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A copy of a picture from South Union museum of South Union Shakers about 1885. The museum is near Auburn in Logan County.

Simple gifts: The Shakers' story

In a sweet Victorian voice, a woman clears her throat and shakily begins to sing "Simple Gifts." Her canary, Little King, accompanies her in one verse, "Tis the gift to be simple, tis the gift to be free."

Her last chord ends with a strength that can be felt throughout the house. Then she must pause and recover.

Eldress Bertha Lindsay, one of six remaining Shakers worldwide, is 92. She lives in Canterbury Shaker Village in lower New Hampshire, down Route 2, past bubbling brooks and a trail of white birches and stone fences.

For a visitor entering the Trustee's House of the village, it's easy to be taken in by the charm of the antique Shaker furniture and the Shaker bonnet hanging on the wooden pegs circling each room.

Six states away from Canterbury and 14 miles from Western is

another Shaker community — South Union.

The Shakers originated in 1774 from a communal religious order — the United Society of Believers in Christ's Second Appearing. Mother Ann Lee of England led a group of eight to America and formed the first village in Albany, N.Y.

Shakers — who got their name from their shake dancing and whirling during worship — believed that Mother Ann was the female counterpart to Christ, said Lisa Rice, tour guide and gift shop manager at South Union.

The Shaker Village at South Union got its start from the Great Revival at Gasper River in 1807. At their most prosperous time in the mid-1800s, the Shakers owned 6,000 acres and had 350 members.

One of the six buildings remaining at South Union is the Centre Family Dwelling House. A cobblestone sidewalk leads visitors from the white picket fence to

the reddish-brown brick dwelling. A red roof tops its four stories.

Forest green shutters match the color of the single door atop the sturdy original steps that are trimmed by wrought-iron railing.

A shiny oak floor greets visitors and twin stairwells connect the 42 rooms — which assured separation of the sexes.

The charm of Shaker culture is reflected in the personality of Eldress Bertha. She and her sister Ethel Hudson, 93, spend their days being cared for by the Canterbury museum staff, nurses and volunteers.

Sister Ethel has become sort of a recluse, living in the Dwelling House and occasionally making her way down to visit the Trustee's House.

Eldress Bertha, who has been blind for five years, is more of a public figure at Canterbury, meeting tourists and talking with

the public.

In 1976, Eldress Bertha and Eldress Gertrude Soule visited South Union. "We went up that long flight of stairs there in the brick house," Bertha said. "Eldress Gertrude was with me and she asked, 'My, how did the older people ever get up these stairs?'"

"Well, we're getting up them, Eldress Gertrude, and we're old," she said.

Eldress Bertha's active present reflects an active past.

For 30 years, she worked in the village, canning fruits and vegetables. She cared for the children and the elderly for the next 27 years.

In 1966, she was appointed trustee, a person who deals with "worldly" people or non-Shakers. In 1971, she was appointed Eldress of Canterbury and is the

only eldress left. Since the covenant closed at Canterbury in 1959 — after the death of their last brother — no one could join the Shaker sect and members couldn't change their titles. The other active Shaker community in Sabbathday Lake, Maine, has accepted a few new members, though.

Restoration of the village at South Union which began in 1976 is nearly complete. The Dwelling House has survived being a farmhand's tenant house after it was sold at auction, said Tommy Hines, museum director at South Union.

The Shakers lived simplistic, clean lives. To keep the floors clutterless, pegs lined each wall to hold chairs, scones and candles. After all, "good spirits will not live where there is dirt," Mother

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INSIDE

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Simple Gifts: The Shakers' Story

Only six Shakers remain worldwide from a utopian society which flourished during the nineteenth century. Although no Shakers live in Kentucky, the state has two Shaker colonies which are still open for visitation, South Union and Pleasant Hill. Story by S. Kaye Summers and Jeanie Adams. Photos by Jeanie Adams.

