24, at 12:00 noon, in room 227. All students who have a cumulative G.P.A of at least 3.5, have made the Dean's List two consecutive quarters, and have no recorded failures for a subject taken at STI are invited to attend this meeting. If any interested person is unable to attend, please contact Dr. Fisher or Linda Hammond, P.O. Box 8837.



**STUDENTS:  
PLEASE CHECK YOUR  
MAIL BOXES**

**The Bookstore  
is now buying  
Used Books  
for  
Fall Quarter**

**STUDENT CENTER PRESENTS:**

FILMS INCORPORATED

A card up his sleeve.  
A noose around his neck.  
It's **GEORGE SEGAL**  
as The Dirtwater Fox.

A wiggle in her hips.  
Larceny in her heart of gold.  
It's **GOLDIE HAWN**  
as The Duchess.

**THE DUCHESS AND THE  
DIRT WATER FOX**

PG-13

**OFFICIAL CALENDAR**

|                   |                    |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| Aug. 28 - Sept. 1 | Finals             |
| Sept. 18          | New Student report |
| Sept. 19          | Registrar          |
| Sept. 20          | Classes b          |

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**AUGUST 26  
NOON AND 8:00 P.M.  
ADMISSION FREE**