

# New dining commons an improvement

By Michael Clayton  
and Sean Higgins  
YELLIN' REBEL

The new dining commons will be completed in mid to late July, in time for the fall semester, Robert Ackerman, the vice president of Student Services said.

"The new facility will enclose 15,000 square feet of dining space and offer more flexibility than the current dining area which is twenty years old and too small for our rapid expansion," Ackerman said.

"Lines should not be an issue unless all 1100 dorm students decided to eat at the same time," Ackerman said. "In addition to the dorm student line, there will also be a cash line."

"The present dining commons will become a new book store, and the present book store will be converted to student activities offices," Theresa Chiang, director of Moyer Student Union, said.

"The size will nearly triple," said Mal Wightman, director of Marriott Food Services. "Starting from the back of the house — the cold storage and dry good storage is being increased dramatically."

"Right now we're working with an extremely small freezer. In the new facility the freezer will be sixteen feet deep, and there will be a back up freezer which is about twice the size of the one we're using now," said Wightman. "It's going to enable us to carry a wider variety."

One of the major problems the dining commons staff has had is limited storage space, he said.

"There have been times when we've run out of products — but only because we could only get so much in. The new freezer system should dramatically address that issue. The back-up system will be a much needed reserve," he said.

"There will be a vast improvement in the food selections with the addition of special orders food, hamburger grills and woks," Ackerman said.

"We'll have a full bakery. Currently, we don't do any of our in-house baking," Wightman said. "We go to the bakeries around town. But now we will be getting a pastry chef and a lead baker, so we'll be able to not only produce the des-

serts for the residence dining operation and the retail operation, but for our catering services as well."

"At breakfast, the servery will have homemade waffles. Waffles will be made right in front of the students and there will be eggs to order at every breakfast. Lunch will be the same way," said Wightman.

"There will be fires and grills right there, so hamburgers, hot dogs, and french fries will be available at every lunch. Also, there will be a wok which means us offering a stir fry entree at every lunch and dinner."

In terms of work force and staff expansion, Wightman said that the full-time staff will be expanded approximately 35 to 40 percent.

He said that the student staff will see a sharp increase in hours available, too.

"This semester, student employees average at least one hundred ninety hours per week. Next semester, the student staff will be expanded to about seven hundred eighty hours," Wightman said.

The staff won't be the only visible expansion. "The present dining room has about one hundred fifty seats. The new dining facility will be increased to nearly four hundred seats," he said.

There is no name for the building yet, he said.

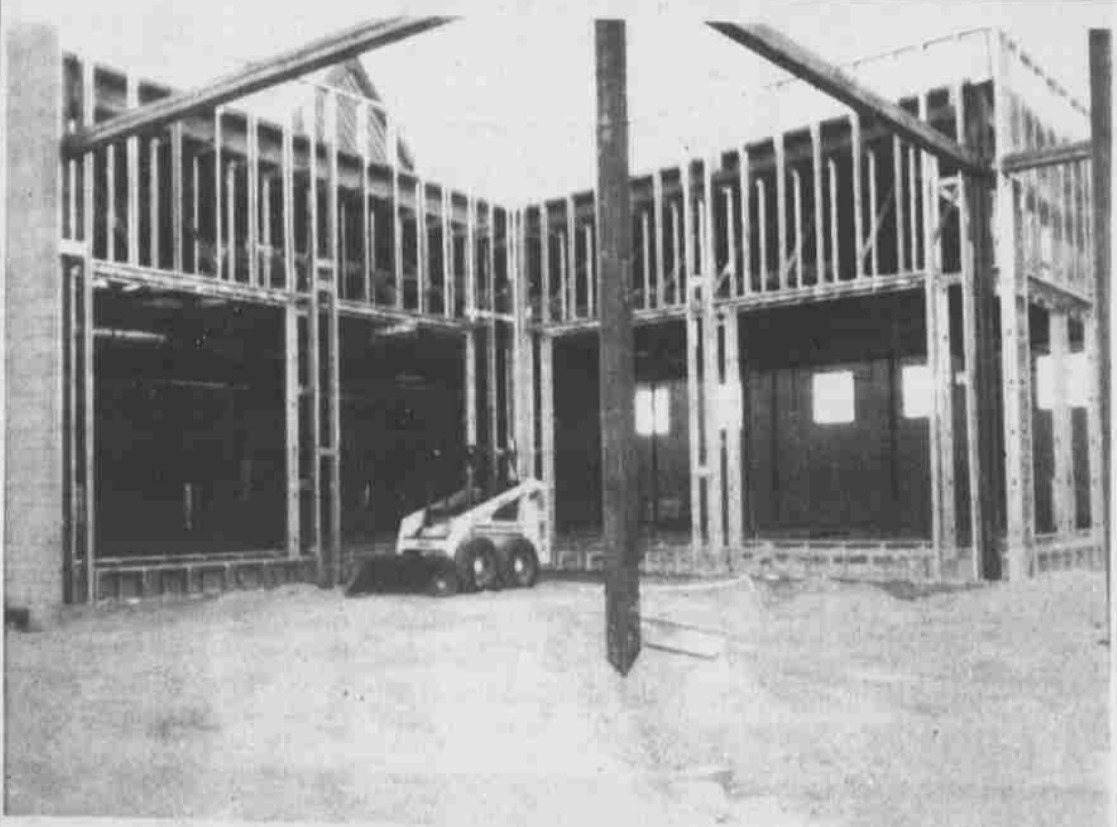
Another change will be the student focus groups that meet monthly to discuss student needs and wants in the area of food services and menu expansion.

"We want to get away from the concept of developing a menu based on what we [food services] think the students want," Wightman said. "We're going to both develop and change menus on an on going basis predicated on student's wants and appetites — based on what they [students] want."

Wightman explained that the area of non-food services would be a major change between the old facility and the new one.

"What we're going to do is put in a large projection TV system and a state of the art sound system," he said. "This way we'll be able to use it as a community system for the students. There will be videos and on monthly occasions there will be a disc jockey to play era specific music such as a fifties night motif."

## UNDER CONSTRUCTION



Yell Photo / Michael Crow

- A NEW LOOK The new dining commons currently being built is scheduled for completion for the fall semester.

The architectural firm of Holmes, Sabatini and Eeds designed the new dining commons building and it (the dining commons) is being built to handle future additions to the ever expanding UNLV campus.

J. Brandon Sprague, representing Holmes, Sabatini and Eeds, said the new dining commons is the most advanced service that can be provided.

"The layout of the building is designed for the maximum use of the area it encloses," Sprague said.

"The entrance will be on the right front of the building, with restroom facilities and ticket gates just inside. From there, they walk past the seating area to the serving section beginning with trays, silver, and napkins, behind which is a

short order grill just opposite the fresh fruit and vegetable stand."

Plated salads and desserts, along with the bread toasting facilities are in the middle front of the serving area, Sprague said. As one moves counter clockwise through the serving area, cereals, the deli, hot food, desserts, beverages, and a soup bar complete the meal and they exit into the seating area, he added.

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