9-4-1996

Crow's Nest : 1996 : 09 : 04

University of South Florida St. Petersburg.
• Someday there could be a touchdown. The university has a plan.

Scott Hartzell
Nest Editor

Daily, they zoom overhead, sometimes at a rate of one every 30 seconds.
When they do, they interrupt the serenity of the University of South Florida St Petersburg campus, flying so low students are able to make eye contact with the pilots.

Considering this flurry of activity that may some day lend itself to an ominous accident, should USF administration and student body be concerned about the planes arriving at or departing from Albert Whitted Municipal Airport?

Dean William Heller is concerned. “We take any emergency that could cause injury to a student or damage to the campus seriously.” The student body has mixed feelings.

Carolyn DeVora, USF St. Petersburg student government president, isn’t worried. “I could be sitting in my living room and a jet from another airport could come crashing down,” she said. “Besides, they (Albert Whitted) were here first.”

David Rissler feels differently. “Odds are eventually one is going to hit.” Steve Johnson, who works in the computer lab, believes “the people using the breezeway linking the Coquina and Davis buildings should worry.”

It’s been rumored some incoming planes have actually made contact with campus roofs. Bob Siwick, captain of the campus police, has looked into this. “There are no tread marks on the roof tops of any of our buildings.” Siwick, who has served on campus for 10 years, continued. “It’s a controlled airspace over there, and that enhances safety.”

But how is that airspace controlled?
Bob Watkins recently answered that question from his airport manager’s office at Albert Whitted. “Aside from their altimeter and air speed gauge, pilots have a fleet of other instruments to bank on.”

Watkins added that Whitted operates under a Precession Approach Path Indicator system, similar to ones used by larger international airports like New York City’s John F. Kennedy and Chicago’s O’Hare. PAPI is a series of eight or-

“Odds are eventually one is going to hit.”
—David Rissler, Student

Please see SAFE page 12.
While walking through the glass sliding doors and turning toward the main area of USF St. Petersburg·s new library, one will feel a sense of peace and calmness. The three-story building is surrounded by glass, providing an open view of downtown St. Petersburg, Albert Whitted Municipal Airport and the Tampa Bay. White, wrought-iron balconies overlook the main floor and couches and chairs flank the left wall of the first floor for students and staff to comfortably sit and read. “It’s more beautiful than we thought it would be.” Jacqueline Jackson, assistant librarian

Oregon artist Robert Calvo designed the three hanging sculptures in the atrium and the bronze artwork throughout the facility, demonstrating both historical and academic themes. A sign inside the display reads: “Their discovery within the building serves as a metaphor for the discovery of ideas that will take place in this new library.”

What is most impressive about the new library is its size: 81,000 square feet, which is twice the size of the old library. The building is equipped with various private reading rooms and separate rooms for copy machines and pay phones. “We now have much more workspace, including our offices. We were so cramped in the old building,” Jackson said.

The library will be offering a new class to teach students how to research over the Internet in addition to the library research and science classes already being offered. Other new features include a distance learning lab, more computers available for students to access the library catalogs and databases, and a special collections department. “We will now be able to display all the valuable memorabilia that has been donated to us,” Jackson said.

The library staff spent more than 50 hours labeling shelves, furniture and equipment in preparation for the professionals who were hired to help with the transition. “The actual move was very efficient,” Jackson said of the three-day task.

The old library is currently being renovated and will reopen next year. Herman Brames, director of Administration and Finance, said “The first floor is going to be a big, wide corridor with service windows off the corridor.”

All student affairs offices including the business office, financial aid and career planning will be on the first floor, along with personnel and purchasing offices.

The entire second floor will house the computer lab, the Dean’s office and possibly classrooms. “The new computer lab will have three open-use labs and one writing lab,” said Jim Cowan, lab manager.

The computer lab will also be retiring most of the older computers and replacing them with new ones. “By the time we get into the new lab we will have 150 workstations available to students,” Cowan said.

The renovations should be completed by May or June of 1997, Brames said. “We are also reviving the name Bayboro Hall for the renovated building.”

CLOSE THE BOOK: Renovations are underway for new Administration offices and computer labs.
A ROOM WITH A VIEW: More students will have the chance to study by the bay.

A HANDY REMINDER: Robert Calvo's sculpture makes virtue an art.

CLOSED QUARTERS: Students no longer have to scramble for a meeting place.

