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Oil Spill in Centennial

By Eric Schwarz

A spill of up to 75 gallons of thick number-six fuel oil was found by a student on the northwest side of the University's Centennial Woods Natural Area Monday. The oil leak, termed "a disaster" by Director of Administrative Support Services Ray Lavigne, originated in the boiler room of the Given Medical building. Members of the University's Grounds crew and employees of the New England Marine Company have been working to clean up the oil spill since late Monday night.

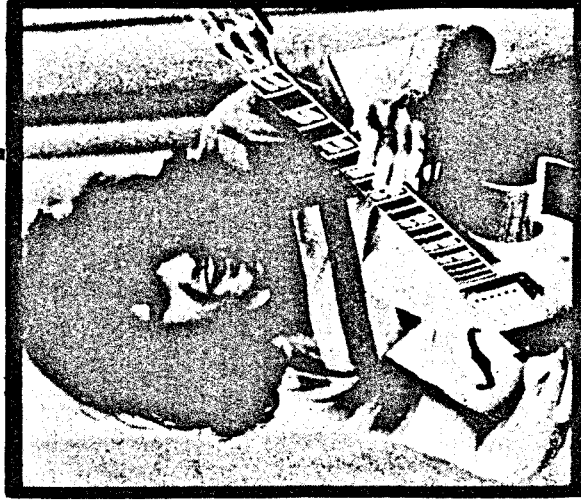
A leak in a section of pipe passing through a steam heating chamber in the basement of the Given building allowed the oil to join with condensed steam and travel through a floor drain to a Sump pit where it was pumped out to the outfall behind the UVM baseball diamond. The oil travelled down a gully

Cont. on page 10



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Centennial Oil Spill

continued from cover



Member of UVM's grounds committee cleaning oil out of a beaver dam in Centennial Woods.

sticking onto rocks, tufts of grass and accumulating in two large beaver dams which create two of Centennial Woods' beaver ponds, said Carl Reidel, director of the University's environmental studies program and overseer of the Centennial Woods Natural Area.

It is hard to assess the damage to the area's wildlife population at this point, said Lavigne, "but we are proceeding ahead and trying to save everything we can." He said that 18 people have been working on the clean up effort since it was discovered on Monday night and predicted that the job would be finished today (Thursday).

Charles Sullivan, President of New England Marine, said there would be minimal damage since there was not enough of an oil cover floating on the water to prevent oxygenation. In larger spills, he explained, the oil cover prevents plant life from breathing, often significantly altering an area's ecological balance.

Reidel called the fact the spill occurred in the fall "lucky" since a turnover of new vegetation next year could help to heal any damage to the area. He added, though, that no one would be sure about the damage "until we see the response of the wildlife."

The active beaver population in Centennial Woods is of special concern to the area's managers. The beaver population had been non-existent until about three years ago, said Reidel, but now they have "an active colony which plays a major role in the area's ecology." Reidel added, "I am worried that even after the clean up the oil smell and slick will drive them out of the area."

The clean up effort mostly involves cutting away brush and sod that has been covered with oil. Workers have been using shovels and chainsaws to remove the vegetation affected by the oil. In addition, Lavigne said, the clean up crews spent Monday night putting two "booms" across the beaver ponds running from 12 inches below the water surface to six inches above and designed to trap any oil still flowing down the waterway.

The cost of the clean up effort is still undetermined, but, Lavigne said, "We aren't concerned about that now, we will spend what it takes to do the job right." Peterson said the manpower and equipment provided by New England Marine would probably run around \$2,000 a day for Tuesday and Wednesday and a little less for the work they did late Monday night.

Repairing the broken pipe, paying the overtime for University workers, and purchasing some sort of screen to prevent a similar accident from happening again will also be costs facing the University, said Lavigne.

This is the second time in the last decade that an oil spill originating in Given, the University's backup heating facility, has damaged Centennial Woods. In 1973 a pipe carrying lighter grade fuel burst and flooded the boiler room also finding its way into the Sump pit and eventually out to the outfall behind the baseball field. On that occasion some of the oil travelled all the way to the Winooksi river, said Lavigne.

To make sure another spill will not occur on the same site, Lavigne is considering purchasing some sort of protective screen to place over the outfall. Other observers were surprised the University had not already near the map and document purchased such a device. "I assumed they had taken precau-

tions after the last spill," said Reidel.

