

N. C. ESSAY

A RESPONSIBLE STUDENT NEWSPAPER

Practice Rooms

Perhaps the most important angle in a musician's development is practice. The significance of ample practice time well-spent cannot be overemphasized for someone who intends to make a living as a professional musician.

When a music student does not have the proper facilities for practicing his medium, it can be quite an obstacle in his path to success. Imagine a dancer being offered one class a week with a teacher and being left to work out the rest of the week without benefit of mirrors or bars, except for what he might arrange in his own dorm room. Yet NCSA's brass and wind majors are being faced with a situation quite similar to this hypothetical one.

We feel it is and has been obvious that poor practice rooms are a problem here. According to the December 10 issue of the Essay, two wind faculty members felt the music practice rooms were not adequate for their students' needs. A third wind faculty member stated the practice rooms had been a problem for seven years. The Institutional Self-Study report, prepared for NCSA in March, 1974, stated that "the existing practice rooms were...acoustically poor for practice, forcing many students to practice in their dorm rooms." The music students that meet regularly with the school of music administration, discussed this issue as a problem at a meeting early in November. Martin Sokoloff, vice-chancellor, demonstrated an awareness of the problem when he instructed maintenance to install carpeting in a room to see if it might improve the acoustics.

Furthermore, we feel this problem could feasibly be ameliorated. Buddy Engelbert, school accountant, has said funds could be made available for improvement of the rooms. Carpeting for deadening the rooms might be obtained and fire-proofed quite cheaply if the right companies were approached by the right school administrators. D & P majors volunteered their services for installation of carpet in practice rooms during the quiet hours controversy last term. Unfortunately, whether or not these solutions are actually feasible remains to be seen. There has been a plethora of verbalization, without consequence.

The problem is perennial, it is obvious, and there must be no doubt as to its seriousness. The question seems to be whose responsibility it is to initiate action on this problem.

We feel the responsibility should lie on the administration of the School of Music. It appears to us that Schillin and Dean Harsanyi have been more than negligent in this matter. When approached by a reporter in November, they claimed there was no problem as far as they could see. Although they have reversed this stand, Schillin now says there is no money to do anything about it. We cannot believe it had not occurred to the administration of the School of Music to investigate that question with the school accountant. In fact, it does not seem to us they are taking any action whatsoever towards solving a conflict which eminently threatens students' development. For some unconceivable reason, they have chosen to ignore the problem, a position which we feel is totally unfair to students.

If the administrators of the School of Music have some cause for believing the condition of the practice rooms unimportant to the department, let them state it. If not, let us see some action now.

Fuzzy Faces

By SHELLY McPHERSON

With an air of owning the campus, Simon strolls down the steps of A-B lounge. Someone calls out "Here, kitty," and waits for him to stop. Feeling amiable, Simon awaits the inevitable. The person pets him clumsily and starts baby-talking at him. This is too much for Simon's ego; lifting his tail, he stalks off, leaving the person feeling somewhat inferior to a beautiful grey cat.

Simon, along with Scarlett, Zeke, and Sascha, are just a few of the superstars here on campus. Somehow, just having them around, makes this school an easier place to live.

Scarlett has had numerous fans since the beginning of last term when she was just a pup and wouldn't go down stairs. Now that she has sprouted long legs, her close friends and casual acquaintances have increased too. Her talents now range from running from Sue Slawter to a pretty good imitation of wrestling Simon. Simon and Scarlett share Apartment B with Sarah Lu Bradley, residence administrator.

ON THE OTHER hand, there's Zeke, a visiting artist. He's the handsome Irish Setter belonging to composition major Bryan Evans. Who can resist a four-legged redhead, the former of this pair? All you have to do is say "Hi!" to Zeke and you have a friend and running companion for life. After that, any time you feel the urge to race, just find him. Zeke's more than just an athlete-he's a good sport - sometimes he'll let you win.

Sascha is the quiet, poised Borzoi of Alton Buzbee. If you haven't seen her around lately, it's because she delivered seven healthy puppies January 22. She's doing well, and her fans hope to have her back with us soon. They're all waiting to see how motherhood has affected one of such great sophistication.

These four are just a few of the superstars to be found at NCSA. Along with the other animals on campus, they are much loved and appreciated by the whole school community. Now that the problem of keeping animals away from the snack bar area has been solved, we are all free to enjoy these characters. Let's keep it that way.

