

A Week at Pacific Union College

Pacific Union College, located in Angwin, California, above picturesque Napa Valley, is one of our oldest colleges. Recently, someone sent us just one sample issue of their weekly newspaper, *Campus Chronicle*.

Reading through it, we were surprised to see how changed the school has become since we knew it in the mid-1950s.

Here are a few gleanings from the Thursday, February 29, 1996, issue of the *Campus Chronicle*:

Page 1:

Frank Knittel, the former president of Southern College (who left in the early 1980s over the scandal of modernism running rampant in that institution) gave a speech at PUC in late February. Now teaching at La Sierra, **he told the assembled student body that nearly all the Adventist colleges in North America should be closed down as a cost-cutting measure—and replaced by a couple of super colleges.**

Below that, an article entitled, “*Why PUC Theology Graduates Don’t Get Hired*,” which noted the financial crunch in the church, said **only one in five PUC theology graduates was hired last year.**

As you and I know, pastors out in the field have done such a magnificent job, shoving out faithful church members, that as the faithful leave—they take their offerings with them.

“Last year in California, Southeastern Conference’s tithe was down 9 percent, Northern’s 3 percent, Central’s 3 percent and Southern’s 2.5 percent . . . PUC isn’t the only school in trouble. In the last two years, La Sierra has only been able to place four of 13 [religion] students . . .

“The self-supporting, conservative Weimar Institute has been having far better success however. Weimar placed 100 percent of their 18 students last year, said Ryan Tilstra, associate professor of religion at Weimar . . .

“According to Tilstra, the 18 students of the graduating class received calls mostly from out of state and throughout the country.”

Very likely, Hartland Institute has placed many of its graduates also. Conservative pastors are still wanted in certain conferences.

Page 2:

On this page we find the feature article in this issue. Entitled, “*Is PUC the Adventist Party School?*” it is an eye-opener. **The title subhead indicates the contents of the article: “Results of a recent survey indicate that only 17% of PUC students use alcohol regularly. Some doubt the validity of these results.”**

Such a statistic is astounding! The alcoholism problem among students at Pacific Union College has gotten so bad, that the administration is breathing a sigh of relief that only one student in every five is regularly drinking liquor! But others, closer to the situation than the rest of us, question that figure as too low.

“The rumor that PUC is ‘a party school’ is based on misinformation according to [John] Collins [vice president for student affairs]. The rumor is being spread, he added, by a minority who are worried about such ‘standards’ issues as jewelry, competitive sports, modern music and drama on campus.”

Wherever Adventists congregate, there will always be a few who will appeal to the others to adhere to our historic standards. Such are generally called “trouble-makers” or “the minority.” The above quotation is revealing, for it details some of the wrongdoing at Pacific Union College. It also implies that such things as wearing jewelry, competitive sports, and wild music have nothing to do with “standards.”

In addition to rampant alcoholism in nearly 20% of the student body, hard drugs are also being used. But the article said it really was not so bad, because a larger number of students do not indulge. We really are doing pretty good, aren’t we? Only 20 percent laying around drunk.

“A recent study of alcohol and drug use on campus, Collins said, showed that 83 percent of PUC students are not regular alcohol users. Fully 62 percent of the students surveyed had never used alcohol, according to the survey. ‘How many faculty members can say that?’ Collins asked, jokingly.”

—Only a little over one half of the students attending PUC have never drunk liquor! But, Collins adds, we can laugh it off, for the faculty probably do not have as good a record. He ought to know; he is on the faculty.

Whenever a college administration does not care about standards, you can know most of the students soon will not either. That attitude is reflected in a comment by one of the faculty members:

"In a panel discussion which followed Collins' talk, faculty members offered alternate perspectives. Trivett said he was not interested in the jewelry issue . . . His concerns about student life dealt with basic integrity and responsibility—not issues like 'worldly' music.

So over 200 students at PUC regularly drink liquor. But the attitude is that we're doing better than the worldly colleges; however **the warning is sounded that we need to keep the parents from learning the facts.**

" 'Collins' statistics are intriguing,' commented another faculty member. 'Clearly, PUC does not have the kind of drinking problem that plagues secular schools. At the same time, many of PUC's supporters would be shocked to learn that 17 percent of our students are, in essence, social drinkers.' Doing some quick arithmetic, this teacher continued, 'What is that? Two or three hundred students?' "

But when students themselves were queried about these estimates, they considered them too low! Living in the dormitories, they believe far more are regularly drinking. Apparently, the poll was taken while the students sat close together in assembly—and they feared that others would see what they wrote down. Because of this, the truth was not fully told.

