

March 4, 2003

Rev. Barbara Barden

List - Ownbey and Room 109

Below is the list of items for the Ownbey Class and room 109. We are fortunate to be in this wonderful new building, and our interest is to make it an even better spiritual environment and experience for our members.

A more complete discussion of the list is attached. We have not commented on whether the costs of the recommendations are budgeted and will need to rely on you for guidance in that area. Our class and officers are open to discussing this list with you and proceeding as you feel appropriate.

Thank you for your encouragement.

List summary:

- 1) **Size of Room 109:**
 - **Recommendation: Ownbey move from room 109 to either the Fellowship Room (110) or the Library, or to another location.**
- 2) **Noise of the air conditioning units:**
 - **Recommendation: Room 109 needs very heavy curtains, thicker glass, shutters, perhaps hooded buffers toward the room as are attached to the other sides of the air conditioning, or some combination to cut down the "whine" of the air conditioning and to block the air conditioning view when needed.**
- 3) **Unattractiveness of the air conditioning view –**
 - **Recommendation: Heavy curtains and / or shutters.**
- 4) **Whiteboards –**
 - **Recommendation: Decision on the whiteboards can wait on room decision. In the meantime, we could use a movable board if there is an extra one.**
- 5) **Bulletin Boards - .**
 - **Recommendation: Place bulletin boards to the left entering room. Could be installed no matter the decision on our room location.**
- 6) **Washing Outside Windows.**
 - **One Solution: Members wash the windows if can be near air conditioning machinery.**
- 7) **Parking –**
 - **Recommendation: Change starting times for various services and spread them out.**
- 8) **Web site –**
 - **Your team has made a fine start. Ownbey appreciates being allowed to experiment.**
- 9) **Time Overlaps with Sunday School Hour –**
 - **Recommendation: Consideration of keeping the hour open for Sunday School classes and adjusting times for Church in the Round.**
- 10) **Atmosphere and furnishings in the Ownbey Class Room –**
 - **Recommendation: Repair present items. Search the basement and other church areas for suitable unused furnishings before considering buying new ones. Members volunteered to check their attic.**
- 11) **Miscellaneous: We are looking for a Bible given in honor of Dr. Peck and four hymnals. An open hole in the wall in 109 should be closed. A light fixtures needs alignment. The piano needs tuning.**

Donald S Redding
President Ownbey Sunday School Class

Rev. Barbara Barden

Ownbey and Room 109

We are excited to be in the Parish Life Building. As we discussed February 14, several items remain to be resolved; and as you asked we are listing them along with *solutions we considered or recommend*. We have not commented on the costs of the recommendations and will rely on you for guidance in this area.

While this list concentrates on items needing possible correction, we recognize there are many wonderful aspects of the class room area of the Parish Life Building. It is new and fresh, inspiring and conducive to spiritual growth, conducive to becoming acquainted with more church members, easier to get to, close to other classes our age, close to the Education Department and other departments, etc., and even the coffee service is working well. The library will be wonderful when it is open as a place to study before or after class Sundays or other days.

Here is the list:

1) **Size of Room 109:**

- *Recommendation: Ownbey move from room 109 to either the Fellowship Room (110) or the Library, or to another location.*

- A) Lou Bledsoe wrote recently, " I thought it was obvious Sunday that our classroom is too small. The present classroom used by the Fellowship class is ideal and that room is too small for them. Hopefully you will point that out to Barbara and she can move them to a larger room (such as the library) and let us have their room where we enjoy fellowship without feeling like we are sardines. Not trying to be cute but I believe we're going to grow in size and need to have a room where we can feel comfortable with growth."
- B) Sydnor Thompson said as he got up to teach one Sunday that he supported a move involving Fellowship / Library as "this is a little tight." With those two logical minds thinking the same thing, I believe we have a point.
- C) We had 59, 46, 29, 55, and 56 the Sundays in the new building. The room can handle 30 satisfactorily, but over that it is too tight as we learned on four out of five Sundays. Last year we averaged 30.8 but some Sundays peaked with many more. For the last few years our average has been :

1997	36.14
1998	36.16
1999	36.18
2000	36.12
2001	34.77
2002	30.8
2003 in old building	33.33
2003 in new building	49.00 (a 50% increase over 2002)

- D) We have older records we could search and calculate, but the above suggests we are going to average over 30, with higher peaks, even when the newness of the Parish Life Building wears off. Much over 30 and the room is tight.
- E) Our preference is to stay in the Parish Life Building, although some members (including Jack Copeland Sunday) asked if we could go back to the old room.

- F) The enthusiasm for the new building probably is attracting larger class attendance. It could wane and the numbers drop. Even so Ownbey attendance would have to drop below our historical figures for the room to be sufficient. A study by Bill Pearce disputes this assertion somewhat; I am basing my assessment on having been in the room every Sunday since it opened..
- G) Bill Pearce made some size estimates which probably should be confirmed.
- 1) It does not appear Fellowship would get more space if they moved to the Library. If we moved to Fellowship we would pick up 100 square feet or 12.5%, a modest increase but relief, and we would be away from the air conditioning whine.
 - 2) Bill Pearce quotes someone's rule of thumb saving the Ownbey space should handle 100 people, but I believe with 100 we would not have room for any open space or furnishings other than chairs.
 - 3) Sizes are:
 - (a) Ownbey – 800 square feet
 - (b) Library – 900 square feet
 - (c) Fellowship – 1050 square feet
 - 4) unless the above figures are wrong, we do not see Fellowship moving.
- H) Use of room 109 as the Library would not require the same ability to hear over the air conditioning as a discussion class requires. A problem with moving the library to 109 is the loss of a closet. There are closets on the other side of the wall in 109 toward the elevator and, as in our old room, a door could be cut through. Costs money, of course.