A Walk on the Wild Side

Western graduate O'Brian McKinley is an easygoing paramedic for Skycare at Louisville's Jewish Hospital and is gung-ho about caring for others. Story by Dana Albrecht. Photos by Chuck Wing.

Dana Albrecht
Magazine editor

Omar Tatum
Photo editor

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Staff applications for Western's award-winning Talisman yearbook are now being accepted. In addition to general staff writers, openings for the 1991 Talisman include editorial positions with the following sections of the book:

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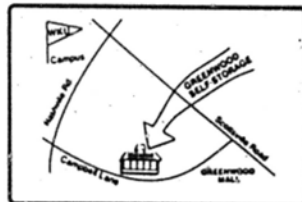
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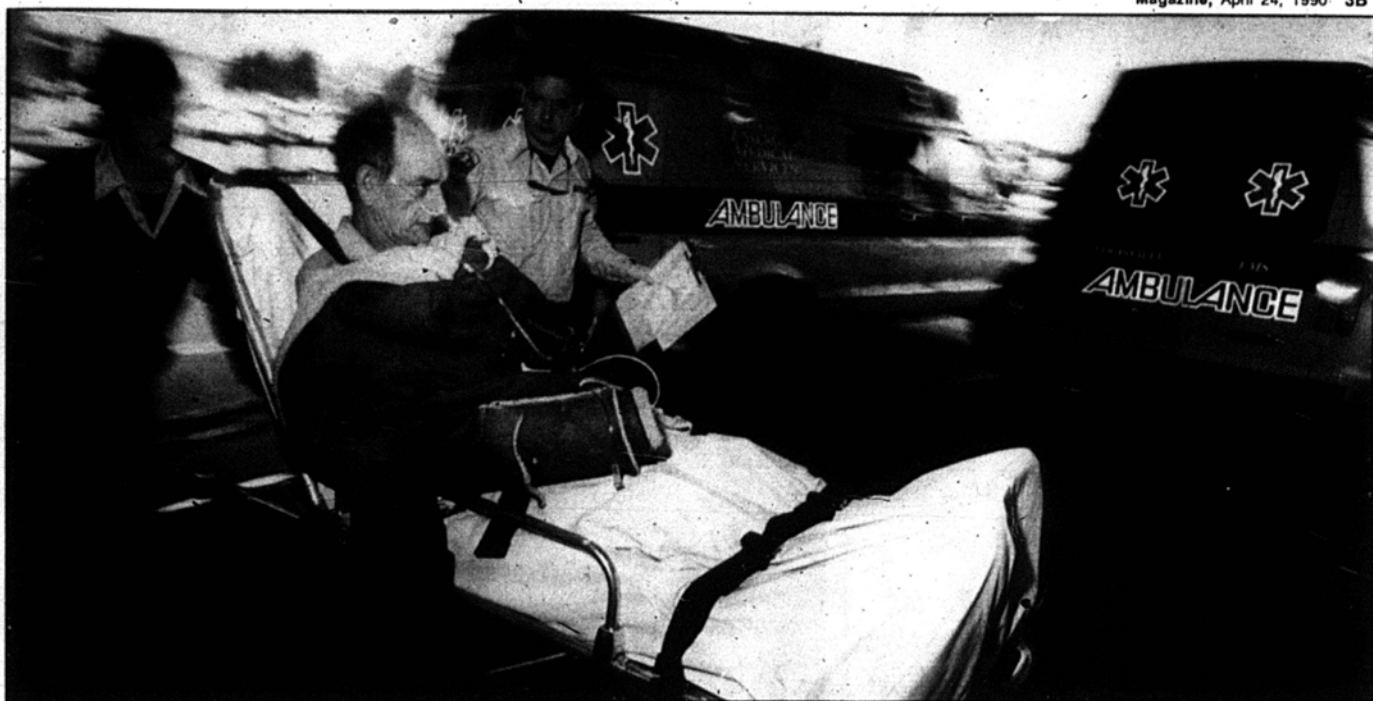
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(Above) Louisville EMS paramedic O'Brian McKinley (right) and EMT partner David Stewart (left) rush a heart patient to Jewish Hospital. (Below) While working as a flight paramedic for Jewish Hospital's Skycare helicopter unit, McKinley jokes with another crew member.

