

April Fool's Day prank causes panic on campus

BY NYMPHADORA TONKS
MANAGING EDITOR

An April Fool's Day prank gone wrong ended up causing mayhem on USD's campus.

It started Tuesday morning 7 a.m. when nine students dressed in black and ran to every emergency phone on campus, pressing the button to yell fake crises before running off to the next phone on campus. Public Safety responded and quickly realized that something was wrong when they were not able to locate any of the "victims." Fearing the worst, they issued a mass text message to the student body urging students to stay in their rooms or leave campus due to a university wide threat to safety.

"We responded immediately, thinking this was a real campus emergency. We utilized the campus-wide text message and put on an emergency notice on the marquee at the main entrance," said Chief of Public Safety Richard Stevens.

Classes were cancelled and panic ensued as fearful students reacted to the vague threat cited in the text message. Calls clogged the phone lines as worried parents and students, faculty and staff called, trying to get information.

At 8 a.m. a public safety officer saw five figures dressed in black running into Tecolote Canyon. Thinking they had found the perpetrators, the officer



called all units to the canyon as well as calling SDPD for backup.

Public Safety surrounded the canyon and caught the "criminals" as SDPD was pulling up. Officials were furious when they realized that a serious problem had turned out to be nothing more than a childish prank. The students were handcuffed and spent two days in jail under felony charges of obstructing

public duty and resisting arrest. All but two were caught.

The students were released after USD dropped formal charges, but students are suspended pending their university trial.

"What these students did was deplorable and they will be punished accordingly," President Emily Schulte said.

"It was just an April Fool's joke and

we didn't think it would be taken so seriously," said Maggie Gregorio and Mary Strauss, sophomores who participated in the prank.

While these students wait for their hearing, their fellow classmates have staged a protest, saying the joke was not in any way detrimental to their academic state. In fact, they enjoyed the day off.

Twirling Torero roller coaster to open on campus

BY NEVILLE LONGBOTTOM
CHIEF COPY EDITOR

The university recently gave final approval to a plan to build an on-campus roller coaster. The roller coaster, named the Twirling Torero, is scheduled to open in the fall of 2012.

Groundbreaking will begin next fall, the week students begin classes. The administration decided to delay work on the construction until then in order to best interfere with daily activities on campus.

Plans to build a roller coaster on campus began after a recent survey of 1,000 undergraduate students. In the survey, 733 cited "too much parking" as their main complaint

about USD's campus, while 647 said their main complaint was "not enough roller coasters." Faulty math notwithstanding, a committee was formed to deal with these issues.

The committee decided to address both issues simultaneously by demolishing the Mission Parking Structure and building a roller coaster in its place.

The Twirling Torero will be 300 feet tall and reach speeds up to 72 mph. There will also be two loops.

"I'm always arriving at campus early, and with parking being so simple, I'm always stuck waiting around for half an hour or more for my classes to begin. A roller coaster would really help that time go by faster," said Jessica Walton, a soph-

omore who will not be able to enjoy the roller coaster unless it takes her more than six years to graduate.

Despite how freaking awesome the roller coaster will be, some have voiced concern that demolishing the Missions Parking Structure could interfere with parking.

With so many places to park on campus, getting rid of one should not interfere with parking on a normal day of classes; however, it is possible the construction could affect parking for special events such as basketball games.

"Many of the students who complain about parking don't realize all of their parking options. Students just need to be more creative when it comes to parking," said Michael

Terry, planning commissioner of the building project.

Terry recommends taking a bus, walking or loading oneself in a box with a day's supply of snacks and water and shipping oneself as alternatives for trying to find parking for special events on campus.

Terry, along with the rest of the planning committee, feels that the amount of fun that a roller coaster would provide the campus overrides any slight concerns about problems the ride could cause for parking.

To help quiet dissention, however, parking services is offering tickets for three free rides to any student who purchases a parking pass from now until the Twirling Torero opens.

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