- *Recommendation: Ownbey move from room 109 to either the Fellowship Room (110) or the Library, or to another location.*

2) **Noise of the air conditioning units:**

- *Recommendation: Whatever the use for room 109, it needs very heavy curtains, thicker glass, shutters, maybe hooded buffers toward the room as are attached to the other sides of the air conditioning, or some combination to cut down the "whine" of the air conditioning and to block the air conditioning view when needed.*

- A) We have experimented with four major seating arrangements, and the noise is a problem in all. It is a problem because the whine becomes worrisome and it can be hard to hear the teacher, though so far ours have compensated well. At times it is not easy to hear comments from class members in our discussions but acknowledge all of that is not the fault of the room. We try to be a discussion class, not succeeding at times, and we need to be able to hear well.
- B) Turning down the fan in the room does not help reduce the sound (much), the main noise coming from outside.
- C) An architect member of the class says that doing a buffer to muffle satisfactorily the sound would be hard. Here are his comments:
- "However, may I say my second major in college was Acoustics and I can tell you right now that we will not resolve the air conditioning problem without major fenestration application of, at the very least, another layer of insulated glass for further isolation or very thick drapery ..."
- D) You mentioned use of a microphone. I am not sure how that works in a discussion class. We would have the whine of the air conditioning. I notice Fellowship has one, but then heard it is going back to another class.
- E) The Fellowship class also has an air conditioning whine but not as loud as 109.

- *Recommendation: Room 109 needs very heavy curtains, thicker glass, shutters, maybe hooded buffers toward the room as are attached to the other sides of the air conditioning, or some combination to cut down the "whine" of the air conditioning and to enable the air conditioning view to be blocked when needed.*

3) **Unattractiveness of the air conditioning view** – the issue mentioned at the beginning by the Gourleys –

- *Recommendation: Shutters and / or curtains.*

- 4) **Whiteboards** - We would like more board space for writing by the teachers than we had in the Youth Building. We prefer permanent boards for several reasons, including ease of use, but a mobile one similar to the one in Fellowship would work until we know whether or not we will move. We use a flip chart now, loaned by a class member, but we need more room to write..
- *Recommendation: Decision on the whiteboards can wait on room decision. In the meantime, we could use a movable board if there is an extra one.*
- 5) **Bulletin Boards** - Need large ones.
- *Recommendation: Place Bulletin Boards to the left entering room. Could be installed no matter the decision on our room location.*
- 6) **Washing Outside Windows.** We can open the window, just one side will open, but we cannot wash the outside from the inside through the one opening.
- *One Solution: Should we members of the class wash the windows? We will try if ok for us to get near the air conditioning machinery.*
- 7) **Parking** - is hard and hard to solve, especially for some of our less healthy folks. The handicapped places fill quickly, as do other spaces close by.
- *Recommendation: Change starting times for some services and spread them out. We know this is a tough one. We have no solution, otherwise. We have been through this exercise several times and know starting times are hard to change.*
- 8) **Web site** – *Your team is making a fine start resolving this issue for the church. Ownbey appreciates being allowed to experiment.*
- You can see what Ownbey has on the church site at <http://www.mpumc.org/ownbey/home>. More would be completed, but it takes a while to learn the program. We will tell Patrick when we are ready to link to the church web site.
- 9) **Time Overlaps with Sunday School Hour** – In the last month, there were several events during Sunday School hours – the ushers’ meeting, the columbarium meeting, Dr. Jones, the Al Staggs / Bonhoeffer session, the Communion Services, etc., and Church in the Round running late..
- A) These overlaps present a dilemma to people wanting to support their Sunday School classes but also want to attend the extra event. They hurt attendance in Sunday School, and overlook the importance of the efforts of the Sunday School teachers in their preparation. We had the smallest attendance the day of the Al Staggs session. True there was ice that day, but many Ownbey members were at the Staggs event, and we had 29 in Ownbey.
- B) The late exits of Church in the Round and late entry to Sunday School Classes cause some disruption in the Sunday School classes.
- *Recommendation: Consideration of the need of keeping the Sunday School hour open for Sunday School classes and of adjusting the times for Church in the Round*
- 10) **Atmosphere and furnishings in the Ownbey Class Room** - The class enjoyed our previous room and the members were fond of it. It was, however, not an attractive room, and it could have passed for a commercial conference room. That was our fault as no member did much about it. I now learn others had the same thoughts. With the new facilities, we have higher hopes for keeping it attractive and conducive to its purpose. We do not want to junk it up, and we are considering some tasteful drawings and other items for the walls and room. We like having Rev. Ownbey with us, thanks.

The furnishings could add more to the atmosphere. Maintenance found and replaced one table with a smaller one but was unable to replace the other. We need both tables because of no Bulletin Board, but one, primarily to leave space for seating, probably would suffice with a bulletin board were we to stay in the room. The coat rack is unattractive, takes up seating space, but is needed as there is no provision for coats in the class rooms area. A table is wobbly, and has a wadded up sheet of paper under a leg trying to keep it steady for the class secretary. The speakers stand is wobbly and sometimes falls apart, which maybe I can repair and will try. Storage space is limited even with the cabinet obtained from our old room.

- *Recommendation: Repair present items. Search the basement and other areas for suitable unused furnishings before considering buying new ones. Class members volunteered to check their attic.*

11) **Hymnals** - we have 37 and are supposed to have 40. *We will keep looking.*

12) **Bible** given the class in honor of Dr. Peck is missing. *We will keep looking.*

13) **Miscellaneous** An open hole in the wall should be *closed* or an electrical outline installed. There are no wires and it is not a safety hazard. A light fixture *needs alignment*. The piano needs *tuning*. I hear that process has started.

Donald S Redding
President Ownbey Sunday School Class
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