'A walk on the WILD side'

Western graduate enjoys thrill of being a paramedic

An arm and a leg lay like lifeless parts from a horror movie on a steel cart beside O'Brian McKinley as he washed his hands and joked with two men, a paramedic and an Emergency Medical Technician. The pasty white leg with a yellow-calloused foot peeked from under a white sheet.

"Just came from Winchester," McKinley said after splashing water on his sweaty face in a small room at Jewish Hospital in Louisville. He pushed damp brown hair back from bloodshot eyes.

"Was it a good one?" the paramedic asked. He and his partner, who work for Louisville's Emergency Medical Service, had just brought in a patient.

"Yeah, it was a good one," McKinley said.

As they examined the limbs, their jagged tops stained with grease from train wheels, McKinley rinsed the large bowl where they were kept in ice. Still chatting, McKinley cleaned blood off the stretcher and started to leave to fill out reports.

As he walked out of the emergency room's hallway, a doctor passed by. "Yeah," McKinley said after asking about the man's arm and leg. "There's always hope."

Hope was probably the best medicine at the moment, and is something McKinley administers in large doses as a paramedic for

Skycare, Jewish Hospital's helicopter unit, and the city's EMS.

A 1985 Western graduate, McKinley, 26, devotes his life to caring for others. With a gung-ho attitude toward his job and easygoing personality, he lives life like "a walk on the wild side" — to quote one of his frequent sayings.

Three weeks ago, McKinley was on the 8 p.m. to 8 a.m. shift for Skycare, where he works part time. It was around 2 a.m. when he and his partner, chief flight nurse Donna Meador, went to a hospital in Winchester to get the man who had lost his arm and leg after being hit by a train.

Later, McKinley learned Skycare had received two other calls while he and Meador fought for more than an hour to raise the man's dangerously low blood pressure before they could put him on the helicopter. The calls were passed to Statflight, the helicopter unit at Humana Hospital University of Louisville. One of them was a car wreck.

"Aw man," McKinley said, a little disappointed at missing the call. "I want some good trauma."

Because trauma calls such as car accidents go to Statflight, Skycare doesn't get a "scene run" often. Besides microsurgery, Jewish also specializes in heart treatment, and most of Skycare's calls involve picking up heart patients and

amputees and bringing them to Jewish.

But sometimes, when Statflight is on a call and another comes through, it is transferred to Skycare. McKinley likes scene runs.

It's unfortunate bad accidents happen, he said as he and Meador headed to Lexington to pick up a patient with an amputated thumb. But when they do, "I want to be there."

As a boy, McKinley became fascinated with being a paramedic when he watched "Emergency," a television show about paramedics. He even took a course in paramedicine at Western.

But he majored in broadcasting and minored in meteorology, and after graduation, he worked as an audio engineer at Opryland Productions in Nashville.

But paramedicine stayed in the back of his mind, and he decided to give it a whirl.

He trained for six months and then worked a year and a half at Bowling Green's Medical Center, which, he said, has an excellent paramedicine program. He worked for the Henderson County EMS for two years before moving to Louisville.

McKinley has been with Skycare for about two years and EMS for three. At Skycare, he works a few nights a month, and then



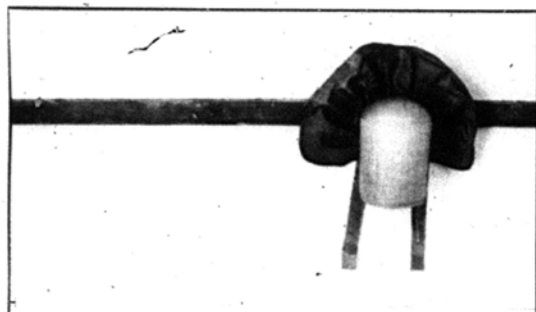
works for EMS from 3 p.m. to 11 p.m. Sunday through Thursday.

