

The  Commuter

BILL COMMUTER

10th Anniversary
COMMUTER



10 YEARS

by Julie Trower
Staff Writer

The **Commuter**, now in its tenth year of existence, is just leaving its adolescent years. Like LBCC, it had to experience growing pains before reaching its present image.

The newspaper has changed dramatically in the hands of the four advisors and numerous student editors who have played an important part in its growth over the years...

In 1970, LBCC classes were spread throughout the community. The college President Eldon Schaeffer wanted a student newspaper to generate a feeling of continuity since LBCC had no campus of its own.

The problem: no one on the faculty knew anything about running a newspaper. English instructor Ken Cheney came the closest so he was awarded the position of advisor.

"We had one typewriter and a 2¼ camera that I didn't know how to use," recalled Cheney ruefully. "Fortunately I was able to enlist students from my composition class."

"What the paper lacked in quality, we made up for in the enthusiasm of a bunch of amateurs. It was not a bad-looking paper, but it was kind of weak in content," he admitted.

When LBCC centralized on this campus in modules, the **Commuter** office was housed in a board room behind the president's office. The first darkroom was actually the president's bathroom.

Being that close to the administration, said Cheney, "we really had to stay on our toes because they usually knew what we were up to!"

In spite of inexperience, Cheney's group managed to put out the paper every week without fail. Only once did they come dangerously close to missing a deadline.

After staying late to prepare the paper for printing, the editor was transporting the completed 'dummies' to his car.

"Suddenly a gust of wind blew the box out of his hands and scattered the pieces all over the parking lot."

They had to run all over gathering the pieces and take them in to fit back together like a jigsaw puzzle.

In 1973, Bill Sweet took over the job of advising **The Commuter**. Sweet was as ignorant about journalism as Cheney had been. Sweet was a creative writing teacher, "so the flavor of the newspaper changed because his students were working on the paper," said Cheney.

Sweet remembers his year on **The Commuter** as an exciting one.

"We initiated a few things: we brought about a standard eight-page issue and an artist's corner." Other features that year included a "Do-it-yourself-Car Corner" series and a weekly

student survey, "The Inquiring Reporter."

They also encountered some controversial issues.

"Almost immediately we went before the Publication Board about an ROTC ad. Frankly, I thought the ad was grotesque." The paper ran the ad which turned out to be a tempest in teapot because no objections were raised over it.

An editorial that year caused some local concern. Entitled, "The Invisible Burn," the article was about using chemicals as an alternative to field-burning. The editorial cited the chemicals as harmful, prompting angry phone calls to both the president and to Sweet.

"I said if they wanted to write a guest editorial we'd give it the same amount of space. Several weeks passed, then we got a short piece. We had to space the lines apart so it occupied the same amount of space. It sure looked funny," he said.

Sweet's overall impression of that year is marked by the closeness the staff experienced.

"I was proud to be associated with the paper. We were like a close-knit family. We didn't set any new standards for journalistic ability, but we put out a pretty good paper."

Roger Zippler, a student from the early days of the school, added his impressions of **The Commuter**. From Dec., 1969-June, 1971, Zippler served as a reporter, editor and sports editor.

At the time, said Zippler, "LBCC was a young school. We felt like we were pioneers. We wanted to use the paper to promote the school."

The Vietnam War was a big issue during Zippler's years on the staff. Quite a few people wanted to work on the paper so they could write a lot of anti-Nam articles.

"When they realized we couldn't do that, we lost a lot of people. But we had to be journalists instead of politicians," Zippler said.

In 1974-75 LBCC got its first 'real' journalism advisor, Steve Eichelberger, a part-time instructor. The following year, Jenny Spiker was hired as a full-time journalism instructor and **Commuter** advisor.

When journalism became a part of LBCC curriculum, **The Commuter** took on a new professional look. More students joined the staff with journalism careers in mind, rather than as an extra-curricular activity.

Spiker is in her fourth year at LBCC. Over the years, she's found that "the issues change from year to year no matter who's advising it, because the students change."

Even with the frequent turnovers in staff, Spiker said, "I've always felt that the newspaper staff is like an athletic team; there's a strong spirit of closeness and teamwork."

