

# THE Filthy Lucre

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## If "Electricity is our Friend," then Apathy is a Fiend

*Contentious Conservative: Contributor*

AS the name of this publication implies, "Filthy Lucre", from the Latin word *lucrum*, 'material gain, profit.' In Latin *lucrum* also meant 'avarice,' and in Middle English *lucre*, could be taken as 'monetary gain, profit,' or 'illicit gain'. Would it be an excessive, insatiable gain if we were to be fiscally responsible with our energy dollars?

The records of how much energy each building uses, and monies spent (i.e. gas and electricity) are public record and are available at the MSU-N business office; recently, the records of the July '01 to Aug. '08 have been seen around campus.

Between July '07 and June '08, Donaldson Hall used 33,589 MMBTUs of gas at a cost of \$44,602. During the same span, the entire campus used \$409,284 in natural gas; So, Donaldson used 10.9% of all the gas consumed.

Out of the 16 major buildings on campus, Donaldson was the third largest consumer of gas; the #1 consumer was Electronics/Brockmann using 52088 MMBTUs at \$70,577, followed closely by the Cowan/Library/Gym heating system, which cost \$69,097.

The swimming pool itself cost an average of \$28,041 per year; that's heating the pool 24/7 for 365 days a year. {*that's about \$2,300 a month on average -ed.*}

The total electrical energy usage for the campus from July '07 to June '08 was \$351,383; Brockmann used about \$48,000 in electricity, and the Cowan/Library/Gym

cost about \$67,000; Donaldson used \$4280 worth of electricity, which makes it one of the smallest consumers on campus overall, using only 1.2% of the total electricity for the year.

Now, if you went into Brockmann last year, it was crazy hot in the classrooms and labs... hot enough to drop even the best scholars into a heat-induced catatonic coma. And, once again the heating systems have just been turned on and are slogging away with temperatures up to 82° in offices and 75° plus in the labs. The Gym can get even hotter, especially during a game.

A local contractor has been working on the heating system in the library, and they did some work on the boilers in Cowan and other buildings. I believe we should implement proven alternative technologies, such as ground source heat pumps and solar power and thermal systems. They say that it is cost prohibitive, but spending over a quarter of a million dollars on gas and electricity every year is OK? We should invest the money currently spent repairing, refurbishing and retrofitting half-baked setups into modern, efficient systems that will save us money in the long run.

There may be factors that I'm not aware of, but I do know that we waste a lot of money and energy; computers that are on all night, lights on in hallways next to windows, lights on in unoccupied rooms. Each little thing by itself doesn't seem like much; it only costs .6 cents an hour for one light, but over a period of time, 10 hours a day, five days a week for a year, that one little fixture uses \$156 in electricity.

The problem is that Northern keeps

throwing good money after bad, just because we don't want to explore the possibility that a good investment now is going to save a lot of money later. We just want the system to coast along, to keep 'getting ours', and well, we can't do anything about the costs, so damn the costs (at the same time, "we gotta balance the budget," go figure).

Northern's administration believes that the students will keep paying higher tuition, and the taxpayers will keep coughing up mill levies; sure, until they (we) get fed up and finally tell the Board of Regents and the administration, "Enough is enough, you are *not* good stewards of our tax dollars, and there will be No More Free Rides."

We need to really take a good look at how we spend "our" money, so we have more to spend on what we really should be investing in; the students, the leaders of tomorrow, and our future in a new technologically advanced world, instead of just letting it go out the window in wasted energy or out the door in excessive revenues given to the power and gas brokers. So, shut off that light, get that heat regulated and under control, and get involved in change, some how, some way, please.

## Letters to the Lucre

*Dr. Johann Klepp: Prof. of Philosophy*

So people's excited that enrollment is up by one student for Fall '08? Am I getting this right? One student? Yes.

In fact, the Chancellor's Open Forum has been changed to a wine and cheese party. Am I getting this right?

One student increase => free wine & cheese for everybody. Ten student increase => **BRAND NEW CAR** for everybody?

Pound Sand.

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