

School Center Chief Watching Clock

His Heart Beats for Education

By **KEN STRICKLAND**
Of Our Broward Bureau

FORT LAUDERDALE — H. Stuart Synnestvedt has an intensely personal reason for rushing plans for the proposed South Florida Educational Center at Forman Field.

He wants to live to see it become a reality.

With plans progressing rapidly this wouldn't pose a problem to most people but with Synnestvedt, development director of the project, it's a different story.

A victim of atherosclerosis, Synnestvedt was given only two years to live after surgeons inserted a plastic valve in his heart to allow flow of blood to his legs.

★ ★ ★

HIS TWO YEARS are up next month.

But Synnestvedt's mind is not on his own problems — it's occupied by his far-sighted plans for the educational center.

Ironically, if it hadn't been for his illness, Broward County never would have come by Synnestvedt's talents as an educational developer.

Before his sickness he was a highly paid executive for Vision Inc., a service company offering schools and industry aid in keeping up with the latest in educational developments. After his operation he found he couldn't keep up with the constant traveling involved in his job and he came to Fort Lauderdale to rest.

"But I didn't want to die sitting around doing nothing," he said, "so when I heard of the educational center plans I volunteered to make a feasibility study of it."

When you are living on borrowed time you need something to occupy your mind, he explained.

The 56-year-old Synnestvedt isn't hampered in his activities by his illness but admits he can't walk too far and his legs ache.

"But I've lived with it so long I don't notice it," he added.

While Synnestvedt would like to see his dream for the educational center become a reality, his real concern is in seeing American education keep pace with the Russians.

"We can't continue to survive against the Russians with a bored attitude toward education," he said. "I'm trying to sell to the people that we've got to change our ideas and put education where it belongs."

★ ★ ★

HE FORESEES the educational center as a step toward establishment of central schools specializing in selected subjects and the end of schools as we know them. "In 20 years you won't be able to walk to a backyard school," he said, "or if you do you will get a backyard education."

He doesn't know how far he will be able to follow his dream but it doesn't dim his enthusiasm.

"I've suddenly got on fire with the idea," he said.