"Several students felt that the figures quoted were inaccurate and expressed a lack of confidence in the survey results. 'I felt a bit intimidated because everyone was so close together and could easily see your response,' said Edward Ponamarov. He also said he knew of several people who put down false information for fear of observation."

An accompanying graph provides more information: How frequently do you drink alcohol? 5% - every day / 15% - 3 times a week / 21% - once a week / 15% - twice a month / 12% - once a month.

A footnote declares that the survey was taken of 391 students in October 1995.

Page 3:

A poster contest was announced, and the students were encouraged to enter it. Two Spanish operas and a French ballet were to be performed in the nearby city of Napa, and the students were invited to try to win the \$750 prize for best posters.

"Napa's Jarvis Conservatory has announced a poster art competition with its spring and summer music and dance activities. The Jarvis Conservatory will be presenting two unique workshops this spring and summer; a *Zarzuela Workshop and Festival* from May 20 to June 25 and a *Baroque Dance Workshop and Festival* from July 22 to August 10. The *Zarzuela festival* will feature performances of two popular Spanish operas, *La Gran Via* and *La Dolorosa*. The *Baroque Festival* will

feature delightful classic French ballet creations. As these events lend themselves well to visual expressions, the Jarvis Conservatory is having a Poster Art Competition to memorialize the two operas and the ballet . . ."

After making posters, the college students will probably want to attend the shows, and collect the door prizes also mentioned in the article.

As if that was not enough worldliness for page 3, the article at the bottom of the page is about the conversion of Newton Chapel into a pool hall!

Any men who have ever attended Pacific Union College will recall Friday evening vespers in Newton Hall Chapel, where they had their worships. But all that is gone; the chapel is now a pool hall!

"A new recreation and fitness room has been opened this quarter in the former Newton Chapel. This room, constructed for the enjoyment of all male residents, has kindled a new competitive fire for table tennis enthusiasts and pool sharks. Construction on the long-awaited facility started this summer and is awaiting the finishing details, even though the doors have opened. 'I simply couldn't keep them out any longer,' says a weary but proud Dean Lanier Watson."

The dean of men is proud that half the student body is now learning to enjoy idling away time in a pool hall!

"The recreation and fitness room is currently open from 6 to 12 p.m. and is equipped with a 35" television set, exercise equipment, a weight training machine, table tennis and pool tables. Although definite dates are not known, more exercise and entertainment equipment will be arriving as funds are available."

In view of the worldliness we have already been inundated with, what will the next page bring?

Page 4:

The top article on this page is about a play, performed by "*Pacific Union College's Dramatic Arts Society*." **Did you know that PUC now teaches theatrical production, to prepare students to later begin careers in stage, screen, and television?**

You entrust your sons and daughters to the faculty of PUC and they teach them to ignore standards, play pool, drink liquor, become theatrical performers, and get excited about opera and ballet. PUC students are lured into this, little realizing what they are getting into when they apply for admission to that college.

"PUC senior Melissa Dulcich leads an experienced cast as Jo, in the unforgettable story of the March sisters. Dulcich is active in DAS [Dramatic Arts Society], having performed in three of the society's previous plays. She also played the part of Liesl in PUC's 1995 production of 'The Sound of Music' and is currently involved in the musical 'Fiddler on the Roof' to be presented at the college in

April. Playing the part of Laurie is Thor Aagaard, who has been involved in four DAS plays, including Shakespeare's 'The Taming of the Shrew.' "

They even present these worldly plays to the smallest children in the community!

"There will also be a matinee performance on the 12th, at 4 p.m., aimed towards an elementary school audience."

Someone tells me that "Fiddler on the Roof" is about a drunk Russian.

Below that, the second article on this page is an encouragement to the students to rebel against church leaders and the Utrecht General Conference Session.

We are finding that an active movement is on foot, through campus newspaper articles and visiting speakers, to convert our college youth to women's ordination. On March 7, Halcyon Wilson, one of the women ordained at La Sierra University recently spoke to the student body. The article regards her as a great hero.

"Halcyon Westphal Wilson, a fourth generation SDA minister, will speak for chapel on March 7. Her topic is 'How my recent ordination has impacted my ministry.' This chapel service is sponsored by the *Faculty Women's Forum* in celebration of *Women's History Month* in March."

