

communique'



Editor's notes

Justice system causes overcrowded prisons

The prisons are crowded, and there's no room for more prisoners, therefore we must give convicts light sentences so they're not taking up space for as long a time.

That sounds reasonable enough, but when criminals are getting lighter sentences, are the prisons really doing their job of deterring crime, or are they simply a justice symbol?

The prisons themselves are answering that question for us, by being crowded. If prisons were deterring crime, as they should be, the prisons would be less crowded because less crimes would be committed.

Also, if our prisons are places of punishment for acts against society, where do prisoners get the guts to ask for

such things as a new television set, and go on a hunger strike until they get it?

This very situation began in the Clackamas County Jail last Wednesday, when nine prisoners decided to go on a hunger strike until their list of demands are met, including a new television set, or having the old one repaired.

Although they are calling it a hunger strike, it's not a true one since the morning that the strike began, the prisoners purchased 93 candy bars, 33 packets of instant coffee, and 14 packets of cocoa from the jail commissary.

But when prisoners feel that they have rights such as TV

sets, when there are people who haven't broken a law

their lives who don't have access to such luxuries, the doesn't seem to be too much justice there.

What we need to do is more responsibility on judges presiding at the trials, leave less on the parole board who see more and more prisoners coming in, and alleviate the overcrowding parole prisoners probably before they should.

Therefore, judges should be required to determine minimum and maximum sentence for each case, within the bounds that have been set for that crime.

That way, if our justice system was more strict with giving sentences out, and the atmosphere inside the prison was also a stricter one, maybe the thought of going to prison might be more of a deterrent for crimes being committed.

—Rick Obritschkewitsch

Journalist knows trials, triumphs

By R.W. Greene
Of The Print

My friend Eddie strolled into "The Print" office last week, and began whacking aimlessly at my Underwood, with something that could have been dried opossum skin, though I didn't ask. He implored me to leave off my anemic pecking and join him at a local beer palace.

"Oh, come on," he said, "you're wasting your time with that paper of yours." I reached for a nightstick kept handy by one of our more violent writers, and it hardly hurt at all when Eddie took it away from me. I stared at the wall. How could I tell him about the last nine months on "The Print," the work we've done, the people we've made apoplectic, the hopes, the dreams, the pain and heartache and the inserts and the stuffed animals we mutilate?

"Eddie," I said, "how can I tell you about the last nine months on 'The Print,' the hopes, the dreams, the pain, the heartache, and the stuffed animals we mutilate?"

"Come and drink Heineken with me," he said. "And wipe your nose."

After a couple of hours listening to Eddie discourse on his favorite topics, fraud and lust, I finally got a word in.

"Not to sound too trite, but it's been educational. Some of us can now paste a photo to a page without getting wax all over the floor. We've learned

that the fortitude of a journalism adviser and a typesetter can reach stratospheric heights. Some of us can curse in fluent Italian. Some of us wish we could curse in fluent Gaelic. All of us know to Scotch tape a page after it's pasted up, so the copy doesn't fall into the printing press.

"Perhaps some things we'll never know how to do. Will any of us ever know what 'aprobrium' is? Will we learn to write a story two hours before deadline? Have we learned that being a writer does exactly zilch for your sex life? Will we ever believe that Scientology serves any real function other than to perpetuate its own myths? Will we ever understand Scientific Creationism? And how does one "railbird"?"

Eddie poured more beer. Some of it got in the glass. "But what do your readers think?" he asked. "You're not walking around in a vacuum over there."

"True. I think we've done as well as anyone with what we've got. I think most of it can be laid to sheer apathy. You get two cans of food in the food drive, you get 20 or less letters all year from students. You don't cover somebody's area the way they like, but you only find out a week before the end of school. You get out what you put in."

Eddie stood up abruptly, knocking the table over. "Yes!" he yelled. "I can see it now—the heartache, the pain, the hope, the mutilation of stuffed

animals! It's journalism!"

I tried to calm him, but by that time a man with a large

and now-quivering mustache came stalking over and we had to leave quite quickly.

Why blood, not food?

By J. Dana Haynes
Of The Print

As most of the student body and faculty may be aware, last week the ASG hosted a double helping of social concern in the form of a blood drive and food drive. The blood-letting went over well, all things considered. The food drive did considerably less to stir our good samaritan souls. Which begs the obvious question: Why?

Well, first one must realize what the writer means by "considerably less" in regard to the food drive. The student government, in conjunction with the Tri-County Community Food Council, launched a fairly good ad campaign for the event, complete with posters and "Today" bulletin announcements. For its part, "The Print" ran two stories on it. And barrels were set up in every building on campus for donors to drop off their non-perishables. All well and good.

Two cans of food were delivered. One of them was rusted.

Meanwhile, back at the ranch, the blood drive was also in swing. It, too, garnered posters and bulletins, and again your friendly neighborhood newspaper covered the event.

The ASG delivered 97 units of blood to the Red Cross, only four units short of the school record and decidedly higher

than the 80-unit goal. All told, it was a singular sanguinary success.

So what happened? Why did endeavor A elicit so much support, while endeavor B bombed? Well, let's look at it as one would a good detective novel.

As any Agatha Christophile will tell you, there are three things necessary to catch any cagey culprit: opportunity, ability and motive.

Now opportunity isn't of much help here. It would have been a snap to carry a couple of cans of Campbell's Chicken 'n' Stars to school and surreptitiously slip them into any of the convenient barrels. Piece of cake. On the other hand, giving blood takes time. What with filling out questionnaires, standing in lines, and the actual vampiric process. Not to mention nausea (and who wants to mention nausea?).

So clearly opportunity, or lack thereof, wasn't what kept the food donators away in droves. Which leads us to ability.

Be there a man with soul so dead, who never to himself hath said: "I'm hungry, it's time to puruse Fred Meyer's." Surely, none of those who didn't contribute can claim to be without the ability to pick up a few non-perishables. There is no one who doesn't have to submit to the rigors of grocery

shopping.

On the other hand, for one reason or another, the body human distills just enough blood to keep us going, and more. It's not as if you have to give blood every third week, it'll start pouring out your ears. There is no internal supply and-demand problem in blood. So again, "ability" rated nothing.

Which, I believe, leaves motive. Ah, ha! cried the spectator, now we're getting somewhere...

Or perhaps not. Certainly, it takes money to purchase a can of food, and who has bucks to toss about today? But the price of a few non-perishables is negligible.

So it can't be said that college students are a cheap labor force. Not that they aren't, but it doesn't appear to be the reason for the unprecedented lack of interest.

So why? Well, it appears to be nothing more than simple bad timing. Charity is all good and well, and the people around here seem to be better than average at caring. Blood drives are just around the corner, and the other aforementioned drive seemed to sate the school's desire for civic duty.

So it wouldn't do to think that the students of CCC just don't care. They do; it was simply bad luck.