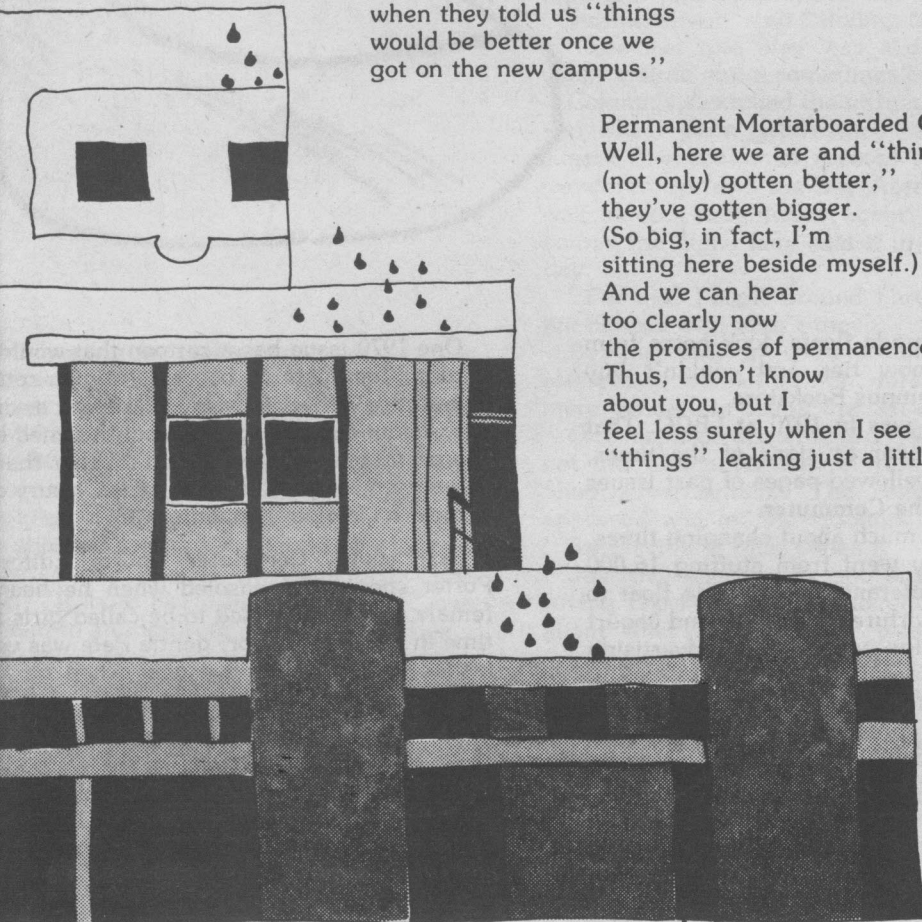
According to past **Commuter** staffers, the feeling of closeness has prevailed throughout the decade of **Commuter** publications. □

Temporary Park Campus:
 When the rain
 telegraphed
 its inarticulate
 messages on the
 aluminum roofs
 of those 10 x 50' trailers
 wherein we taught,
 or an ancient train grumbled by,
 we could not hear
 each other not thinking
 and we were surely satisfied
 when they told us "things
 would get better once we
 got on the new campus."

Temporary Modular Campus:
 And when the walls
 for crying out loud thin,
 filtered the old saws
 of an art class into
 American Lit.,
 we were bemused
 and made Excedrin pauses
 because we could not hear
 the art in artillery.
 And we were surely satisfied
 when they told us "things
 would be better once we
 got on the new campus."

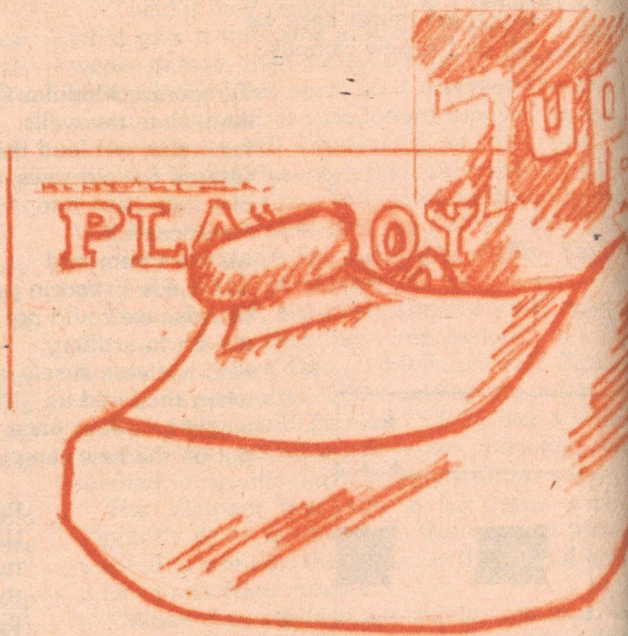
Permanent Mortarboarded Campus:
 Well, here we are and "things have
 (not only) gotten better,"
 they've gotten bigger.
 (So big, in fact, I'm
 sitting here beside myself.)
 And we can hear
 too clearly now
 the promises of permanence.
 Thus, I don't know
 about you, but I
 feel less surely when I see
 "things" leaking just a little.

