

Downtown apartments take measures against fire

By TIM EVSTER
Collegian Staff Writer

Many newer downtown apartment complexes are using "state of the art" fire protection measures to increase resident safety, the Centre Region Code Administration director said Wednesday.

James Quigley said a move toward improving fire safety and protection is among newer complexes such as Alexander Court Apartments, 309 E. Beaver Ave.; the Atrium at Allenway, 315 S. Allen St.; the Rider Building, 121 S. Burrows St.; the soon to be completed Hetzel Plaza Condominiums, 500 E. College Ave., and Beaver Plaza Condominiums, 222 W. Beaver Ave.

At Alexander Court, Quigley said sprinklers are located in laundry rooms, trash shoots, and storage areas. The complex has a stand pipe which will bring water to the roof and enable firefighters to battle fires on the rooftop or from building to building.

Quigley also said the complex has a "tremendous alarm and notification system."

Complexes built five years from now will probably be even safer for tenants in avoiding harm from fires, he said.

Eric Gardner, residential property manager for H & B Realtors, 478 E. Beaver Ave., said a fire extinguisher and smoke detector are located in each apartment of the 15 apartment complexes managed by the firm and are inspected before tenants move in.

Gardner said fire extinguishers are located in the kitchen or as close as possible to it and smoke detectors are located outside sleeping areas.

"If a water heater were to explode, it would explode with the force of seven or eight sticks of dynamite."

— James Quigley, Centre Region Code Administration director

Large complexes such as Park Hill Apartments, 478 E. Beaver Ave., also have alarm systems, he said.

An official from Kissinger Leonard & Brower Realtors, 245 S. Leon-

ard St., said fire alarms are placed strategically on each of the floors of the firm's six apartment complexes.

Smoke detectors are located in approved areas as established by the proper maintenance and building codes in each one of the apartments, and fire extinguishers are located in each of the hallways, she said.

At Americana House, 119 Locust Lane, fire extinguishers are also located close to the kitchen in all of the apartments, the official said.

Periodically, George W. Kistler Inc., 220 S. Fraser St., a fire protection firm, inspects fire extinguishers in all Kissinger Leonard & Brower apartment complexes, the official said.

Once a week, the emergency system and condition of the halls are also checked, doors and windows are kept intact, fire extinguishers are checked to make sure they are not discharged, and light bulbs are checked to make sure they are lit and not broken, she said.

Quigley also said that the Centre Region Code Administration plays an important role in protecting tenants from fires. The administration periodically inspects conveyances to make sure they are properly hooked up to the proper fuel source and have the proper temperature pressure relief.

Failure to have the water heaters properly hooked up to the fuel source could cause a gas line rupture or an electrical fire depending on the type of water heater used, Quigley said.

The heaters must also have the proper temperature pressure relief to prevent an explosion.

"If a water heater were to explode, it would explode with the force of seven or eight sticks of dynamite," he said.

Other things to occasionally look for in preventing fires are storage of any flammable liquids and junction boxes and other splicing of electrical conductors, he said.

Interior and exterior stairs must also meet certain requirements, Quigley said. Both types of stairs, including the stair handrails, must be 36 inches wide to provide adequate room to get up or down them in case of fire.

Exterior stairs must also have a cover on them to keep elements such as snow and ice off them and an approved pitch (depth of each tread of a stair is greater than the rise between that tread and the tread below) of less than 45 degrees.

The borough also requires that any window within 10 feet of exterior stairs or a fire escape must consist of one quarter inch thick wire glass.

Quigley said this glass is the only one of its kind that will not blow out in case of fire.

Although they do exist in most apartment and condominium complexes, Quigley described fire escapes as "inherently hazardous" and said the only time they would be approved is if it was not permissible by zoning to build an exterior stair.

Quigley said fire escapes are narrow, made of steel and thus potentially slippery. They have no cover for elements such as ice and snow, and have an approved pitch of up to 45 degrees. He said they also do not count as encroachments into the setback, as defined by the zoning ordinance.

