September 5, 2012

HCC Board of Trustees - Renovation and Construction Project Tour.

I received the following invitation from HCC.

> The Haywood Community College Board of Trustees will meet on Tuesday, September 4 at 3 p.m. in the 100 Building Board Room. Attached is a general agenda for the committee meetings as well as for the Board meeting.
>
> Notice: As members of the press, you are invited to send one representative from your paper to the renovation and construction project tour. The representative can join the BOT in the parking lot of the RCAC at 12:30 p.m. You will also need to R.S.V.P. to me (Debra Davis) by noon Friday, August 31, so that appropriate shuttle arrangements can be made. Please include the name of the representative who will be attending. Thank you.
>
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This tour was open to the public, and since I had continued interest in the FLS solar thermal stuff, I took the opportunity and my camera. I was again hoping personnel from FLS would be present to explain the solar thermal stuff. A similar tour was offered back in May, but no one from FLS showed up. Compare pictures with those taken back in May, on www.haywoodtp.net , Tour of HCC Creative Arts Building for Board of Trustees on 5/16/2012. 5/20/2012... This tour included various renovation activities around the campus, over and above the Creative Arts Building, and some of the more interesting and unique photos are included. A quorum of board members were present, along with Rose Johnson and Bill Dechant.

The tour started at the back of the RCAC building (Regional Center for the Advancement of Children), where a new playground is nearly complete.

More playground equipment. Note the little people hand rails by the steps. Trustees indicated this equipment was built by Clark & Leatherwood and brought over.

This picture was taken inside the current (old) creative arts building. This nice person operating the weave was gracious enough to let me take her picture, as I had never seen anyone using one of these weaving machines before. It was explained that the old creative arts building was constructed over a 3 year period by students. Trusses warped during that building period, and now the roof leaks, and, additionally, the floor has settled.

The following two pictures are of the energy efficient house being built by students (and contractors). The fascia material was something I had never seen before.

It is poplar bark that has been stripped from a tree, flattened and treated. Was very impressed.

This material came from a local craftsman.

Trustees were provided with information as to how each of these renovation projects were funded.

The tour of the Creative Arts Building started on the top floor. Hard hats are still required. There has been considerable progress in the construction since May, but it looks like a little while to go before it is ready for classes. There were a couple of things that stood out to me during this tour.

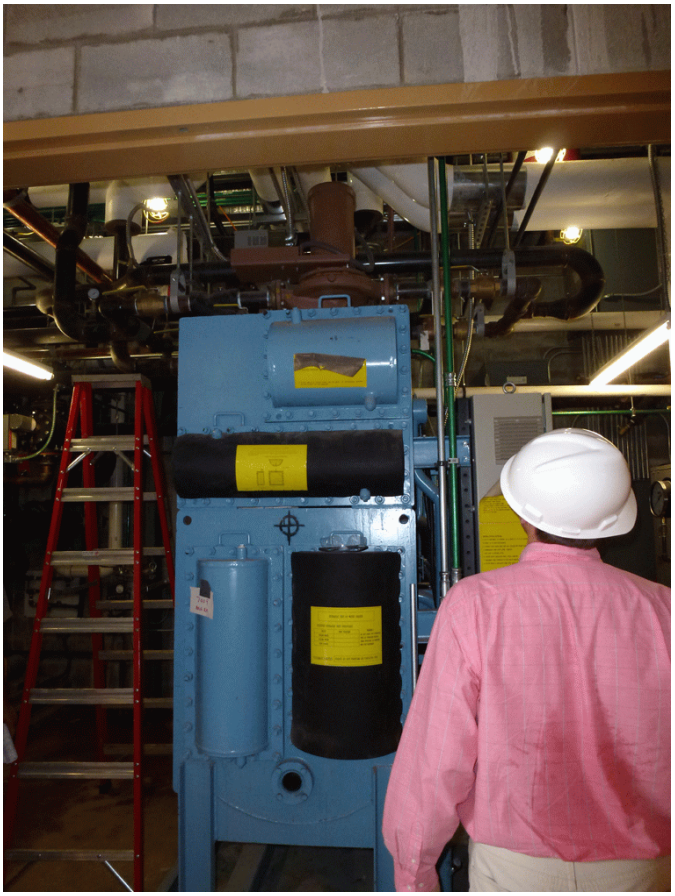
- The amount of low voltage wiring [-],
- The automatic motion sensing for switching on lights as you walked into rooms [+],
- The equipment room housing the FLS solar thermal stuff [-],
- The opaque material on the southern facing large windows [-].

This is a picture of stuff above the dropped ceiling. The channel next to the pipes contains lots of blue low voltage cable (network/video/data). This is a room on the third floor where the cables terminate in a panel.

Rear of panel.

Front of panel. There were more terminations than this on the second and first floor. For a building that is supposed to house students for making pottery and other crafts, it appears that there is enough extra capacity to support a small division of Homeland Security or the NSA. It looked like about 3 times what I would have estimated it would have required.

Rack on the second floor.



