

Switchboard Swiftess

Students' 'Talk-a-thons' Keep Dormitory Operators Busy

By DENNY MALICK

Students who complain about the telephone lines always being busy at night take notice. On an average, taken from 6 to 10 p.m., 6000 calls are completed by the University residence halls operators.

According to statistics, each of the eight operators on duty connects three calls a minute. This is an average taken from a normal week.

Students for the most part can blame their fellow students who do not abide by the three-to-five-minute conversational limit for the busy lines.

15 Calls at One Time

Edna Shirk, chief operator at the University for 18 years, explains that each operator is able to handle 15 calls at one time. Many times during the evening three and four operators have their boards filled and cannot do anything until someone finishes a call, Miss Shirk said.

Long conversations that tie up the operators also puts more pressure on other operators with the result that at times there is a delay in connections, she said.

One of the main peeves of the operators is students who place fake long-distance calls. The chief operator estimated that one-third of the long distance calls placed after a vacation period are faked in which the student makes a collect person-to-person call askin' for himself at home.

No-Charge Calls Home

His parents would then know he has arrived at school safely and the call would not cost anything because it was not completed. Miss Shirk, however, cautioned students that Bell Telephone Co. may consider placing a fee on collect person-to-person calls whether or not they are completed.

Although exciting experiences of the operators are few and far between, one occurred two years ago. A small fire broke out in Osmond Laboratory and the emergency call was placed to the operator. However, for some undetermined reason, the switchboard mechanism failed.

The alert operator nevertheless kept her wits, left the board and placed the emergency call downtown on a separate phone directly connected with the downtown line.

Placed Calls to Ike

Miss Shirk recalls many instances when she placed calls to President Dwight D. Eisenhower while Dr. Milton S. Eisenhower was president of the University.

One interesting feature of the telephone setup is that the fall semester is busier for the operators than the spring semester. Miss Shirk accounts this to the many fall activities and to new freshmen becoming acquainted with the University.

Commenting on student behavior and courtesy on the telephones, the chief operator said that general cooperation has been better than usual this semester. She said that she, together with operators, enjoy the work and, for the most part, overlook pranks and non-cooperative spirit of some students.

Wild Rumors Spread

One of the busiest days for the operators was a Sunday several years ago when smoke from forest fires in Canada blackened the skies. Long distance lines were jammed with callers spreading wild rumors as exaggerated as the world coming to an end.

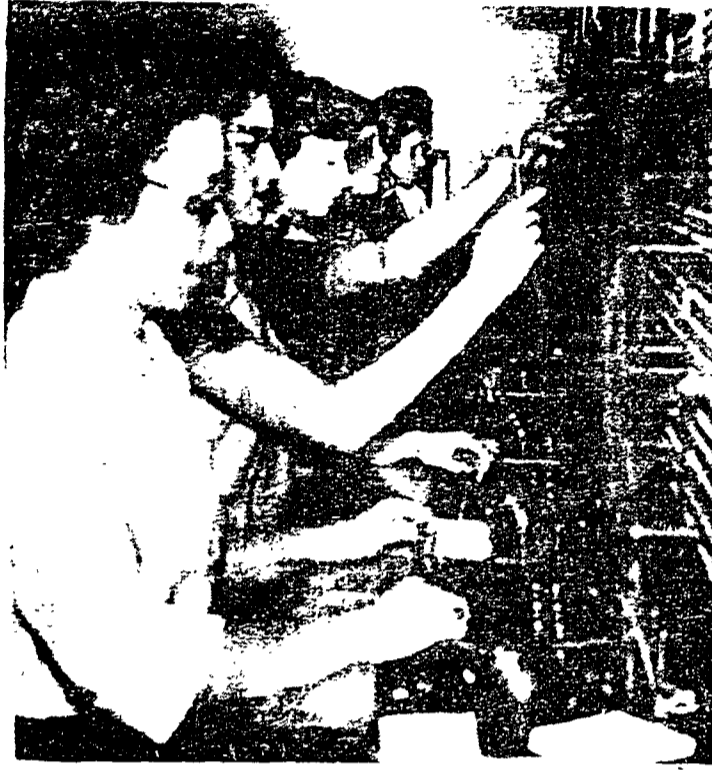
Bad storms, such as hurricanes, also cram the lines with students calling to see what conditions are in their hometown and vice versa.