"I just loved the thrill of paramedicine and having the ability to save a life and help a person in a time of need," McKinley said.

That thrill puts a gleam in his dark brown eyes when on a code three run — meaning life-threatening — for EMS. Being a

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A dying past



An original Shaker bonnet at South Union. The Shakers made most of their things, such as bonnets.

"I've enjoyed life. It's been a wonderful experience. I've had the joy of taking care of other people's little girls. I think my life has been fulfilled."

Eldress Bertha

Only six Shakers survive

Continued from Page One

Ann said:

Wood trim on white plaster walls holds the original color of ochre made with fish oil and mustard.

Marriage was forbidden by the Shakers. Membership grew from converting people of other faiths and adopting orphaned children. Women lived on the west side of the building; men on the east side.

It was a custom for the women to take care of girls and for the men to take care of the boys. Married couples who joined had to embrace a brother/sister relationship.

Shaker children were given an eighth grade education and at age 21 were given a choice to leave the community. Hall said those who left were given basic necessities — a sack of flour, \$100 and a horse and wagon.

"They were always fair to their people," said Deedy Hall, 85, who calls herself the grandmother of Shakerstown at South Union. If a Shaker didn't want to remain a Shaker, he could leave.

Not all Shakers were loyal, said historian Julia Neal, 86. "There

were always Jack Frosts — here in the winter and gone in the spring."

"I came here (Canterbury) as a little girl of eight," said Eldress Bertha. "By the time I was 18, I was a mama of the younger girls." Eldress Bertha said she doesn't feel that she missed out on life outside the Shakers.

"I've enjoyed life," she said. "It's been a wonderful experience. I've had the joy of taking care of other people's little girls. I think my life has been fulfilled."

Hall's interest in South Union started when she and her husband Curry (now deceased) bought the Shaker sugar maple farm in the '30s.

The Halls inherited some Shaker furniture, and she began to collect more for a bedroom.

After Hall and her mother visited the Shakers at Canterbury, she returned to open a small museum across the street from her home. In 1960, she displayed her Shaker collection at the old Christian Church in Auburn.

"From that day on, the door was

never closed," Hall said. Her collection was moved 10 years later to its original home at South Union.

"After the Civil War, the members weren't nearly as dedicated," Hines said. Their animated shake dancing had even calmed.

Membership at South Union declined to nine in 1922. The village was closed and property was sold at a public auction.

The last nine Shakers at South Union were given a choice: life in an eastern Shaker village or leaving Shaker life with \$10,000.

Only two Shakers chose the trip east because they were unable to take care of themselves, Neal said. Sister Lizzie Simmons and Trustee William Bates moved to Auburn and got married.

The Shaker past is still present today with items such as clothespins, saws, brooms and packaged garden seed. The wooden clothespin was created by Shakers, as well as the circular saw.

Shakers dealt with people from the "outside world" by selling packaged seed, fruits and jellies, brooms, silk and pure-bred cattle.

"Last Call!" declares a yellow-



(Above) In 1845 Shaker membership totaled nearly 4,000 in 18 communities. Now there are six worldwide, including Eldress Bertha Lindsay, 92. Here she sits in her

kitchen in the trustee's house at Shaker Village in Canterbury, New Hampshire. The picture below is the Shaker Village.

A half-mile away from the Centre House is the Shaker Tavern, built in 1869. Massive white columns contrast with other brick buildings. The railroad at its front door supplied the Tavern — a hotel and restaurant — with customers or "people of the world."

Today the Tavern serves food "cooked in a different way," by following Shaker recipes, said owner Barry Redmon. His favorite is the Shaker pot roast with cranberry gravy.

