Police isolate crime-infested area

Vacant Houston apartments closed to drug dealers, prostitutes

HOUSTON (AP) — Houston police say they will seal off an area of mostly abandoned apartments to anyone who doesn't pay rent to live there in an attempt to curtail widespread drug dealing and prostitution.

Residents of the surrounding area have complained about the crime that has spread into the southwest Houston area known as "Death Valley."

An elderly woman in the area was killed last September by a teen-ager who was attempting to finance a drug buy, police said.

Police say the crackdown Friday will focus on about 3,000 apartment units that were considered fashionable during Houston early boom years and now are mostly abandoned and used almost exclusively by prostitutes and drug dealers.

Rats run freely through the row after row of buildings. Many windows are broken or boarded up. Guard dogs man the fences of the few properties whose owners are committed to keeping the drugs out.

"We have dealers who are squatters in vacant apartments, who come here and sell dope for the day," Houston Police Capt. Bill Edison said. "And we have lots of consumer trade.

"If you just drive down the street in the nighttime, people will approach you to try to sell you drugs. You could run over them," Edison said. "You can't get past them without getting stopped at night."

Civic group members plan to go into the area Saturday after it is closed off to clear out trash and dispose of the hundreds of syringes and needles littering the ground.

"The intent of this operation is not necessarily to make arrests," Edison said. "If there's crime going on, we will make arrests. But the idea is to give this neighborhood a chance — so we can put it back together."

Police compare their plans for Friday with last year's effort to discourage teen-age cruising on popular lower Westheimer.

Highway sniper remains free after police search in El Paso

EL PASO (AP) — Police used a helicopter Monday night to search for a sniper who shot at several cars on an Interstate 10 access road.

No one was hurt in the shootings, and police didn't find the sniper, El Paso police Sgt. Don Georgens said.

Police began the search after two motorists said their cars were struck by bullets Monday evening as they drove on a westbound access road on the west side of town. Another driver had reported being shot at while driving in the same area Sunday, Georgens said.

Police enlisted the aid of a Border Patrol helicopter with a spotlight, and six El Paso police officers and a canine unit searched a brushy area, but the two-hour search ended at 8:30 p.m. Monday without anyone being found.

Georgens said one of the cars might have been struck by a rock, but police believe damage to the other two vehicles was caused by bullets.

Construction on campus closes several streets

Several streets on the Texas A&M campus are closed or rerouted because of continuing construction on campus.

The parking garage on the north side of campus is accessible by Ireland Street from University Drive. Ireland Street is one-way southbound from University to the parking garage and one-way northbound from Ross Street to the garage.

Asbury Street is now one-way from Ross to University. A traffic signal is planned for the corner of Asbury and University by mid-February.

Ireland to Ross remains open. The eastbound side of Joe Routt Boulevard is closed for construction on the power sub-station for the new south-side residence halls.

Construction on the sub-station, which is in the Military Sciences Building's parking lot, will remain as is until March.

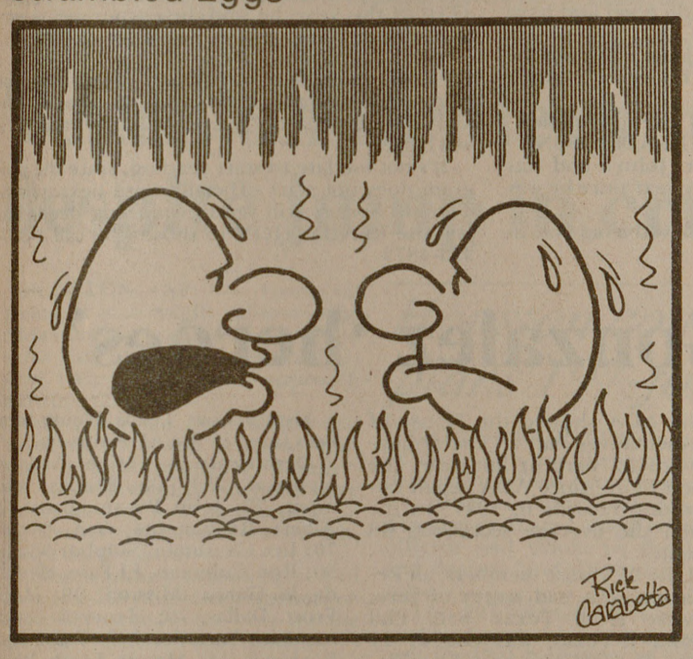
All parking spaces in the Northside garage have been sold. Approximately 250 students have not picked up their permits. Those spaces will be reallotted for sale if their owners do not contact the parking administration department.