In 1974 UVM's Board of Trustees, recognizing the "growing concern over the degradation of the natural environment," accepted over a thousand acres donated for its Natural Areas system and appointed the director of the environmental studies program, Reidel, to "perform several tasks deemed necessary to carry out the intent of the (Trustees') resolution." The areas are used for educational and scientific purposes but the University has only appropriated \$1,300 for upkeep since then, said Reidel. In 1981 Reidel called the system "The least funded Natural Area in the country."

The Grounds crew does not have the staff to help with the upkeep of the Natural Areas said Lavigne. Though their staff has been reduced to 22 from 38 in the last few years, Lavigne feels they are doing a better job than before because they have a harder working crew.

The barebones budget that Lavigne works with and the lack of funding for the Natural Areas makes some observers worry about the physical and natural infrastructure of the University. If money is not spent soon on the pipes, paths and water systems at the University, they argue, the University will be facing much larger costs later on.

Other related problems which occurred recently may be only coincidences or may be evidence of a wider problem.

Sewage Systems

Last Friday, November 6, the Bailey-Howe library closed for the day at 2:00 because a broken sewage pipe was causing bathrooms on the main and ground floors to overflow. The main sewage line broke under the library parking lot sometime early Friday morning, said Lavigne.

By 1:00 there were three to four inches of raw sewage in the ground floor of the library. Other observers were surprised the map and document purchased such a device. "I assumed they had taken precau-

Reader Services at the Library.

The pipe which broke, said Lavigne, was an old clay pipe and was not as durable as the iron pipes which make up most of the University's sewage system. The pipe has been temporarily repaired and the University is now soliciting bids to replace it permanently, said William Ballard, Associate Director of Administrative Support Services.

Another problem at the library, said Crouch, is the intense heat which has led to a steady stream of complaints from students and staff. The main reason for the heat, said Lavigne, is that one of the library's three air distributors is broken. Lavigne's office has ordered replacement parts, but they have not arrived yet.

In addition, Lavigne said that some of the heaters in the library (none of them are supposed to be on at this time of the year) are leaking warm air. "We don't have enough people on the staff to check all the radiator valves like we used to," said Lavigne.

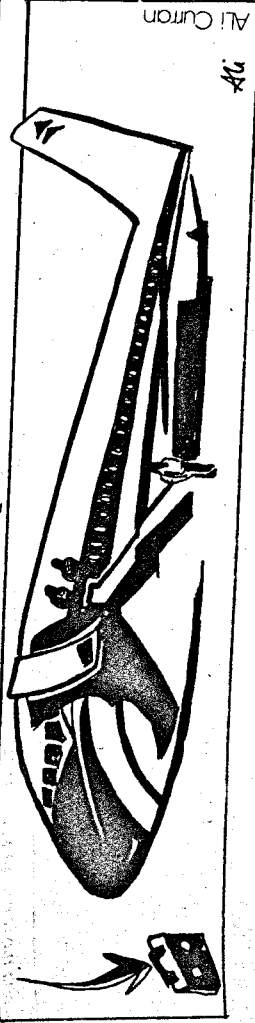
The heat is a great mystery to me, said Crouch. He added, "I don't know why the University can't stockpile some extra parts to deal with the kind of problems we have been facing."

Water Quality

This week Lavigne released a letter to members of the campus community detailing some problems with the University's drinking water. For the next year, until the city completes construction of a new water treatment facility, the campus water pipes will carry water which occasionally contains more than the allowable amount of copper and iron.

The water is not a health risk and any problems with high metal content are solved if the first user in the morning lets the water run for several minutes.

Burlington has very soft water, containing low levels of minerals and when it is stored in metal pipes it leaches metals from the pipes, said Lavigne. The new retreatment center will



Travel Service Opens On Campus

By Alex Nemerov

As the result of a study first begun in 1980 and an idea first conceived in 1974, the New England Travel Service has been awarded a contract by the University of Vermont to serve as an on-campus outlet for travel arrangements. To be known as the "UVM Travel Center," the service will open for business on November 15.

From its space in the Campus Ticket Store, the travel service will handle train, bus and plane tickets, car rentals and hotel arrangements, and will be open to all members of the university community.

New England Travel, which was chosen from among several applicants who responded to a September, 1981 ad placed in the *Burlington Free Press* by the University, already has two offices in the Burlington area, one on Battery Street and one in the Champlain Mill in Winooski.