Barbarajene Williams
 January, 1974



Good ol' days

**Class rings,
bow ties and
the prom...**



Students made parade floats, took notes from teachers wearing bow ties and couldn't buy "Playboy" in the campus Bookstore.

That's the way it was in 1970 at LBCC. That and much more appear as signs of the times, popping out of the yellowed pages of past issues of this newspaper, **the Commuter**.

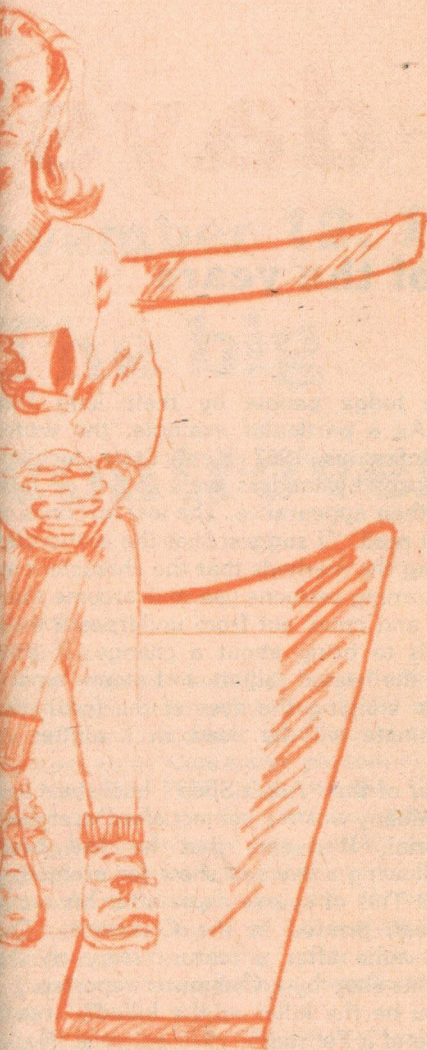
If little things say much about changing times, then LBCC's history went from stuffing 16,000 napkins into that Veterans' Day Parade float to sermonettes on the virtues of sprouts and yogurt to last year's campaign against 7-Up advertising in the Commons.

The early **Commuters** reek of campus activities that are hard for present-day LBCC-ites to imagine. Biology instructor Bob Ross in a bow tie is conceivable, but an all-school (yes, ALL-school) picnic featuring sack races, tug-of-war and apple bobbing?

One 1970 issue has a cartoon that would modern feminists to boycott (woman-cott) **Commuter** office forever. It shows a dr man-about-campus ogling a full-bosomed b lab partner, as the prof asks, "Other than Thompson here—tell me what your o project for biology is this term?"

Last year's **Commuter** Sports Editor Porter should be consoled when he hears female personages used to be called girls a time in the paper. Poor, gentle Pete was ve lashed several times last year when he s and called women "girls" in sports stories

Christmas Proms, Homecoming Dance class rings really existed in the early da LBCC. Queens and princesses reigned. were Decorations Committee Chairmen, tion Committee Chairmen and Rally



ers cheering for teams they referred to as Purple."

ever, some things haven't changed much. In 1971 we were already trying to get bike to LBCC (a feat not yet accomplished) and ending the demise of student government (a feat already accomplished last year).

s about the campus' architecture apparatus started the minute the last brick was laid. "It looks like a big gas station," one said to an inquiring reporter back then.

