

Behind the scenes: Darrell Peterson

by Sharon Olmstead

"I was amazed that some people don't know there is a campus photographer here!," said Darrell Peterson.

Peterson came to Capitol Campus three years ago with a bachelor of science degree in communication media with a concentration in photography from Indiana University of Pennsylvania.

He can be spotted all around the campus on assignments, but his office is on the third floor of the Olmstead building, across from the student darkroom, which he supervises.

Peterson, 32, is 6 feet 3 inches tall has blue eyes and a beard, and usually wears blue jeans.

"He's an absolutely outstanding photographer," said William Mahar, chairman of humanities at Capitol Campus. Mahar continued, "He's also a first rate employee...I'm pleased to have him in my department. "He's the only technical employee in the humanities division," said Mahar.

Peterson's job includes doing copywork, making slides, prints, and graphics for lectures, journal publication, and public relations.

Peterson coordinates the student's darkroom, hiring and training the work-study students, ordering supplies, and keeping the darkroom functioning. One semester he worked with a student on his independent study.

"There's a lot more I'd like to do for the campus...services aren't being utilized as much as they could," said Peterson.

He said he would be glad to help the staff and faculty prepare slide presentations, to coordinate and make them flow better, but no one has ever asked him.

Michael Kalbaugh, his former supervisor and head of Instructional Services at Capitol, says that Peterson's title is "senior photographic technician."

Darrell's personality is fantastic, which is extremely important in dealing with people," said Kalbaugh.

Peterson said his job is a "conglomeration of several positions." He stressed that University Park was more specialized and that one person does a specific task like just shooting or just copy work, while others only do printing.

Peterson said that "At Capitol Campus, the volume is much less, so one person must do everything, making the job more complicated."

Peterson was born in Erie, Pennsylvania and moved to Cleona in the tenth grade. With no real direction, he quit college after one year and worked at several low paying jobs.

When he was laid off at

Bethlehem Steel, he said it was "a god-send." It was clear to him that he must get an education, so he enrolled at Indiana University of Pennsylvania.

The first semester, he took basic photography, and he was "hooked." During his college years Peterson worked delivering flowers and working for Parks and Recreation Department.

Peterson also managed the students center hobby darkroom for two and a half years, where he supervised two-three employees and advised students who used the center.

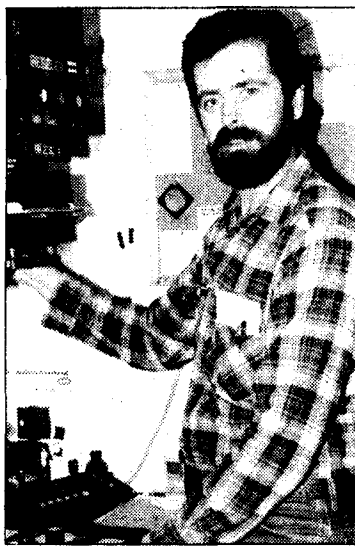


photo by Sharon Olmstead

This job experience and advanced photography courses prepared him for a forty hour week internship at Hershey Medical Center.

After graduating, Peterson

managed a camera shop in Lebanon until he got a job at the Hershey Medical Center. After thirteen months he quit to work at Capitol Campus.

Now Peterson lives in Lebanon near his parents and five sisters. Every year he vacations in Maine in the Arcadia National Park and said he enjoys music, picnics, hiking, skiing, and trout fishing.

"I love cold weather and the mountains," said Peterson. This year he wants to try winter camping. Some day he hopes to learn to sail and drive across the country visiting national parks.

Peterson wishes he had more time to use his 4'5 camera. "I don't feel I have the vision I used to have," he added.