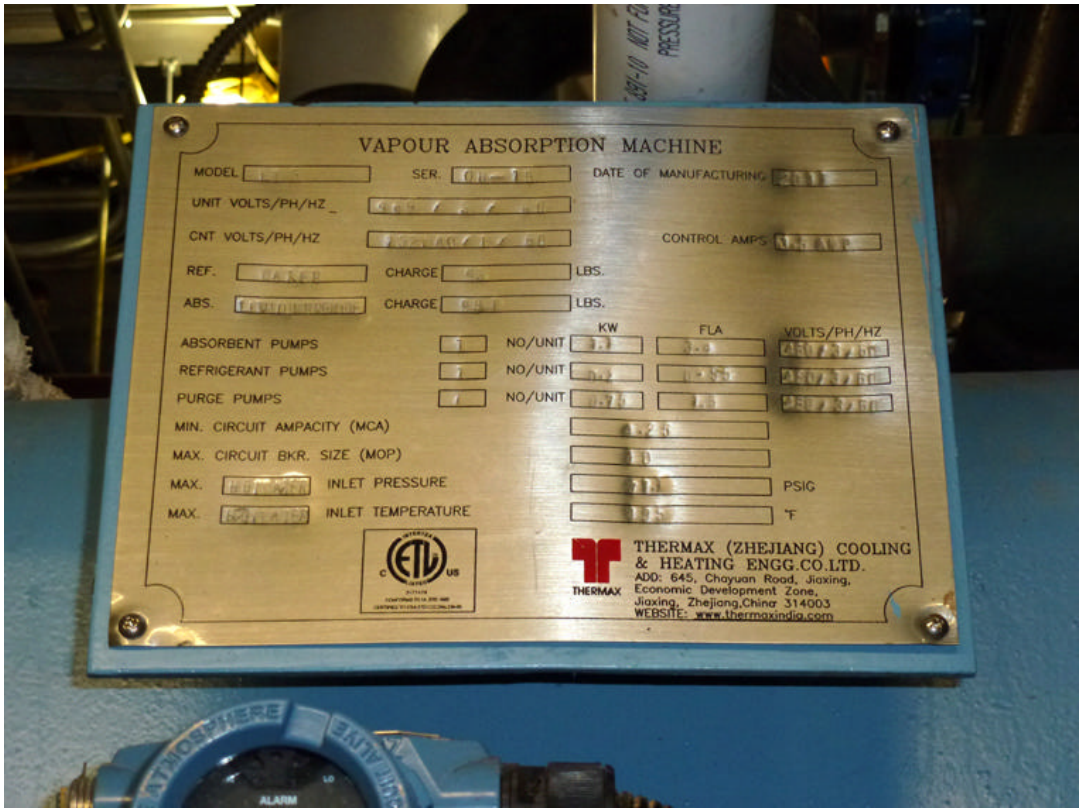
The vapour absorptive machine from China, now dwarfed by the pipes and plumbing that has been installed in the room. It is so crowded in that room, one of the contractors said they had to start assembling from the top of the room and work downwards.

As I recall my visit to the Vanir facility over in Fletcher, the largest Adsorptive Facility at that time, the two units were housed in separate large rooms, plenty of space, the coolant tank was also located inside the building nearby, and the water pumps were laid out nicely in a nearby area, humming away quietly, and the layout looked like it was created by an actual designer who had done this before.

The stuff that was jam packed into this teeny-tiny room looked like it had been designed by Rube Goldberg

> From Wikipedia, A Rube Goldberg machine, contraption, invention, device, or apparatus is a deliberately over-engineered or overdone machine that performs a very simple task in a very complex fashion, usually including a chain reaction. The expression is named after American cartoonist and inventor Rube Goldberg (1883–1970). Over the years, the expression has expanded to mean any confusing or complicated system.

The room needs to be about 5-6 times the size to accommodate the amount of stuff packed in there for maintenance considerations. What happens of a pump burns out and has to be replaced? Do you disassemble part of the system, or do you punch a hole in the wall? This room was brought to you by the combined effort of Innovative Design and FLS.



Parameter plate on Absorption cooler, Made in China.

Chemical Drums near the Solar Thermal Equipment.

The outside coolant tank looks like it has insulation now.

Loading dock area, FLS equipment located behind the coolant storage tank.

Two south facing floors are seen here. There are small windows on each floor, and large windows, covered with some kind of white opaque material. This evidently is some kind of insulator. But you know what, this campus is located on a very nice forestry environment. When you are inside of these rooms, and you see a large window that is opaque, and can only see outside through the small porthole windows, it gives a feeling of oppression, depression, and claustrophobia. I'd like to review the data on the cost/benefit ratio of this concept of slapping white opaque material on windows. Is this another Innovative Design idea, courtesy of Michael Nicklas?

There are a considerable number of renovation projects currently underway at HCC, and we visited only a few of them on this tour. Funding for these renovations are by grants being taken advantage of by HCC, by taxpayer dollars approved by county commissioners, and other sources. These renovations are being well managed, in my opinion, to stretch dollars as much as possible, for the overall benefit of HCC. There are plenty of people working on these projects, and all should be given credit for their work. If I knew who they all were, I would cite them.

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