The accompanying article glorifies her act of rebellion against duly constituted church authority. She is portrayed as better qualified to minister because of her willingness to take part in a defiant ordination service.

Page 5:

This is a picture page, and is filled with photos, primarily of competitive sports events.

Pages 6-7:

At last, something we should expect to find in a Christian publication: the story of a woman who triumphed over suffering, under difficult circumstances.

Page 8:

This is the conclusion of the page 1 story on lack of placement for graduating theology students.

Page 9:

An article on black-white relations, plus a humorous article about the oddities of ministers.

Page 10:

Here are some excerpts from this article; perhaps you can figure it out:

"Why does the perfume of our youth smell like a \$2.99 Brut soap on the rope? Here we stand united as one piece of smelly future nostalgia . . . Black Holes-An X generation subgroup best known for the possession of almost entirely black wardrobes. Some of us want to blend in like a smooth cup of sumatra, others like it black . . .

"QFM-Quelle fashion mistake. It was really QFM,

Oh man, painter pants? That's 1979 beyond belief." Then there are those Silver Belled, cockled Shelled girls who walk around on campus looking like a walking piece of dinner wear, a piece of tinfoil over a Sabbath lunch casserole or a space bimbo extra on Star Trek The X Generation . . . Now that we are on the [Angwin] hill and free [from parents and adult supervision] . . . the spirit of rebellion has clothed people in the very dresses Jezebel was wearing before she was told to take off her red nail polish and [be] thrown to the dogs . . ."

The author concludes with a discussion of favorite television dramas.

Page 11:

The top article on this page notes that Dr. Martin Marty, a very liberal theologian at the University of Chicago, will be at the College Bookstore on February 29, to autograph copies of his book, which the students are encouraged to purchase. He is senior editor of *Christian Century*, probably the most liberal Christian magazine in America.

Below that is "*This Week: Calendar of Events.*" **It tells of several events which the students are encouraged to attend. These worldly events are held on campus and even at a San Francisco downtown theater:**

"Andrew Lloyd Webber's *Music of the Night*, March 13-April 7, Golden Gate Theater, 1 Taylor at Golden Gate and Market Streets, San Francisco. Featuring highlights from the musicals *The Phantom of the Night*, *Miss Saigon*, *Sunset Blvd.*, *Requiem*, *Cats*, etc."

"SA [PUC Student Association] presents *Cafe 96*. It will feature *Janis Loves Jazz* with sax player and recording artist Wes Burden, and the *The Poetry Corner* with area poets. Saturday, March 2, 8 p.m. in Andre Recreation Room. Admission is free."

"*CABL Stress Relief/comedy Show*. Wednesday, February 28, 8 p.m. CABL will sponsor this show in Paulin Hall. Admission is free."

"Ray Boltz presents *Concert of a Lifetime*. Sunday, March 3, 7 p.m. Buy tickets now for concert which will be held [on campus] in Pacific Auditorium."

Anything worldly is acceptable at today's PUC. You will hear faculty and church leaders whine that they cannot seem to stay the tide of worldliness in our youth today. The truth is they are encouraging the rapid downward trend! This one issue makes it clear that the administration of this college is doing all they can to steepen the slippery slope to perdition.

Page 12:

This page has an ad about ecology, protecting the earth, etc. The faculty is more concerned about protecting the environment than protecting the students.

Page 13:

This page is all about intercollegiate sports competition. This is all the rage in our colleges now. We can understand why the other “Christian colleges” participate in them, for they do not have our light. But we know better. **The PUC teams travel up and down the coast, playing other colleges. The article on this page tells how they played in a tournament, in which several college teams participated, including La Sierra.**

“If you come across anyone from the Pioneer women’s or men’s basketball team, give them a pat on the back, a handshake, or any other form of congratulations. The women placed first in the *California Coastal Conference Tournament* this past weekend in Southern California; the men came in second.

“The Lady Pioneers defeated Pacific Christian College in the semi-finals . . . They played Simpson College for the championship and PUC was again

victorious . . . The Pioneer men played against La Sierra University during the semi-finals . . . Pacific Christian College and PUC were matched up for the finals.”

Page 14:

An advertisement for a book on how to get scholarships.

Page 15:

This page features pro and con arguments about Dr. Knittel’s page 1 article, about how most of our colleges ought to be closed down and, in their place, one giant super college should be established in the East and one in the West.

Page 16:

A funny quiz.

Ready to send your children to PUC? They will really be educated there.