

Campus Forum

Anyone who thinks this campus hasn't come a long way since its inception should take a long look at some of the early yearbooks. And anyone who thinks the **Capitol Times** hasn't come a long way since 1969 should see our file copies of a mimeographed publication that called itself simply "Student Newspaper".

But that doesn't mean that either the campus or the **Capitol Times** should be satisfied with mediocrity. Treading water may be good exercise but it won't win you any medals at the Olympics.

As Capitol Campus welcomes a new administration that is obviously committed to improvements, we at the **Capitol Times** think it's time to improve ourselves. That's why we're changing our format from a monthly magazine to a bi-weekly tabloid newspaper. We believe our new format is much better suited to an expanding campus. It should allow better coverage of campus news and events, while allowing journalism students to gain experience in reporting under deadline conditions. We also think it will make the **Times** more attractive to advertisers, who provide valuable information directed specifically to a college-oriented audience.

But that's not all.

We're adding **COLOR** to selected issues, this one included. Plus, we're opening a new classified ad department to allow you to communicate directly to the campus community. We'll also be adding professional editorial cartoons, graphics, and news from the College Press Service.

And we're working on a special surprise for our Christmas Edition.

Of course, we'll continue to print your letters. And we'll continue to include coverage of sports, records, movies and features that balance our regular news items.

Altogether, we think we're on the way to creating an exciting new newspaper for the campus. We hope you'll agree.

If you'd like to join us at the **Times**, as a reporter, artist, photographer, advertising salesperson, or whatever, just drop by W-129 in the Olmsted Building. We'd be glad to talk to you.

And if you're happy just reading the **Times**, that's OK, too. Look for our next issue on September 20.



Crime and ping-pong balls

How safe are we?

By Neil Myers

There was a newspaper reporter who once boasted that he created a crime wave single-handedly. He didn't actually commit any crimes, he just started writing more frequently about crimes that occurred every week.

The focus of his news coverage started officials talking about the "problem." Sociologists analyzed it and developed complex explanations, and the public worried about it. Then the reporter decided he'd had enough and he stopped emphasizing crimes. The offenses continued as always, but the crime wave mysteriously ended.

This issue of the **Capitol Times** contains several articles dealing with crime on campus. The problems reported definitely exist. We make it our policy to verify our information as much as possible. But we're not trying to create a crime wave, and we hope you won't infer any. If the emphasis seems unusual, it's probably because serious problems are infrequent here.

All of that said, there are some real issues that need to be addressed. One of them is arming the campus police force.

If ever there was a question that could pass for a ping-pong ball, this is it. It seems that every year or so, there is an incident on cam-

pus that places a campus policeman in the awkward position of confronting a potentially armed criminal with little more than his hands. Then someone suggests that the police be armed. A committee is formed to study the matter. Generally, the administration, sometimes aided by vocal students, opposes the move on the grounds that someone could get hurt if an armed officer misjudged a situation.

That is true. It is also true that armed criminals would face little opposition should they decide to harm an officer, a faculty member, or a student. Moreover, some students themselves have weapons, albeit in violation of University rules.

On balance, it makes more sense to arm a trained and carefully selected police officer than to let criminals have a free reign, especially in a semi-urban setting like ours. Most likely, the officers wouldn't need to use a firearm 99 times out of 100. But what do we say to them when the 100th time comes and they're powerless?

It's time to stop playing ping-pong.

It's also time to make some other small but important changes. This campus is spread out over a large area, with considerable distances between many buildings and some remote stretches in between. Last summer, a

woman was accosted on a campus road. She wasn't harmed, but she could have been. And in a case that is apparently ongoing and which campus police declined to discuss, part of the campus is reportedly being visited by a window peeper.

Campus officials have already done a lot to reduce the likelihood of these situations. New lights were installed last year on the path to the dorms. This year, the student escort service was expanded to include free rides to the residence areas on weeknights, supplementing the existing service to and from the Olmsted parking lot. A fifth police officer was also hired.

Yet there are gaps. Would it, for instance, be possible to extend the escort service to Sundays, when the library is open? How about including people walking to the Multi-Purpose Building or C.R.A.G.S. at night?

And then there are the lights in front of the Olmsted Building. How about leaving one or two on for the students working late in the TV studio, the radio station, the newspaper office? How about better street lighting in Meade Heights, as one resident there suggested?

Nothing, of course, can provide absolute safety, and, as I said earlier, the problem really isn't as bad as it may seem. I'm not saying the sky is falling. I just think it pays to glance up now and then.

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