Those wishing to pick up parking permits and appeal citations should go to the garage's northwest corner on the first floor. Those sections of the parking administration have been moved there.

As of Feb. 1, billing for parking citations will be added to fee statements.

Students who do not own a parking space can park in the garage for 50 cents per hour or four dollars a day.

Scrambled Eggs



IF YOU THINK THIS IS HELL, WAIT 'TIL YOU SEE THE RESTROOMS.

CIA

(Continued from page 1)

select the highest qualified students for its co-op program, because only they can pass the agency's stringent security clearance requirements.

"What we look for is the best and the brightest student we can find," she said. "We're not looking for any particular (academic) discipline. We're looking for bright people who are of high moral character and who have an interest in working in foreign affairs. From that, it then depends on what the qualifications of the individual are."

Sasso said requirements for the top-level security clearance are rigid, but that it's necessary because of the agency's importance to national security.

The agency's research into a student's past is, often, more extensive than the student might expect.

"A lot of people don't want to go through that kind of rigid process of obtaining a security clearance," she said. "We not only want to see your academic standing, but also your personal standing, your financial situation, your social behavior, your sexual behavior, drug usage. We either go back to age 18 or the last 15 years, depending on what your age is."

Yates said the agency's strict requirements for a security clearance are necessary because the CIA doesn't want to hire anyone with skeletons in their closets that could be used as blackmail if discovered.

Yates said the general feedback he receives from the students he has worked with has been positive because of the type of work the CIA assigns students.

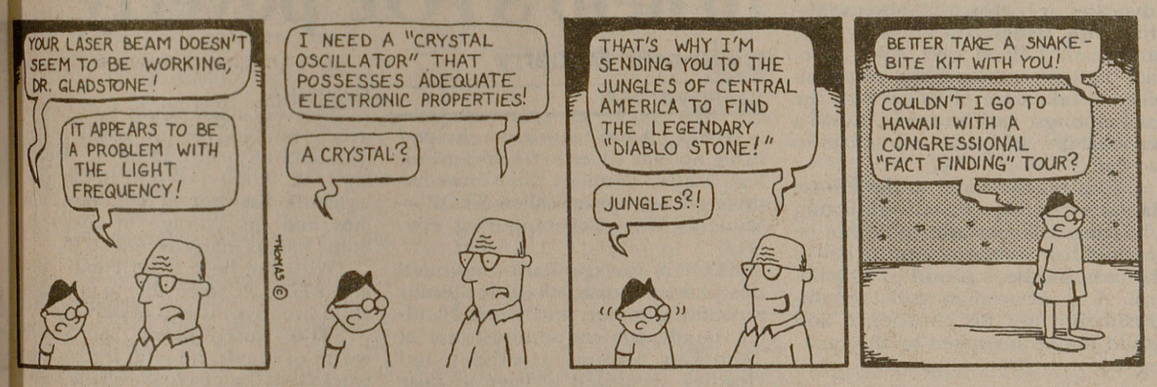
"The feedback of the students that I have personally talked to has been excellent," he said. "They really like it. The CIA has a big co-op program, and they're utilizing the co-op not only for hiring co-ops, but also to train them and to hire them. It's a very intriguing type of work, very stimulating."

Yates said students who wish to apply with the CIA through the co-op program need to do so at least six months in advance. He also said the agency prefers students to start co-opping as early as possible, and to take a variety of courses.

"They want to encourage students to start co-opping as early as their sophomore year," he said. "They encourage them to take more foreign languages and courses that have to do with international studies."

Yates said the CIA looks at the co-op program as a long-term investment because they want to hire the student who already has been trained and who already has worked for them.

Waldo by Kevin Thomas



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