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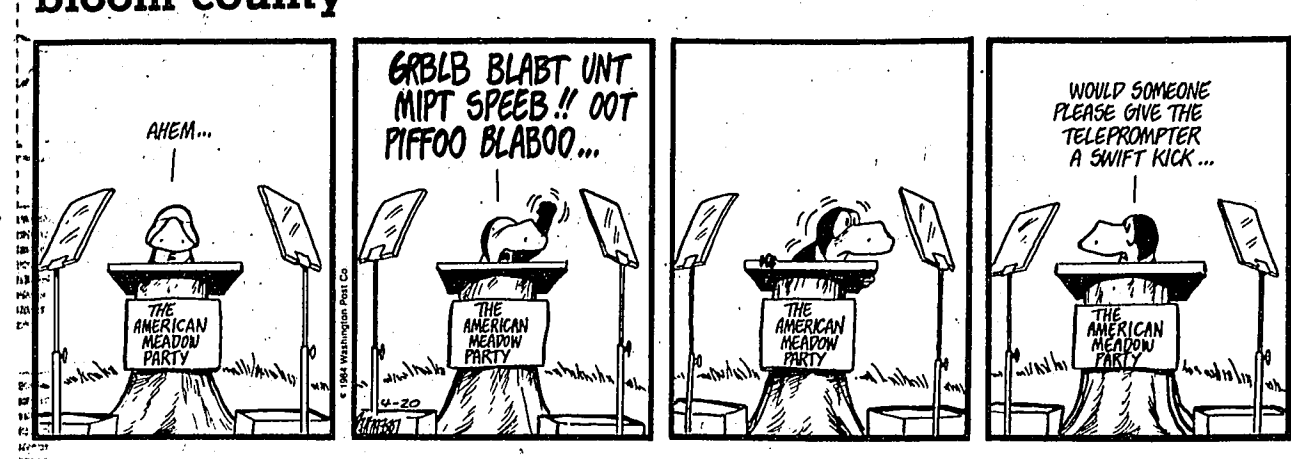


comics, etc.

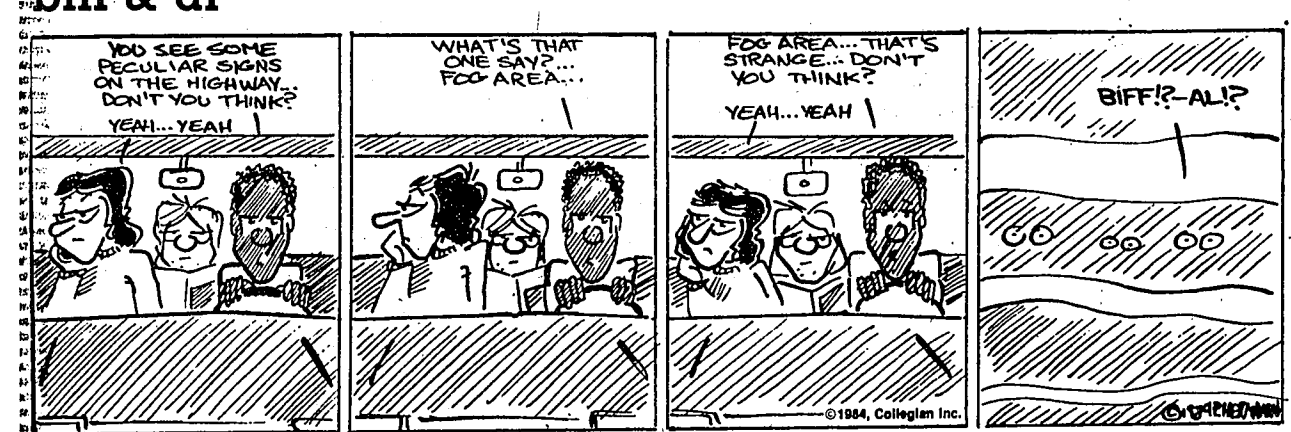
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7 ways to housebreak a burglar:
Remember, the average burglar will break into a house only when the going looks easy. Here are 7 effective ways to discourage him.

1. Install deadbolt locks on all exterior doors.
2. Make certain all windows and patio and garage doors are securely locked.
3. Buy an inexpensive timer to turn on your lights and radio when you're out for an evening.
4. When you go on vacation, ask neighbors to keep an eye on things. Have deliveries stopped, mail picked up and keep your grass cut. The point is, make your house look occupied.
5. Keep your lawn tractor and bikes locked up when they're not in use.
6. There is no place you can think of to hide a key that a smart burglar hasn't thought of first.
7. Never leave notes to delivery men indicating that nobody is home.