CHANGING SKYLINE: Contemporary architecture brightens bayboro harbor.

FALSE ADVERTISING: The old library is closed for good.

Welcome to the new Nelson Poynter Memorial Library

PHOTO ESSAY BY JIM SHARP
A glitch in the system bogs down the CCC

Ferdinand DeVega
Nest Staff

Amy Hopkins' job seems simple enough: She helps students find work. But as director of the Counseling and Career Center (CCC) at USF St. Petersburg campus, her job recently became a little more complicated.

The week before fall class began, Hopkins was notified of changes to the center's computer system, changes instituted by the university's branch campuses. She had to quickly adjust and learn how to operate the new system.

"The sticking point... is that Tampa constantly does this, and they do it in all areas," Hopkins said. "They (CRC) had... an opportunity to switch to an Internet-based system rather than a DOS based system, which means that students would have access from home or from any computer that has access to the Internet," Hopkins said. "They felt they had to do it."

Since the day she was told of the CCC's decision to go with the new academic software system, Hopkins has attempted to correct the problems that have accompanied the change so that students will not be too inconvenienced.

"It's not like everything is totally different, but it's different enough," — Amy Hopkins, director of the CCC

Words from the Wellness Center

Surgeon General warns us: Get fit!

Sandy Blood
Nest Staff

The U.S. Surgeon General recently released a report on physical activity and health. This landmark report is anticipated to redefine the role of physical activity in the improvement of health and quality of life for all Americans. Health professionals, such as myself, hope this report will have a significant impact on the public's perception of the importance of exercise much the same way the Surgeon General's report on smoking redefined the perception of the effects of smoking on an individual's health and well-being.

The report states that health benefits are achieved by weekly moderate exercise. This means you do not have to be an elite athlete to derive health benefits, you just need to get up and get moving. Moderate physical activity is defined by the Surgeon General as using 150 calories of energy a day, or 1,000 calories a week. Walking for 30 minutes, swimming laps for 20 minutes, washing and waxing a car for 45 to 60 minutes or pushing a stroller a mile and a half in 30 minutes are examples of moderate physical activity.

The report states that exercise will not only reduce the risk of dying from coronary disease, but also cut the chance of developing diabetes, hypertension and colon cancer. It enhances mental health, fosters healthy muscles, bones and joints and helps maintain function and preserve independence in older adults. With all the benefits you may achieve, it seems obvious that we all must incorporate exercise into our daily lifestyles.

As students of the University of South Florida St. Petersburg, you are encouraged to use the Campus Fitness Center located in the Campus Activities Center. You need to complete an equipment orientation prior to using the fitness center. You may schedule an appointment by calling 893-9589. Also, please feel free to stop by my office for additional information concerning all health and wellness issues. I'm available on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. in DAV 116.

This space available. Cheap.

Call Rob Hypicio at 553-3113.
The Doctor is OUT

Scott Hartzell
Editor

Call him Dr. Moreau.
He's obscure. He's demented. He's responsible for the creation and subjugation of an island of bizarre creatures that crawl, growl, screech and leap out at you in director John Frankenheimer's The Island of Dr. Moreau.

Sound interesting?

It should. Writers Richard Stanley and Ron Hutchinson base their screenplay upon the novel of the same name by H.G. Wells. But despite its origin, this cinematic version of Wells' literary masterpiece is far from interesting. For the record, Hollywood has honored Wells' classic twice before - in 1933 (The Island of Lost Souls) and in 1977 (The Island of Dr. Moreau).

The '96 Moreau mistakenly wraps itself around a mundane theme immediately. It then embraces a sluggish plot and sinks. Updated, and given a futuristic feel, Frankenheimer's film drags audiences to nowhere as it meanders along.

To ask if it was necessary to convert the 100-year-old novel to film for a third time just might be second guessing the talented Frankenheimer - creator of such classics as The Manchurian Candidate and Bird Man of Alcatraz.

Besides, his reason was obvious. We are living in troubled times, and although it's not a violent film, violence is what The Island of Dr. Moreau is all about.

Regardless, Frankenheimer can't be happy with this movie. Wasting 114 minutes to discover what a 10-second glance at today's headlines would reveal, most viewers will become depressed instead of impressed with this film that touts anti-violence.