1973 some photos were appearing with men in lockers needed to be corralled by head girls. That same year some women still wore curlers and sprayed their hair.

gs were folksy then. Faculty members wrote columns in the paper, often discussing death matters. Art instructor Jim Brick didn't resist the chances to pun about platform

shoes in one letter:

"Platform shoes," he asked: "What are they? (1) A quick way to gain some stature i. e. getting up in the world?... (2) A new kick?... (3) A way of being tipsy?..."

The first U.S. "Energy Crisis" reverberated across campus in 1973. "Car Pool It" became a catch phrase, but some were skeptical. One student said, "If you can convince me for sure that there really is an energy crisis, then I will do something about it."

What we now know as "heavy" subjects began appearing in the campus press in late 1973. One woman student reported in detail on a Portland conference she attended called "Growing Up Female."

"Talking with each other about the collective rape of women is not an easy task," she reported. Her piece ended like a cross between "Sesame Street" and "Rolling Stone:"

"The last role play was a downer...What a yukky way to end a sometimes beautiful day."

Columnists extolled the virtues of bean sprouts and wheat germ, while they sang the evils of sugar. One columnist created a character who wandered up from the Bay Area to find Albany was indeed enlightened about health food. Of course the hippy lady said it in the lingo of the day:

"Far out! People around here are really into the natural trip, aren't they?"

By the end of 1974 **Commuter** reporters referred to women as Ms., forecasting an even more genderless use of the last name only.

One major controversy of 1974 was whether or not the **Commuter** should run an Adult Book Shop advertisement. The college deliberated, approved and let the students in on flicks like "The Devil and Miss Jones."

Just five short years ago one student told a roving reporter that he thought the best thing about that school year was the college's "cohesiveness, its togetherness. Everyone here seems like one big, happy family. In fact, I just changed my major so I could stay here longer."

That same student is probably still here, wandering around the not-quite-so-chummy campus' wind tunnels, taking notes from teachers who now wear jeans and give reading assignments out of "Playboy." □

Opinions

Editorials reflect the passage of the years

by Julie Brudvig
Staff Writer

Although many issues have been discussed on the **Commuter's** Editorial page, none have been as frequent than that dealing with student government apathy.

From the first year of the paper to today, student participation has remained the same instead of growing with the college.

In an editorial dated October 12, 1970, the writer expressed his concern over the lack of participation in a recent election and even went as far as saying, "and then students have the nerve to say the voting age should be lowered to 18 in Oregon."

Another editorial dated May 1, 1972, had something else to say that caused a big stir among those involved with student government. The writer called the last ASLBCC elections "shoddy." Evidently, a lot of "backstabbing, mudslinging, and false rumors" involved with the campaigning drove that writer to such an opinion.

Other political concerns that have surfaced in the **Commuter** include the stealing of LBCC's first American flag in 1971, a welcome to LBCC's new President, Ray Needham, in October 1971, a telegram sent to President Nixon by the Ecology Club in November 1971 and the **Commuter** staff announcing their political endorsement of then-president Nixon and Vice President Agnew.

The telegram in dispute was supposed to be a letter sent by the student government, but according to the editorial, because of "laziness," they passed it on to the Ecology Club. The telegram read:

Mister Nixon:

On behalf of concerned citizens in our locality, we strongly protest the planned atomic test on Amchitka Island.

Linn-Benton Ecology club.

On May 25, 1970, an editorial dealing with

how police judge people by their long hair appeared. As a particular example, the writer used the infamous 1967 Kent State incident where innocent bystanders were killed or hurt because of their appearance. The last few lines of his editorial read, "I suggest that the authorities quit applying the methods that the characters on Saturday morning cartoons use to overcome their differences and crawl out from underneath their moldy shells to bring about a change. If they don't, then the heated radiation of atomic smoke will soon be stinging the eyes of the fortunate. The unfortunate will lie dead in a clutter of rubble."

