



Campus Cops Corner

-Public Safety Tips for the PPCC Community-

Public Safety Bi-Weekly News Newsletter

This issue's subject is deadly serious. "Classroom security" is extremely important to all of us here. While the subject matter of "School Shootings" is distasteful, I hope you will take a few moments to consider my suggestion.

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Classroom Security on a Budget

Headlines regarding shootings at malls, churches, and especially schools, have shocked us all over the past few years. For purposes of this short article, it's important to note that not all the shootings or shooters are the same.

For example, some of the shootings have targeted specific victims, i.e., the most recent (10/27/08) campus shooting at the University of Central Arkansas in Conway, AR, was NOT random. The three victims were specifically targeted by the suspect. These types of incidents are very similar to the angry and estranged husband who tracks his spouse to her place of employment and attacks her there.

The other type of incident, and the one which seems to attract most of the attention, is what criminologists call a "spree shooting." These are the ones often perpetrated by "inadequate personalities" at places where large numbers of people gather, i.e., malls, churches, schools, etc. The victims in these shootings seem to be "random," and since the Columbine Shooting of 1999, there appears to be some effort among "spree shooters" to "rack up a body count" to surpass that of Klebold and Harris at Columbine. Seung-Hui Cho, 23, the infamous Virginia Tech shooter from 2007, held Klebold and Harris in high regard and clearly saw the Columbine death toll as a bench mark to be exceeded. He killed 33 in addition to wounding approximately 18 others. The December 2007 shooting at New Life Church next to our Rampart Campus is another example.

The fiscal situation we find ourselves in today has prevented us from moving forward with the purchase of new classroom locks as discussed during last year's Leadership Council session. The next best interim step I recommend is to implement a simple procedure among our faculty suggesting that the **doors be locked at the beginning of class**. Late students would simply have to knock on the door, be recognized, and then allowed entrance. The intent is to not allow the shooter easy access to large numbers of victims.

I'm aware that this would create some inconvenience for our faculty. "Security" frequently finds itself at odds with "convenience," however I believe the "Post Virginia Tech" world in which we live, demands we take reasonable precautions, and I contend this is a reasonable step in light of the fiscal restrictions we find ourselves facing today.

Important Numbers & websites:

- 24-7 Emergency Number: 502-2911
- Emergency Alert Sign Up: www.ppec.edu/alert