Marlon Brando stars as the docile yet fearful Moreau, a genetic scientist striving to create the perfect being. Residing with him is his daughter Aissa, played seductively by The Craft's Fairuza Balk. Always lurking close by is his assistant Montgomery, portrayed by Val Kilmer, who is rapidly becoming a perfect player of the deeply disturbed.

“We are living in troubled times, and although it's not a violent film, violence is what The Island of Dr. Moreau is all about.”

Please see DOCTOR page 8.
Chain Reaction
It’s about water and energy, and it’s all wet. Keanu Reeves and Morgan Freeman star. Freeman’s OK. Reeves drowns right along with the screenplay. (PG-13 — 98 min.)

Courage Under Fire
Meg Ryan’s cutey appeal goes AWOL in this Gulf War drama about a gutsy medevac pilot who might be the first female to receive the Medal of Honor. Denzel Washington excels. (R- 120 min.)

Escape From L.A.
Snake Plissken is back (Just call him Snake). This one works, but only if you haven’t seen the original. Director John Carpenter demonstrates limited creativity by allowing scenes and dialogue to be stolen from this one’s prequel, Escape From New York. (R- 98 min.)

The Fan
Robert De Niro can flash a wide, squinty-eyed smile and then quickly snap into a cold, heartless sneer like no one else. He performs that magic act repeatedly in director Tony Scott’s baseball film also starring Wesley Snipes and Ellen Barkin. If you like thrillers, The Fan will steal your attention and slide safely into your lap of approval. (R-115 min.)

Fargo
Perhaps the finest film so far this year, and it’s still out there. Frances McDormand skillfully portrays an amiable police chief of a small burg who goes about her work with a cool matter of factness, all while being obviously pregnant. It’s the Coen brothers (Raising Arizona) at their best. (R — 99 mins.)

The Frighteners
Michael J. Fox stars as a ghostbuster who financially milks residents of a small town with a haunting con. Jeffery Combs (Re-animator) as a paranoid law man is the highlight of this film that moves at a frightening pace, but tries to do too much, especially on the special effects end. (R-105 min.)

Independence Day
Is there anyone out there who hasn’t seen this one? Aliens invade, we lose the White House and a lot more. Jeff Goldblum, Will Smith and Bill Pullman attempt to save the day in this sci-fi drama with a space-ship full of special effects. Hollywood has done better, however, when dealing with our alien fears in films like The Day the Earth Stood Still and Aliens. (PG-13 — 154 min.)

Jack
Don’t expect a riotous comedy here. Robin Williams is a 10-year-old boy in a 40-year-old body in this sometimes funny, sometimes sad story. Williams has his moments, and the kids are cute. It’s the twist and turns from humor to despair that might age this film for most. (PG-13 — 115 min.)

Kansas City
It’s jazzy music. It’s dirty politics. It’s Harry Belafonte Jr. excelling as Sel­dom Seen, a club-owning gangster circa 1934. Jennifer Jason Leigh, Miranda Richardson and Steve Buscemi also star in this slick crime drama by director Robert Altman.

The Nutty Professor
Eddie Murphy returns in a BIG way as an oversized college instructor in this remake of the 1963 Jerry Lewis comedy. Fitting in is the message, but who cares about a message when your sides are splitting. Laughs abound as Murphy plays six different roles. (PG-13 — 100 min.)

Tales from the Crypt: Bordello of Blood
Ghouls just want to have fun in this horrific tale about seductive vampire prostitutes who dispose of their Johns after sharing sex. Ouch. Highbrow comic Dennis Miller stars as the cop who investigates. (R — 87 min.)

A Time To Kill
Assault, murder, fidelity and revenge drive viewers through this fine drama based upon the John Grisham novel of same name. Matthew McConaughey performs like a young Paul Newman, and Samuel L. Jackson is vibrant. Sandra Bullock adds color. Just go see it. (R-144 min.)

Trainspoting
A group of Scottish heroin junkies display their need for addiction in this excellent film by Danny Boyle. It’s downbeat. It’s upbeat. It’s worth seeing — a couple of times.

The Truth About Cats & Dogs
This is an ugly-duckling story about a radio station. It’s also pretty funny. High-lights: Janeane Garofalo will win your heart, and it also stars Uma Thurman...and Uma Thurman...and Uma Thurman. (PG-13 — 97 mins.)
The groove of Beck

Neil Price
Nest Music Critic

Come join the fun as we travel through the mental highways and byways of one of today's most wacky, inventive and certainly eccentric musicians in the growing world of new music. Being one of the best young male musicians to emerge in recent years, 20-year-old Beck tries to prove he can accomplish much with his latest album, Odelay.