Neal has spent her life documenting the history of Shakers. While she was a sophomore in 1925, Neal wrote her first story about South Union for the College Heights Herald.

After graduating from Western, she taught English here for five years and directed the Kentucky Museum for more than seven years. Neal grew up in Auburn, and now lives in Bowling Green.

Since then, she has written four books about Shaker history, including "The Journal of Eldress Nancy (Moore)" at South Union. It's one of the journals used to write the play for the Shaker Festival held every summer at South Union.

The play, written by the late

Russell Miller, a Western theater professor, incorporates Shaker life and dance.

"The Shaker was said to be the free-est man on earth," Neal said. He was able to make his own choices — without a church, priest or other directions.

About 150 miles away is the second Kentucky village, Pleasant Hill, near Harrodsburg. Twenty-three Shaker buildings grace the rolling green hills, trimmed by limestone and white fences.

Massive limestone steps lead to a double doorway of the Centre Family Dwelling — the center of attention among the other structures. White, limestone blocks stack to make four stories with a dateblock reading "Founded 1824 Finished 1825" in black cursive letters.

Lavender, catnip and ambrosia — a few of the herbs the Shakers used for medicine and flavorings — grow outside the dwelling.

The old mail-stage route splits and runs down the center of Pleasant Hill. At one time it brought trade to and from Lexington and Perryville, Ohio.

But the route brought Civil War invaders, too. As with South Union, the Shakers at Pleasant Hill couldn't recover from the raids made by waves of soldiers

and the blocking of southern markets.

Markets meant money to the Shakers. One of their more profitable products was the flat broom. At one time, Shakers at Pleasant Hill produced 150 brooms a day, resulting in an \$8,000 annual profit, said Garnett Ashford, one of the interpreters who answer visitors' questions.

"There's not a broom on the market that will compare to the Shaker broom," Ashford said, trimming a bundle of corn with a butcher knife.

He still makes brooms on the original 1850 machine with the same materials — broom corn, hemp and wood.

"They were people that were about 20 years ahead of the outside world," Ashford said.

Today, Eldress Bertha's days are filled reminiscing, refilling the birdfeeders, listening to her nurses read to her and making tapes for her many friends.

She still insists on taking tickets (when the tourist season begins), said Wayne Arends, a volunteer and craftsman for the Shakers. "But we are trying to get her to cut down for her own sake."

Arends said Eldress Bertha "has a message and it's not in her words, but who she is."



(Left) Devola Collier, a Shaker interpreter at Shakerstown in Pleasant Hill, waits to take tickets from tourists in the Center House. The interpreters dress in Shaker costumes and act as tour guides. (Below) Allen Crabb, a wagon master at Shakerstown, waits to give a wagon tour.





McKinley signals an OK to pilot Nick Melillo after checking the wheel chocks as they prepare to lift off to pick up a train accident victim at a hospital in Winchester.

'A walk on the **WILD** side'

paramedic is a challenge, he said.

But meeting challenges doesn't stop when the work shift does. It spills over into hobbies such as flying, sailing and scuba diving.

"I like being confronted with challenging situations," McKinley said. "I'm adventurous. I love adventure. That's why I dive. I like to logically think things out."

A code three comes over the radio — a possible stroke. McKinley acknowledges the call through a telephone attached to the console. He flips on the siren and zooms through the narrow streets.

After pulling up beside a brick building, McKinley slips on blue gloves. Then he and Stephen Phillips, McKinley's partner that night, calmly get the equipment they might need from the back of the ambulance. It's not the frenzied rush people see on television about medical emergencies. Being too fast on the job can lead to clumsiness and silly mistakes.

The strong stench of alcohol hits them as they walk into the unfurnished apartment. Bottles and newspapers are scattered on the fading olive-green carpet. A man lays on the floor with his head propped up and the trails of two tears drying on his face. Three other men are standing near him.

