

B Street

by Jon Caldara



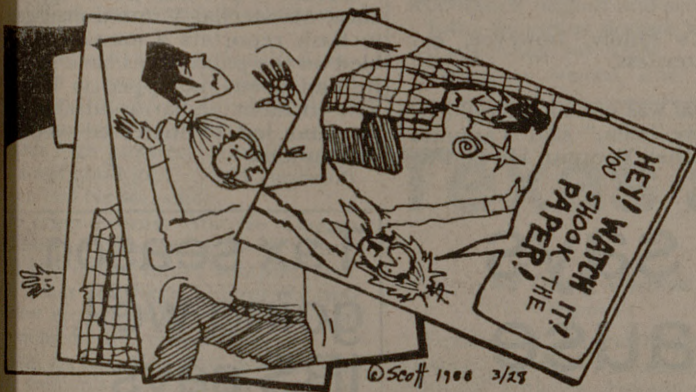
Waldo

by Kevin Thomas



Warped

by Scott McCullar



Crime-ridden community fights back

ALICE (AP) — Residents fed up with the spiraling crime rate in this South Texas community about 35 miles west of Corpus Christi are considering patrolling their own streets to fight back.

In this community of 22,624, one in eight households was burglarized last year, according to state figures. Overall, the crime rate in Alice is almost double the statewide average for a city its size, according to Texas Department of Public Safety statistics.

"Burglaries in Alice are running at a rampant rate," Gary Lynd, a local businessman, told the *Corpus Christi Caller-Times*. "Burglars don't hit one house. When they hit, they hit whole streets. . . . They hit a lot of houses on the same street."

Lynd's drilling company has been burglarized repeatedly during recent months. His pickup truck has been broken into nine times while parked outside his home in an affluent neighborhood, he said.

"We've had pretty well enough of it," Lynd said.

According to FBI and DPS statistics, 723 burglaries and 1,361 larceny-theft cases were reported by the Alice Police Department in 1987.

Fed up with the repeated crimes, hundreds of residents formed the anti-crime group Citizens in Action.

Members of the group, afraid they may be victims of reprisal, try to keep their identities secret.

Lynd says his neighbors are so upset about their homes being repeatedly burglarized that they are considering patrolling their own streets to help stop break-ins. Some of the patrols could be armed, he said.

"Yes, we would defend ourselves," Lynd said. "You have the right to bear arms. And I will do whatever it takes to protect my property and my family. And I mean whatever it takes."

"I don't want to kill anybody. . . . But I'll do whatever it takes to defend my family and property."

Police Chief Pete Hinojosa says the department won't allow armed vigilantes to patrol the streets.

City officials acknowledge that the crime rate in the city has been rising and say they welcome the formation of the citizens group. City Manager Roel Valdez attributes the burglary rate to a poor economy, early release of repeat offenders from overcrowded state prisons and the judicial system.

State Rep. Ernestine Glosbrenner, D-Alice, calls the rampant crime a tragedy.

"Why is it all of sudden that Alice is no longer Alice?" he said. "And how do we get it back?"

Housing program matches elderly, college students

By Kimberly Motley Reporter

When students choose roommates, they often look for characteristics similar to their own, but this was not the case for Daniel Summerlin, a freshman biomedical science major, and Lurline Bolmanskie, a 76-year-old widow.

Summerlin and Bolmanskie found each other through the Aggie Elder Share program, which involves students living with senior citizens. The program was founded and is directed by Peggy Owens, project supervisor for consumer sciences and a housing specialist with the Texas Agricultural Extension Service. Elder Share began last summer after 18 months of research and planning.

"It stemmed from an elderly housing program in the medical school, but when that committee dissolved, it was something I wanted to continue," Owens said.

The program is unique because it involves students living with senior citizens, she said. "The programs deal with the multitudes of people needing housing," she said. "They could be yuppies or single women with children who live with senior citizens, but this is the only one where students live with them."

She said the senior citizens do it for the companionship, not as a means to gain extra income.

"They are alone," Owens said. "Usually they are widows with strong ties to the University."

Their husbands may have been professors at A&M or they may have worked for the system at one time, she said.

Living with Summerlin gives Bolmanskie something to look forward to, especially in the evenings. Before she found out about the program she lived alone with only the companionship of her cat, Muffin. She said she also had been concerned about her safety because of recent break-ins near her house.

She read about the program in a weekly paper in her neighborhood and decided immediately to fill out an application.

Summerlin came to A&M from Tennessee. He said when he arrived in College Station he had a difficult time finding a roommate and a place to live because he did not know anybody.

"I found out about the program in the Off-Campus Housing Center," he said. "I filled out an information card and went to Houston."

Summerlin's mother lives in Houston and he said he thought he would have to commute until he found a place to live. But the center called him and told him about Bolmanskie.

"I gave her a call and she told me I could come on down," he said, "but she also told me there was someone

else coming, too."

Bolmanskie says it was not hard to make a decision.

"Danny boy beat him here," she said. "I liked him as soon as I laid eyes on him."

The affection and warmth are obvious between Summerlin and Bolmanskie.

"Mom (Bolmanskie) and I take turns doing the household chores like vacuuming, washing dishes and cooking," Summerlin said. "Sometimes we just do them together."

When Summerlin moved in they fixed up the spare bedroom together. Bolmanskie says he has been a big help to her.

Summerlin said there was never a problem adjusting and there have not been any other problems so far.

But Owens says this is not necessarily true for all participants in the program.

"Like any roommate situation," she said, "personalities may clash."

She also said there may be problems when the student moves out.

"There is a real sense of loss on both parts when the student leaves," she said.

Summerlin agrees with Owens.

"The only drawback I can see is when I leave," he said. "The bond we have is so strong it will be hard. But right now makes it all worth it." He said they won't lose touch when he graduates.

"She'll be bouncing my children and grandchildren on her knee," he said. "As long as I'm at A&M I'll stay here."

Bolmanskie agrees. "You better not leave me," she said.

Although Summerlin would recommend the program to almost anyone, Owens said it takes two special people to make a match.

"I don't think it's for everyone," she said. "It takes a student with some understanding of senior citizens. Students must be very flexible because the older people are usually set in their ways. They've been around a long time."

She said that, at the same time, the senior citizens must have a certain amount of flexibility.

"It's two people meeting each other's needs because it won't work if there are a bunch of prejudices," she said. "The elderly can't think that every college student wants to drink and party all the time, but it does require more flexibility on the student's part."

Owens says there have been only four matches out of an original twelve inquiries.

"Because the job is so time consuming, making sure I'm not matching anyone up with Jack the Ripper, I'll feel the program has been a success with 10 to 15 matches a year," she said.

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