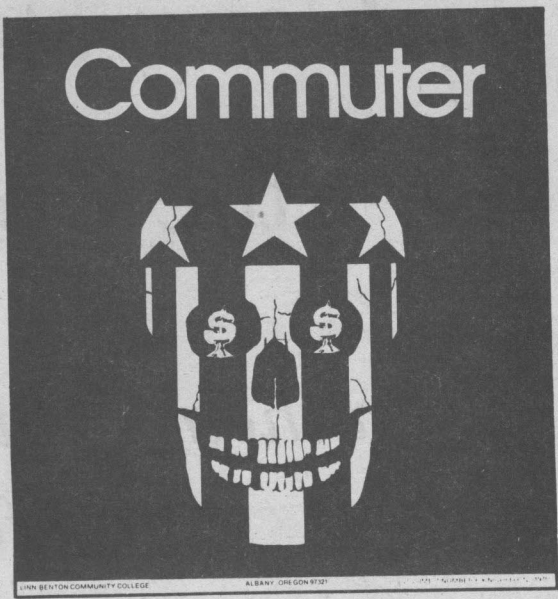
The owner of the "Adult Shop" bookstore and theater in Albany was the subject of a December, 1972 editorial. It seems that he had been arrested following a live sex show for promoting prostitution. This of course came after his many ads had been printed in the **Commuter**. The arrest also came after a feature story on the owner and his shop by a **Commuter** reporter.

"Will you be the killer or the killed?" reads the headline of a February, 1976 editorial. No, it wasn't about the war in Vietnam. Instead it concerned the burning issue of bike lanes to LBCC from Corvallis and Albany. The writer stressed a need for bike lanes along the narrow roads to LBCC.

In a March, 1976 issue, a male student wrote to the editor after seeing some high school girls wearing mini-skirts on the LBCC campus. The goal of his letter was to get LBCC's female students back in mini-skirts by saying, "legs are nice to look at. Ladies should be proud and honored that the mere sight of a pair of luscious legs incite that burning hormonal desire in men."

However, his letter back-fired when the next issue carried a response from one LBCC female who said, "I, for one, will never feel comfortable wearing a skirt in the Commons again, for I now know what evil lurks in the minds of men." □

November 12, 1975 The big controversy



Dale Stowell
Staff Writer

At first glance it might have looked like a state's flag on news print, but it was actually an edition of **the Commuter** that nearly sapped the community from some **Commuter** personnel.

The Nov. 12, 1975 issue of **the Commuter**, sporting a skull with screws through the forehead and dollar-sign eyes on page one, quickly became the publication's biggest controversy.

Remembered simply as the Veteran's Day issue, its three pages of unidentified editorial comment against—among other things—Veteran's Day activities in Albany, nearly made a few staffers walk the plank.

Bob Miller, present director of campus and community services but then administrative officer of the Publications Committee, said the paper brought out some big concerns.

"There were a number of very angry people in the community," Miller said, noting that at that time too much community disapproval of the school could be devastating as LBCC had no tax base.

"The issue was not what was said," Miller said; it was a question of whether journalistic principles had been followed.

Jenny Spiker, LBCC journalism instructor and advisor to **the Commuter**, was working through her rookie year as advisor when the Veteran's Day storm hit.

Spiker said she knew that some comment was going to come out against Albany's Vet's Day activities, but she was not prepared for how strongly that message would be portrayed.

Editor Hugh White and a friend stayed one night to finish **the Commuter** on a day when there was no school. According to Spiker, who was not present then, the two became very emotional about the topic and it grew into their strong, private declaration.

Even though the issue angered a lot of people, many whole-heartedly supported the paper.

"Every closet liberal in the school flooded **the Commuter** office," Spiker said.

But this support did little to ease the tension.

Spiker spent hours talking to administrators," she said.

Her stand was that it was the newspaper's right to make critical comments but that the treatment was inappropriate.

After a review by the Publications Committee, many informal meetings and White's followup editorial explaining his stand and apologizing for upsetting people, the matter slowly faded away.

There were no resignations and no keel haulings. However, Spiker said the controversy affected **the Commuter's** reputation for at least a year.

As Miller summarized, "It's one **Commuter** that will always be remembered." □

ILLUSTRATION CREDITS: Cover—Jenny Zur, page 3—Cheryl Haworth, pages 4 & 5—Dan Huckestein. These three also worked as art directors for the issue.

Congratulations to the Commuter

*on their Tenth Anniversary
and for their*

Service to

Linn-Benton Community College

You've done more than your share to build a fine reputation and an ever-increasing learning tool at LBCC. May The Commuter continue to prosper for the next 10 years and more!

The College

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Guidance Services
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Developmental Center
Veterans Affairs
Health Services
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Transfer Programs
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