The man complains of pain in his side. As McKinley asks him questions and looks him over, Phillips jots down the medication the man uses on a "run sheet."

One man with a black eye keeps interrupting the questions with slurred ramblings, trying to tell them what's wrong. Someone tells him to shut up, but the man continues. McKinley points a gloved finger at him. "You get in the way again, and I'm going to take you to a place with a lot of bars," McKinley tells him in a firm don't-mess-with-me tone.

"Still hurts down here, sir?" he asks the man, gently prodding his abdomen. The man with the black

eye tries to "help" again. "Here you go, sir," he said, holding a green pill in his extended hand.

McKinley ignores him. He and Phillips quickly load the man onto the stretcher and roll him out. "Who called EMS on me?" the man keeps asking accusingly. "I'm gonna kill whoever did."

Once inside the ambulance, McKinley prepares an IV and the EKG. He and Phillips move quickly and efficiently, keeping the man occupied with little chatter as they work.

This is their environment. Everything is under their control. Getting control at a scene is an important aspect of their job — especially when working the sixth district.

The sixth district is the west end — or what McKinley calls the "bullet and Band-Aid district," where "you get all sorts of fun things." Domestic violence is a way of life there, he said, especially in the project housing area nicknamed "the bricks."

For a troublesome or potentially troublesome patient, "you approach him in a hurried manner" and get him out of his environment as quickly as possible, he said. "You always stay one step ahead and try to think what he's thinking. That's why we talk to him a lot."

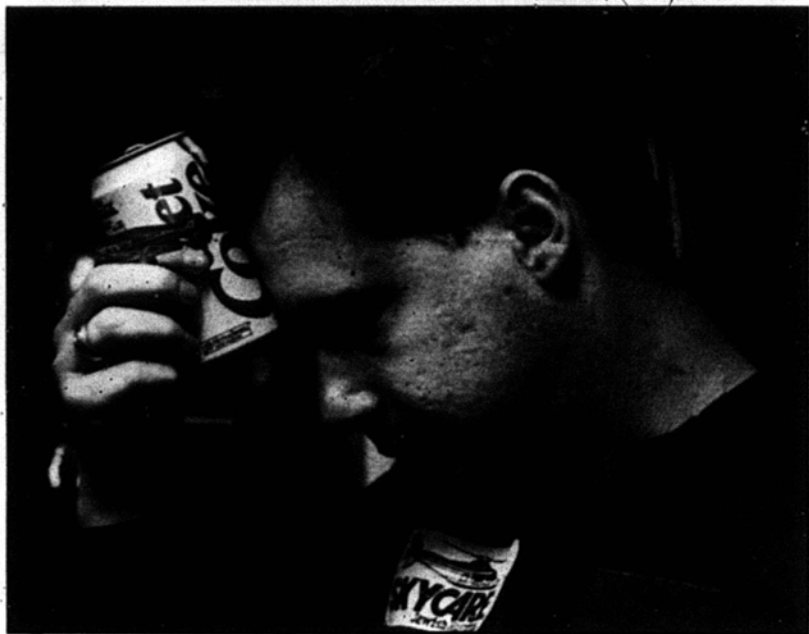
When he began working the district three years ago, it was a culture shock, McKinley said.

"You usually expect the worse, and when you expect the worse, it happens. That's what we call a walk on the wild side."

"It's fun, but it's a dangerous job," Phillips said. "Some places we go to are hostile."

Such places are called "hot scenes." McKinley has been in two, including one with bullets buzzing around. Another was when he treated a woman assaulted by her boyfriend, who barricaded himself in the house next to them with several guns.

But no matter what the danger, "I have a tendency to still go in,"



After a grueling 12-hour shift at Skycare, McKinley cools his head with a soda can as the shift change nears.

McKinley said. "I don't know if I'm a hot dog or what."