Shelly McPherson is a college freshman Drama major.



Nicky, Did You Hear Anything???

America, Wake Up!

By KURT ESCLICK

Consumers do not need to be told that they have many problems. They ignore one big problem completely. This problem is the automobile industry. The problem facing us can be solved, but not until we do several things.

We must refuse to drive cars which are too big and too heavy. We must learn to drive properly. We must fight foolish, hurried legislation in Washington that causes costly reruns. And we must quit believing cock-eyed commercials showing Joe Average or Charlie Jack-strap getting 26 miles per gallon in his Caddy, telling us how much safer and nicer it is to drive the large American luxury car.

In America, the way we classify cars by size is completely warped. The epitome of the large American car is the Cadillac Fleetwood, with a 500 cubic inch engine that gets 11-14 miles per gallon. In Europe, a good example of a large luxury car is the Audi 100LS with a 114 cubic inch engine which gets 18-28 miles per gallon. An example of an American midsize car is the Chevrolet Monte Carlo, with its 454 cubic inch engine getting 11-16 miles per gallon. Its European counterpart, the Volkswagen Dasher, has a 90 cubic inch engine and gets 23-35 miles per gallon. Then we come to the "small" cars. The American-made Chevrolet Vega has a 140 cubic inch engine and gets 19-28 miles per gallon. The brand new, European-made Volkswagen Rabbit has a 90 cubic inch engine and gets 24-38 miles per gallon. The Vega weighs 2560 pounds while the Rabbit weighs roughly 1800 pounds. These figures are pretty staggering. What's more, the European car will out-accelerate, out-handle, and will give you a better ride than their American counterparts.

Now we come to you, the driver. Oh boy! How bad can one group of drivers get? Certainly not much worse than us. The average American driver is like the proverbial accident looking for a place to happen. Many Americans can't even drive a car with a manual gearbox. They use automatic gearboxes costing them 20 per cent of their already had gas mileage. They have no feel for the road with their power steering and brakes. They have little or no knowledge of skid control. Driver's Ed teaches you to turn your wheel into the slide and that's about

it. The funny thing is, that won't even work in an understeering situation where the front tires lose their grip first, which is what American cars are designed for. Those of you who are reading this will say to yourself, yes "He can't be talking about me; I'm a good driver," because as Stirling Moss, the great race driver, once said, "There are two things a man will not admit that he can't do; they are drive, and make love."

Next in my line of fire are the crazy laws the hired help in Washington keep cranking out. Next election year we will have to screen our applicants more carefully. Their five-mile-per-hour bumper law, enacted in 1973, cost Americans \$700 million; it was designed to save money. The problem was, in crashes of more than five miles per hour, the bumpers were ruined and cost three times more to replace than the 1972 bumpers. A bit of a miscalculation, wouldn't you say?

Now they have done away with seatbelt interlocks, the gadgets that keep you from starting your car until your seatbelt is fastened. Lazy Americans griped about the energy it took to buckle up, so Congress erased the law, and replaced it with this crazy 55 miles per hour speed limit. Consider the fact that about 60 per cent of drivers of cars with interlock systems wear their seatbelts and about 40 per cent disconnect them. Without interlocks, wearers are expected to drop about 30 per cent. According to CALSPAN (formerly California Aeronautical Laboratories), out of drivers in 30,000 accidents, 500 were wearing lap and shoulder belts. Among those 500, there was not a single death. Congress has replaced a proven lifesaver, seatbelts, with an unproven and highly disputed one, the 55 MPH speed limit.

Incidentally, in England, the first few months after the speed limit was raised to 80 mph after having it at 55 mph, the highway death toll dropped 15 per cent.

America had better wake up. Go out and buy a truly small car before it's too late. Learn to drive it defensively, and don't let Washington mess us up any more. Most of all, don't be fuelish.

Kurt Eslick is a high school French Horn major.

*Mileage statistics are from the Environmental Protection Agency. Other figures from Road and Track and Autoweek magazines.

N. C. ESSAY

Editor: Kay Crutcher

Advisors: Bill and M'Lou Bancroft

Managing Editor: John Haas

Business Manager: John Hubbard

Pullout editor: Ken Ballard

Photo Editor: Bryant Arrington