Make Crime More Trouble Than It's Worth.
Governor's Justice Commission
Box 1167, Harrisburg, Pa. 17120

Crossword

Across
1 Detecting device
6 Violin maker
12 Italian city
13 Deduction
14 Defeat
15 Pastel
16 Eryth
18 Plural ending
19 Charter
21 Hi-wisher
23 Indian fortress
27 Ditch
28 Arm bone
30 Cue
31 Indian
32 Detriment
33 Swallowed
34 Inferior diamond
35 Problem
37 College in Cedar Rapids
38 City of the Sun
40 Norse navigator
42 Inferior paper
43 Adult insect
48 Prayer
50 Office machine
51 Abster
52 Overact

Down
1 Smooth
2 American humorist
3 Misadventure
4 Centre
5 Tranquil
6 Radian
7 Sole
8 Grovel
9 Scotland's longest river
10 Japanese statesman
11 Member of Congress: abstr.
17 Athenian statesman
19 Rummage
20 Conveyance
22 Follow
23 Musical direction
25 Broz
26 Fencing sword
29 Horseshoe
30 Trunk
39 Gas used in TV tubes
41 Caliph
42 Varangians
43 Baton
44 Nervous disease
45 Football position
47 Acquire
48 Galena

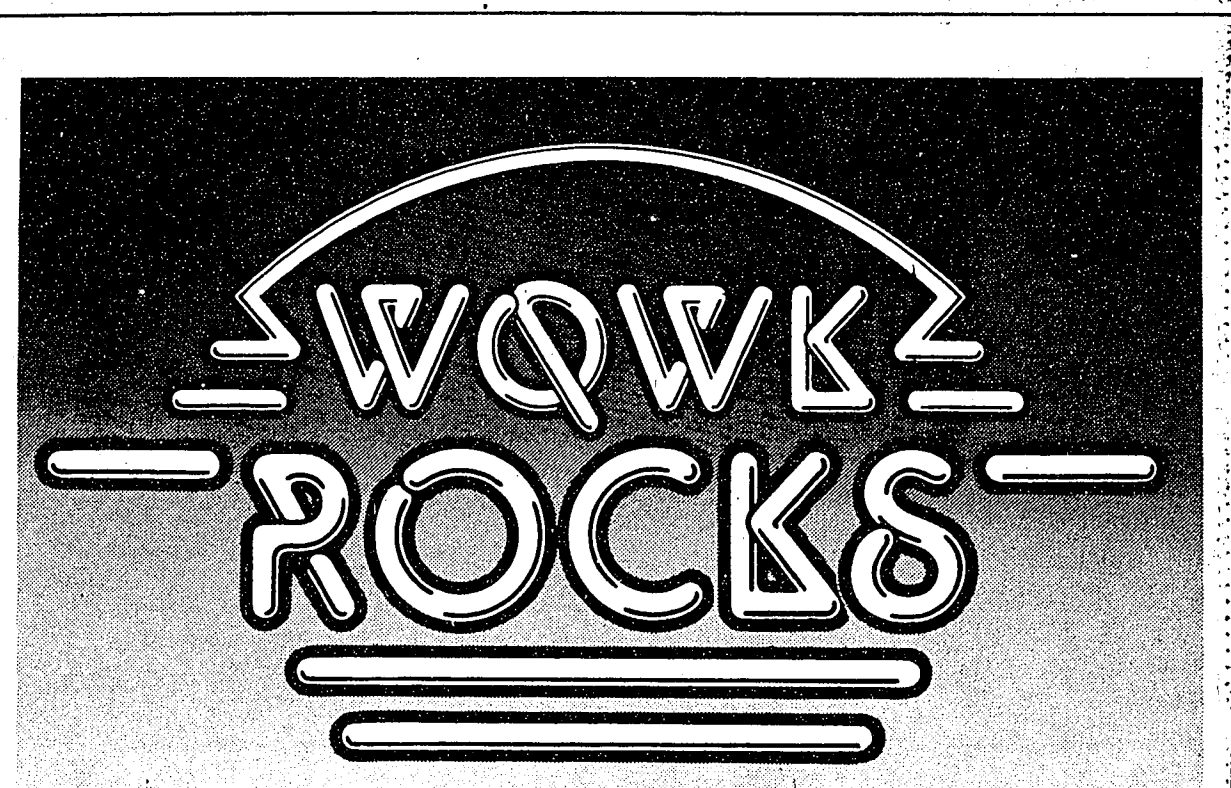
(answers in Monday's classifieds)

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Straut (St. Mary's)..... \$3.85

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