

Student attitude study shows Campus cops misunderstood

By SARA BULLARD
News Editor

University Police are plagued by "a very real image problem within the campus community," according to security services director T. E. Marvin.

A survey done late last Spring by three business administration students showed that most UNC students believe the Campus Police "are concerned almost totally with traffic control and traffic violations." Marvin said that impression is false, and that only a "very small percentage" of police man-power hours is spent dealing with parking and traffic problems.

The survey done by students Jim Brookshire, Craig Hamilton and Bobby Hooper also revealed that most of the respondents believe the Campus Police are not as well trained, less respected, and less capable of handling crime on campus than

the Chapel Hill Police.

"In an overwhelming majority of cases," the report states, "people have higher esteem for the Chapel Hill Police than the Campus Police."

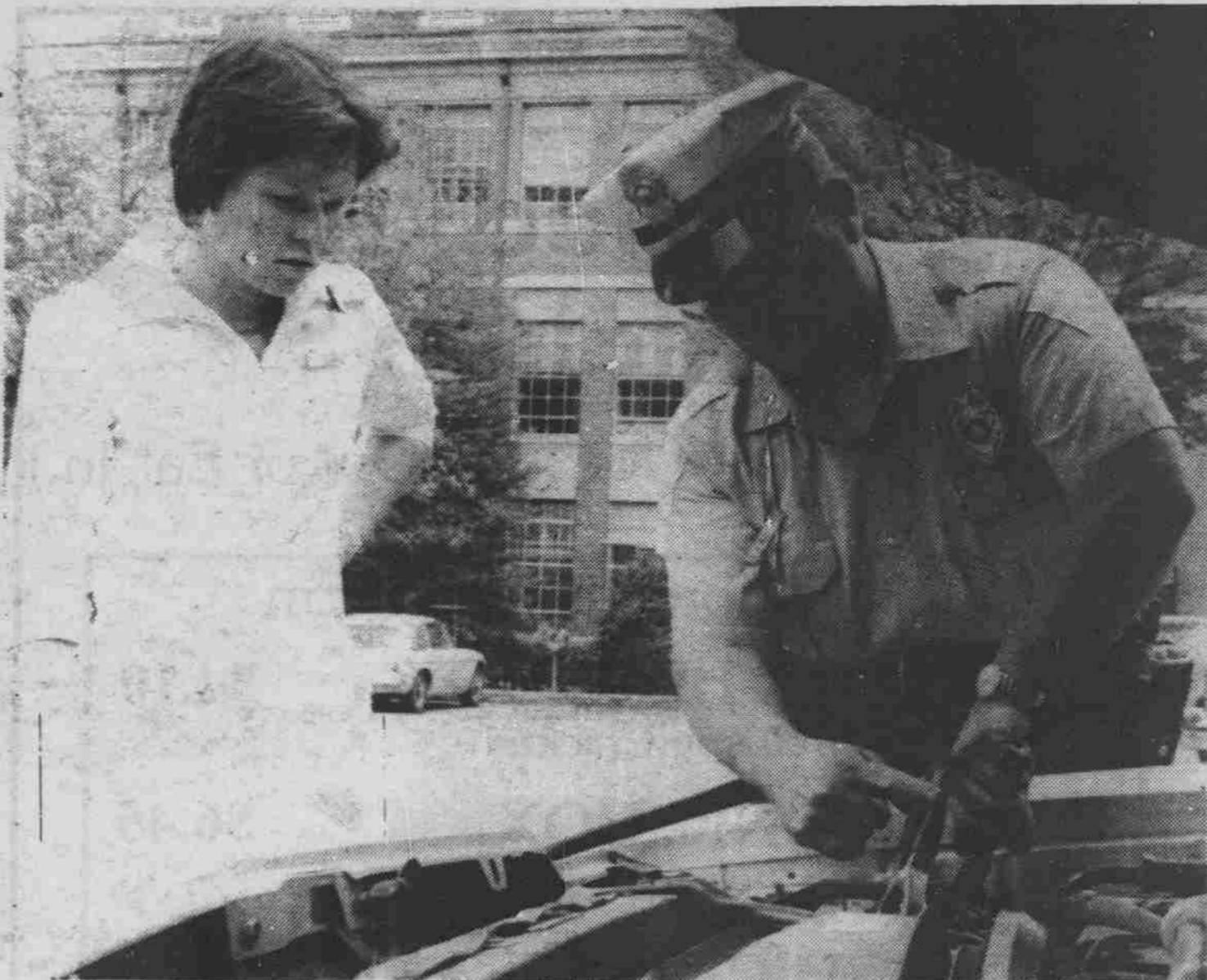
Eighty-seven per cent of the 100 respondents said Chapel Hill Police were better trained, 66% said they had more respect for Chapel Hill Police, and 76% said if an armed stranger broke into their room, they would rather have the Chapel Hill Police respond.

Marvin said the distrust is unfounded, and the misconceptions result from a lack of understanding about the qualifications and functions of the Campus Police.

Campus Police, Marvin said, have the same training and the same authority as the Chapel Hill Police, and because there is generally more crime occurring on campus than off, the Campus Police are involved in at least as much criminal investigation and arrests as the Chapel Hill Police.

Most students, Marvin noted, tend to perceive traffic and parking control as the only function of the Campus Police because "there is probably no more controversial issue on campus than parking."

"People see what they want to see," he said, "and when they see an officer in a towing situation they think that's all we ever do."



It may look like all they do is give tickets, help start cars and escort young ladies across campus, but that image is deceiving, campus police say.

Services which the Campus Police perform that are widely ignored are: giving first aid and transporting the injured, escorting women around campus at night, operating an engraving service to identify valuables, monitoring the emergency phones on campus, and investigating and preventing crime on campus.

When asked "what services are provided by the University Police that you are aware of?" 71% of the respondents answered parking and traffic control while only 10% included crime investigation in their responses.

Marvin said he expected the survey to reveal some misconceptions about the Campus Police, but said he had "no idea it would be that strong."

He said "the main thing that came out of the survey was a real lack of confidence on the part of students."

To combat the police image problem, Marvin said several programs are being developed to "professionalize the mode of operation of the University Police," and to make students aware of the services the police provide. Posters placed around campus have proved to be the most effective publicity of police functions, according to the survey.

The department plans to expand the public relations effort, as well as instituting a "retraining program" for the police themselves, to help them focus more on crime prevention and investigation rather than on the traditional security and parking duties.

The survey, Marvin said, is being used extensively this summer in studying the role of Campus Police.

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