His hot-doggedness allows him to help someone no matter how dangerous the situation is. About two weeks ago, he and his regular partner David Stewart, who's on vacation now, received the Mayor's Citation of Valor for Acts of Bravery from Mayor Jerry Abramson — the highest award given to public servants — for rescuing people from a fire.

He happened to cruise down Muhammed Ali Boulevard when he saw flames shooting through the top half of a house. "It was luck that we saw it," McKinley said.

After calling the fire in, he got the people — who didn't know their house was burning — out of the bottom floor. Then he and Stewart dashed upstairs, banging on doors, shouting and looking

for people. But no one else was there.

"He's aggressive on all patients that need good thorough treatment," said Darrell Tedder, one of EMS's operations supervisors.

"He's a good guy," said Capt. Ira Dyer, director of education for EMS. "Give him five of Valium and put him out to save the world, and he'll do it. If you don't give him that, he'll save the Earth and Mars."

And his dedication to saving lives shows in his work not only for Skycare and EMS, but also for Louisville's SORT, Special Operations in Response Team. McKinley was part of a group who formed the team about two years ago to respond to hazardous material spills and fires, water rescue and "things out of the ordinary." The team has a drill

about once a week and has special spacesuit-like uniforms.

"O'B — he knows what he's doing," said Billy Starks, a fellow paramedic and good friend of McKinley's. "He's not a bad paramedic... he's honest and a down-to-earth guy."

He's also a guy with a comic streak.

"He jokes a lot," said his girlfriend Liz Hurley, 29. She is an Emergency Room nurse at Jewish Hospital, where they met more than two years ago.

"Everybody likes him," she said, which is evident as McKinley cruises the streets waving and grinning to people he knows or talking to police officers and fellow workers at his usual district hangouts such as Convenient at 28th and Market streets or the fourth district police sub-station in the bricks.



McKinley's sense of humor and friendliness helped him be a successful Big Red for three seasons at Western. "I thought he was neat when I saw Big Red in high school and thought it would be fun to be him," said McKinley, also a Delta Tau Delta alumnus. As Big Red, "you felt free to express yourself. I loved it."

However, sometimes, "with the way he behaves, people don't know whether he's pulling their leg or not," Hurley said.

But when he gets to an accident scene, he's all business. And McKinley is the first to tell you that.

"I'm a laid back guy. I have fun, and I enjoy my job," he said. "But once I approach a scene, I get serious."

McKinley cares about the people he helps, but is tough when necessary. During a slow night last week, McKinley recalled a run a few months ago when a drunk man tried to get out of an arrest by staging a seizure. So the police called EMS.

Once there, McKinley said he knew the man was faking it and decided to play along. He knelt by the man, who was still shaking around and peeking at the police from under his eyelashes.

"You're doing it wrong," McKinley he told the man as he dropped to the ground and started to shake. Then he began to drool, and told the man he also had to pee in his pants.

The man just stared at him and said to the police, "This guy's nuttier than me."

Laughing at the memory, McKinley said that the police and the crowd were eating it up, making the man angry and curse more.

It's just all in a day's work.

As a paramedic, "I'm basically the eyes and ears of the ER doctor," said McKinley, who is trained to administer IVs and heart medicine, use the EKG, handle labor and delivery and anesthesiology.

The main goal of a run is to get the patient to the hospital quickly, which means the paramedic and the EMT, who knows mainly basic first aid, work as a team.

"If you're slow enough that when seconds turn to minutes and minutes to hours, you haven't done your patient any good," McKinley said. "You don't stay and play — you load and go."

But the most important aspect in any situation is that "safety is first." On some calls, McKinley slows down to size up the scene before stopping. Then he and his partner move cautiously because anybody "can turn on you just like that. You have to watch out for your partner," McKinley said, "and your partner watches out for you."

