

Crime reports

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Yell Photo / Robert Anderson

In the line of duty - UNLV campus police officer Wayne Washington instructs UNLV students on campus procedures.

tor of Public Safety Gary Wilson said his department allows similar access to that offered by Hollenbeck, but also works with a news release service.

"We have a central review person," Wilson said. "It's usually a Sergeant, and he is available to talk with student reporters about the activity log."

Kurt Hildebrand, editor of the Yellin' Rebel from 1987 to 1988, said he thinks running a daily log may be a distraction to reporters. "There's nothing intentional (on the part of the police) but their log is bare minimum. It includes no information. Just that something happened, when, and where," he said.

All that information without substance might make student reporters overlook interesting stories, according to Hildebrand.

But Karen Splawn, Yellin' Rebel editor from 1989 to 1990, said she feels that it's up to reporters to dig out information.

Splawn, a reporter for the Las Vegas Review Journal, doubts that any police department is entirely open to reporters. "There's certain things they're not going to tell you," she said.

UNLV's Hollenbeck, though, recalled a time when talking to reporters helped put an end to one man's crime spree.

"There was this one fellow who had a scam going," he said. "He would tell people he was a transfer student and that the campus police had impounded his car. He would approach people and ask them to lend him \$30-\$35 to help him get his car back."

Hollenbeck said that more than a dozen reports were filed by students who had given the man money. While speaking to a journalism class, Hollenbeck mentioned the incident. Later, a student in the class saw the man talking to a friend and called the police.

"There's a relationship that

can form between the newspaper and the police department. I see it as our function to inform the community what kind of crime problems that are going on here, so that they can better protect themselves," he said.

It was Hollenbeck, two years ago, who began providing the daily activity log to reporters.

But even the daily log is not enough for Dawn Miller of West Virginia University. Miller doesn't accuse WVU police of hiding crimes, but the fact that she has no way of verifying the information is enough to make her suspicious.

Although her university supplies her with lists of campus crimes similar to the log provided to UNLV students, Miller wants more information from campus police. "If I could look at their records everyday I would feel more confident," she said. "What I want is to be able to see what they do all day."

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