Sandy Holloway founded New England Travel in January, 1980, with his wife Nancy, and said he looks forward to his service's

association with the University. "Our philosophy has been to provide a level of personal service better than what the traveler has come to expect," he said at a November 9 meeting in Rowell building held to discuss the Travel Center. "We want to find the best deal possible, and usually that means the cheapest arrangement we can find."

"We like to ask questions, offer options," he continued. "Sometimes that means asking the client if he will accept a flight the next day, or the next night. They may be minor deviations, but they can amount to substantial savings."

The Travel Center will replace the UVM Purchasing Department as the sole handler of travel arrangements. In the past, the Purchasing Department staff has spent what they claim was an inordinate amount of time dealing with travel plans.

"We are all very optimistic that New England Travel Service will save us a lot of time and money," said Jane Matthews, an Assistant Comptroller in the Accounting office.

Dear Ronnie...Love, Bernie

By Lynn Cline

Burlington's Mayor Bernard Sanders has written two letters to President Reagan in the past month, informing him that Burlington Aldermen have voted to reject any national funding for the government's crisis relocation plan, and that Burlington voters have passed a resolution calling for an immediate end to all U.S. military and economic aid to the government of El Salvador.

In a letter dated October 26, Sanders told Reagan of the Board of Aldermen's unanimous rejection of Burlington's participation in any crisis relocation plan involving evacuation of urban areas as a result of nuclear war.

"We believe it to be totally irresponsible to allow people the false hope that they could survive a nuclear war, or that a nuclear war could be 'winable,'" the letter stated. "All of the respectable medical and scientific

evidence indicates that if nuclear war should occur, virtually all of the people in our area would be killed, and those that survived might prefer death... as horrendous as World War I and World War II were, World War III will be qualitatively different as a result of nuclear weapons. There will be no World War IV."

Sanders ended the letter by asking Reagan to "Please think courageously and boldly." He added, "The survival of humanity is in your hands."

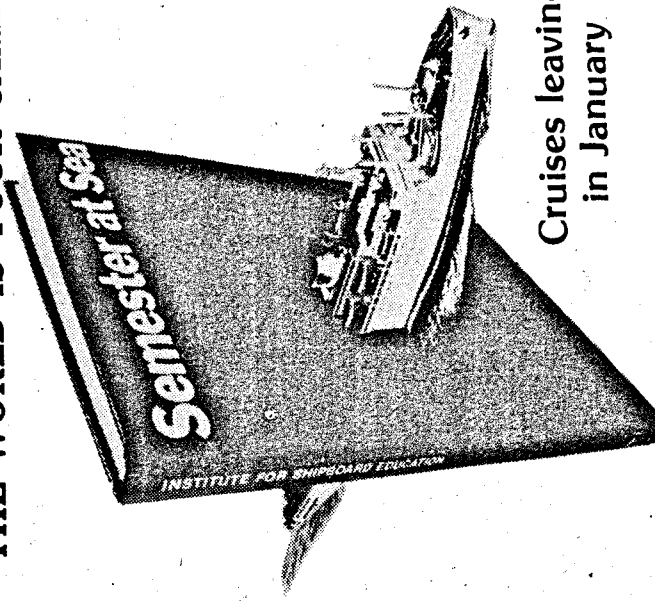
In a second letter, dated November 8, the Burlington mayor informed Reagan of the results of a referendum which appeared on Burlington's ballot on election day, November 2, 1982. The resolution, which was passed by a vote of 74.5 percent, read, "The people of Burlington urge the President and the Vermont Congressional delegation to: 1) Immediately end all

military and economic aid to the government of El Salvador, including the training of Salvadoran military personnel in the United States, and 2) Immediately recall all U.S. military advisors presently in El Salvador. Sanders stated that it is "absolutely absurd that our government continues to spend tax dollars supporting the repressive government of El Salvador."

He claimed that "the people of Burlington, Vermont are saying very clearly... they would much prefer to see federal money being used more wisely and productively than in support of the military dictatorship in El Salvador."

Sanders closed by saying, "I hope that you will take very seriously the sentiments expressed by Burlington voters because I believe that our views here are not terribly different from views held by a majority of Americans."

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Sitting in his office on South Prospect Street, Lavigne reflected on his job. "We often forget what we are here to do — and that is to help the students. We are trying to keep our costs as low as possible to keep tuition down. Sure we could keep a stockpile of spare parts, and we could use a larger staff, but it costs more."

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