

Refresher course: Boone Junior College/DMACC 101

Does your family have three generations, or maybe even four generations of Boone two-year college graduates? Four living generations would be possible.

When this year's students enrolled last September, they were joining a 70-year-old institution. Isn't it time we had a refresher course on Bear facts?

Boone Junior College, as it was officially named when it opened in the fall of 1927, had a first-year enrollment of 60 students, probably all having just graduated from Boone High School. Classes were held on the third floor of the high school building.

A liberal arts curriculum equivalent to freshman classes in other colleges was offered. Credits were fully accredited and fully transferable to other colleges.

Instructors, all of whom were required to have master's degrees in the subject matter they taught, divided their time between the high school and the college.

J.R. Thorngren was the first dean. He served in that capacity for 26 years.

Tuition was \$50 per semester.

The success of the new school was evident at once, and expansion began immediately. A second year was added in the fall of 1928 with an appropriate sophomore curriculum, and classes were included to qualify graduates for an elementary teaching certificate.

After World War II, the influx of returning veterans, as well as increased students from surrounding communities, made it clear that larger quarters must be found.

In 1955, when the present Franklin elementary building was constructed, college classes were moved to the old Franklin building, which was renamed Franklin Hall.

In the short time that the old Franklin had stood idle, windows had been broken out, and pigeons had moved in. The floors had been oiled

A Second Look

By Lorraine Lovin



so many times it actually was a fire hazard.

But when it was renovated, the two-story brick building gave students more of a feeling of the "college experience."

Two luxuries the new location provided were its own cafeteria and a student lounge.

There still was not room to accommodate everything. The old National Guard Armory was used for athletic and physical education activities; the music department was centered in the Presbyterian Church building; some science and art classes were still held at the high school; and the Ryan High School gymnasium provided a place for intercollegiate basketball.

In 1956, Boone Junior College held its commencement separate from the high school for the first time.

BOONE JUNIOR COLLEGE TAKES A GIANT STEP

The school's next move opened doors allowing for progress unforeseen just few years before.

In the early 1960s, the state legislature formed 16 area education districts for a statewide system of area two-year colleges. The Boone Board of Education and the Boone community hoped that the local junior college would be designated as one of the attendance centers in the system, but our already-cramped quarters could not house an area attendance center.

A great deal of anxiety accompan-

ied Boone's risk-taking. A period of negotiations followed among the Boone Community Board of Education, District XI Area Board of Directors, and the state legislature.

The federal government gave grants for building junior college facilities. Boone received one of the grants, but the amount was not at all adequate to build a new facility in a new location. At that time the Area XI board had no funds for the purchase of buildings.

Clair Abbott, who had been named dean of the junior college in 1964, Lloyd Courter, president of the Boone Board of Education, and Harold Welin, a Boone businessman

who had been appointed to the area board of directors, worked tirelessly to find a solution that would preserve our college and make it a part of Area XI.

Abbott organized every student who was enrolled in the school, divided the city into sections, and sent the students out to knock on doors and try to convince every voter the value of approving a bond issue to finance the balance of the cost of a new campus.

In spite of a number of uncertainties, the Boone community passed a \$925,000 bond issue by a 96 percent victory and built the current college classroom building without knowing

whether or not it would be approved as a district attendance center.

The word was circulated that if the new building could not become an area college, Boone could use it to replace its high school building which was in need of remodeling and enlarging. It was questionable that it could have been converted for that use.

On February 21, 1969, the Iowa State Legislature passed enabling legislation for a long-term lease/purchase agreement between Boone Community School District and the

DMACC

please turn to page 4



Above is the 1961 Boone Junior College graduating class in front of Franklin Hall, the school's atten-

dance center before the current DMACC building was constructed.

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DMACC today has an enrollment of 1,173 students and the school's expansion continues, providing space for the growing enrollment and added offer-

ings. The most recent addition was the Lloyd Courter Center, at right.

DMACC: Enrollment continues to rise

DMACC
continued from page 1

Area XI Board of Directors. Such a contract was drawn up and legalized, with the area having 18 years to complete the purchase of the facility from the Boone board.

Boone Junior College succeeded in becoming one of the five attendance centers on July 1, 1969.

July 1987 concluded the 18 years; the purchase contract was fulfilled; and the area's indebtedness to the voters of Boone was repaid.

THE COLLEGE TODAY

At age 70, the Boone campus, now an attendance center of Des Moines Area Community College, is alive and in the best of health. The experiment that started during the "Great

Depression" to provide economical higher education to Boone High School graduates is now in full stride with its college offerings.

It is continuing to move forward as it prepares to enter the 21st Century.

The starting enrollment of 60 students has been eclipsed by the current enrollment of 1173 students.

DMACC's Boone campus provides career courses, such as nursing, yet also maintains its solid, fully accredited liberal arts curriculum, with many of its graduates receiving A.A. degrees and then transferring to universities—most often, to Iowa State University.

At the same time, Iowa State students pick up courses at DMACC for more personalized instruction.

The Boone campus is the only one of the five Area XI centers that offers extra-curricular activities. It has a

well-rounded athletic program, top quality dramatic and music productions and many scholastic organizations.

The school's building program continues, providing space for the growing enrollment and added offerings.

Kriss Philips, who has been dean of the Boone DMACC center for the past 16 years, is particularly excited about the school's expanding technology. Philips tells of the courses the local college offers over the Internet, making it possible for students anywhere in the world to register and get credit for subject matter originating in Boone.

Philips notes that the academic and the technical are merging and blending more all the time, a fact that the Boone Bears are taking advantage of.