"I like to be alone a lot," said Peterson. He admitted to

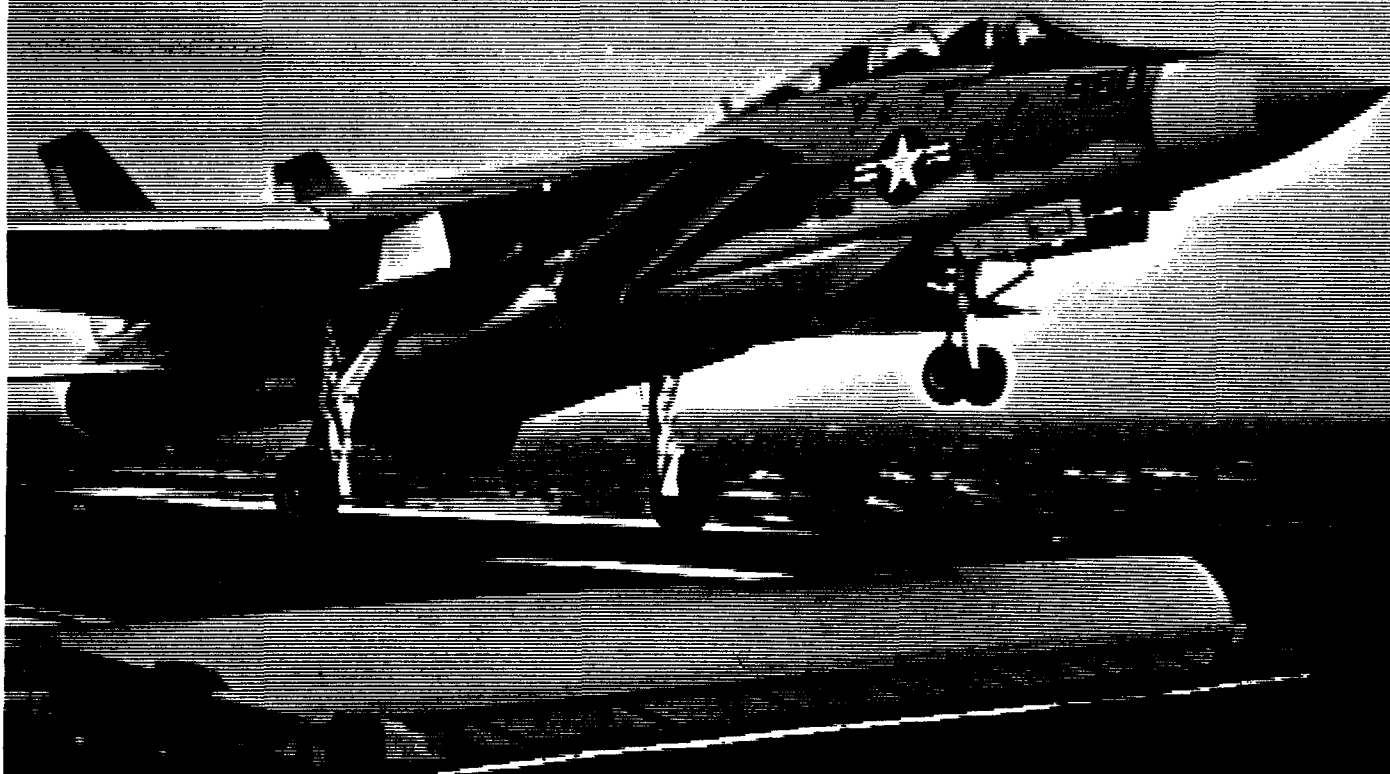
being an impulsive person. "I don't like making long range plans."

There are frustrations with his job and it is difficult to find work-study students, and coordinating the darkroom can be difficult, keeping it clean and making sure the students follow proper procedures, said Peterson.

"Sometimes assignments are difficult...Sometimes they don't understand...How can you get a good-looking picture of the dorms and make it look good?," asked Peterson.

Considering the advantages of his job, Peterson said that he is pretty much his own boss and he enjoys having people come to him for help and advice. Peterson is working in a field that he loves.

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