William F. Diehl, University telephone supervisor, reports that only 120 conversations may be carried on at one time. There are 1100 phones in the residence halls, 1015 for women and 85 for men, in addition to 65 trunk lines to downtown area. Diehl urged students to limit the length of calls as he pointed out that frequently in the evening all 65 downtown lines are busy.

Two Systems Used

In addition to the residence halls setup, there is an administrative telephone system. The administrative setup, which is a dial system, handles an average of about 8000 outgoing toll calls per month alone.

Both systems are operated around the clock. All University phones are rented from the Bell (Continued on page eight)



—Daily Collegian Photo by Marty Scherr

RESIDENCE HALLS OPERATORS are shown at the switchboards during the evening rush period from 6 to 10. An average of approximately 6000 calls are completed during the period each night.

Trustees Make 3 Appointments

Three new staff appointments have been approved by the University Board of Trustees.

Dr. Chester W. Hitz has been named professor of pomology in the Department of Horticulture, effective July 1.

Dr. Hitz is now associate professor of pomology at the University of Delaware. He received his bachelor of science degree from the University of Missouri and his master of science and doctor of philosophy degrees from the University of Maryland. He served four years in the army.

Dr. Paolo Gallitelli has been appointed a research associate in the X-ray and crystal analysis laboratory of the Department of Physics. He is a professor of mineralogy at the University of Modena in Italy and received his doctor's degree from that institution.

Another new research associate in that laboratory is Frederick M. Lovell, of Wales. He received his bachelor of science degree in physics and mathematics at the University of Wales.

Prof Publishes Textbook

Dr. Hans A. Panofsky, professor of meteorology, has just published his book, "Introduction to Dynamic Meteorology."

Paintings by Katz Exhibited in HUB

Paintings by Alex Katz of New York, N.Y. and Camden, Maine, are now on exhibition in the Hetzel Union Building and will be shown until Feb. 24.

Katz studied at the Skowhegan Art School, Skowhegan, Maine, in the summers of 1949 and 1950 and was awarded Skowhegan Art School Scholarships both years. He also won the Skowhegan Painting Prize in his first year.

He has had one-man shows in 1954 and 1957 at the Roko Gallery in New York, exhibited in two-man shows at the Peter Cooper Gallery, New York, and the Tanager Gallery, also in New York, and contributed to group shows at the Roko, Tanager, Stable, Camino and A.C.A. galleries in New York and at Bowdoin College, Brunswick, Maine.

4 Freshmen Put on Pro For Firecracker Prank

The Senate Subcommittee on Discipline has approved disciplinary probation for the remainder of the semester for four freshmen accused of throwing firecrackers in Nittany dormitory 44.

Two separate cases are involved.

In one, three students told the Association of Independent Men Judicial Board of Review they exploded firecrackers as a prank and not as an attempt to injure other students. The board had recommended disciplinary probation.

In the other case, two students were accused of exploding a firecracker under the door to the room of another student who was sleeping. The students said the firecracker was lit as a prank to awaken the student.

Recommendation Changed

The second student in the case will receive office probation. The AIM Board had recommended office probation for the first student and judicial probation for the second student.

Each of the students involved in the two cases admitted knowing University and state regulations on firecrackers.

A letter will be sent to the parents of the students.

In another firecracker case the dean of men has approved recommended judicial and office probation and a letter home for a freshman accused of attempting to build a firecracker in Nittany 24.

A second freshman involved will receive judicial probation. The case was also reviewed by the AIM Board.

Assembled Matches

The students told the board they assembled matches in a compact form to see if an explosion would occur. The result was a burned spot on the tile floor.

The AIM board has referred another case for further study involving a senior and a ninth semester student bringing beer to Hamilton Hall.

The students told the board they brought the beer for another student, who was locked in a

closet with his books, as part of an experiment.

They said the beer was bought to refresh the student and that he had no prior knowledge they were going to buy it.

Research Director Appointed in HEc

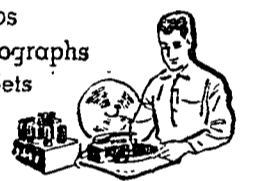
Dr. Ruth R. Honey, professor of family economics and housing, has been appointed director of research in the College of Home Economics.

Dr. Honey assumes responsibility for coordinating and developing the program of research in all aspects of home and family life. She will continue as professor in the departments of home management, family economics, housing and home equipment for part of her time.

She holds a bachelor of science degree from both the University of Idaho and Cornell University, master of science degree from the University of Idaho and a doctor of philosophy degree from Cornell University.

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