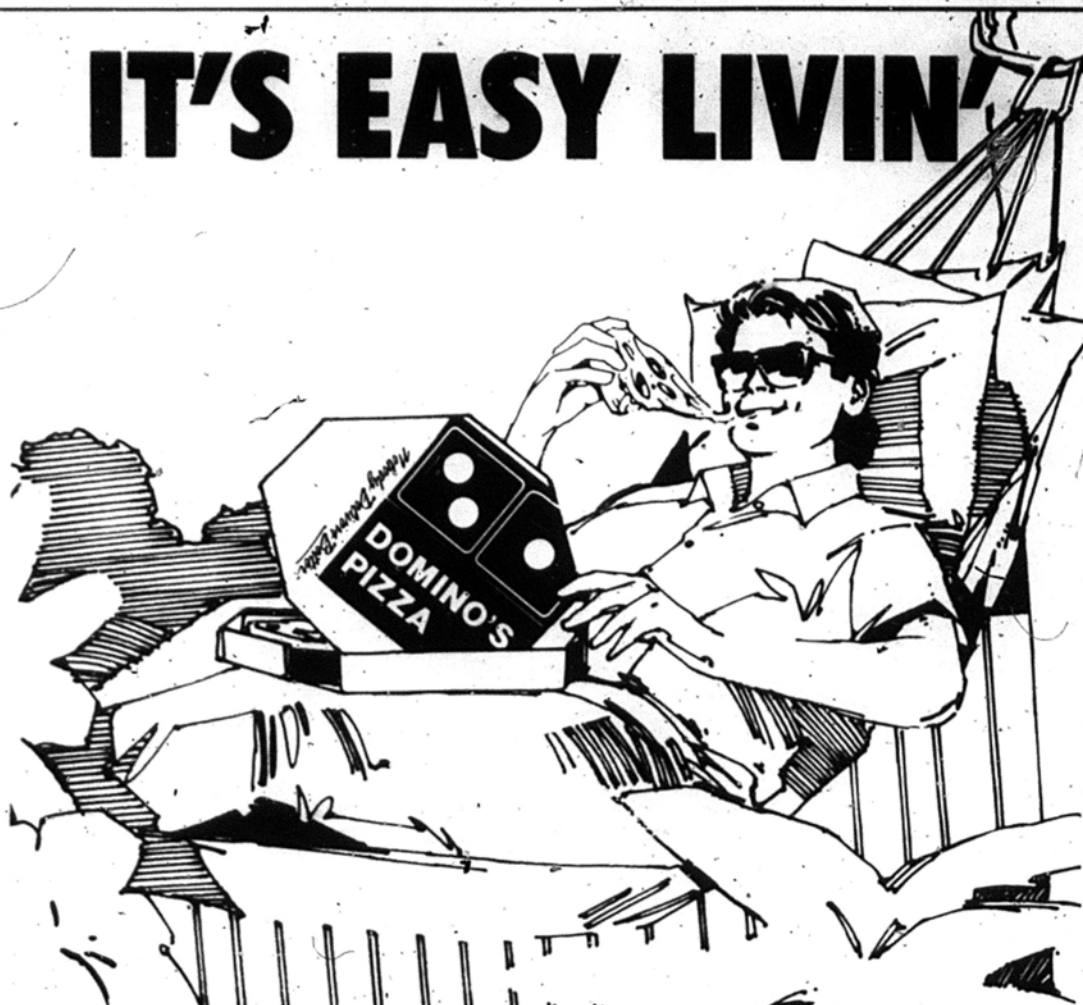
With about two more hours left in his shift Wednesday, another code three comes through. McKinley and EMT partner Robbie Coleman dash from Convenient to the ambulance. As he races through the gray-black evening, Deniece Williams' song "Let's Hear It for the Boy" comes on the radio.

McKinley turns it up just enough to hear and gives the accelerator another boost. The ambulance's lights splash the street signs, leaving a reflected red and white trail behind.

It's time to take another walk on the wild side.

To get easier access to his patient, McKinley saddles an auto accident victim while he prepares a second IV during his shift at EMS.

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