The accomplishments he achieves are many and marvelous in his third album, the first being the independent Ultra-Soulmarine, and the second Mellow Gold. On Odelay, Beck sets out to accomplish the unthinkable - to combine as many different styles of music as possible and leave the listener with a good sounding record. Classical, jazz, blues, soul, funk, latin, country, hip-hop, folk, punk and finally rock are all present on this album with great ingenuity and even better results.

As the character who assaulted our auditory senses a few years ago with the infamous Gen-X anthem "Loser," from the Mellow Gold album, he has many critics to court and appease. Although, I am under the impression that he couldn't care less as to what the establishment felt about the validity of his musical creativity.

And what creativity does he have? Plenty. On Odelay, his second foray into mainstream music, he presents the listener with an unbelievable amount of rhythm and energy. It shows off his talent for melding many soundscapes and rhythms into a cozy and wonderful groove that hooks you right in.

Beck was helped in this process of creation by two of the best electronic wizards in the field, the Dust Brothers, a.k.a. Mike Simpson and John King. They are the producers that propelled the Beastie Boys into their current style of music and mayhem, with the underrated Paul's Boutique. The Dust Brothers bring with them years of experience and knowledge that Beck seems to feed off in creating this masterpiece.

I found it easy to absorb the melodies from some of the tracks as if I've known them for years. From the opening track, "Devils Haircut" to the closing freestyle of "Ramshackle," Beck provides solid entertainment for the listeners. It was hard not to fall in love with the guitar and electronic rhythms that he throws around, especially on the countrypunk.

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So jump on board and come along on the scenic route of one person's imagination that certainly will amaze and inspire delight in all who care to listen.

Album rating — ★★★★★

(Albums are rated from 1 to 5 stars)
It is Montgomery who plucks Edward Douglas (David Thewlis of Dragonheart fame) from the Java Sea after Douglas' plane goes down while en route to a United Nations' peace summit. Montgomery then deceives the diplomat, convincing him to come to Moreau's island, where he is made prisoner. During an escape attempt, Douglas discovers gruesome creatures with half-human, half-animal features — the results of the doctor's dabbling with genetic engineering. They are Moreau's children, who grovel at his feet for much of the remaining 75 minutes of this pitiful film — until they get tired of it.

While portraying the infamous doctor, Brando does occasionally allow his classic style to surface. Sporting sunglasses and a blinding white robe, with his skin covered by a pearly cream, Brando offers up a mysterious and odious character reminiscent of Apocalypse Now's Colonel Kurtz.

In addition, Oscar winner Stan Winston (Aliens, Terminator II and Jurassic Park) deserves accolades for his creation of Moreau's beastly subjects, and Frankenheimer does his best to direct a poor script. But neither Brando, Winston nor the acclaimed Frankenheimer can save the tedious viewing within The Island of Dr. Moreau.

Film rating — 🎭 ⭐⭐⭐⭐
(THis film is rated from 1 to 5 stars)
UPCOMING EVENTS

Back-To-School Splash! • Friday • Sept. 4 • 5-10 PM • Poolside
Free soda, food, DJ, Jesse Mitchell’s “Oldies but Goodies” & beer. Open to the USF community & their guests only - bring your USF ID.

LECTURE: “Like Judgement Day: The Story of Rosewood”
by Arnett Doctor • Monday • Sept. 9 • 11:30 AM -12:30 PM • CAC-109
Soon to be a major motion picture by John Singleton, this is the story of Rosewood, a mostly black town that was virtually wiped out by the Ku Klux Klan in 1923. Doctor, a descendant of three Rosewood families and the man who brought this story to light after nearly 70 years, shares both the tragedy and the redemption that was finally won for the survivors.

TUESDAY MOVIE MADNESS: “Crimson Tide”
September 10 • 10 AM, 1 PM & 4PM • CAC-109
Enjoy free popcorn & 25c drinks.

Psychic Fair • Thursday • Sept. 12 • 3-7 PM • CAC-Core
10-minute readings. 30c USF ID, 50c Others.

WEDNESDAY JAM at the USF COFFEEHOUSE: Cry Blue
Sept. 18 • 5-7 PM • Bayboro Cafe
Enjoy $2 mugs and 25c refills while listening to the alternative jazz and rock sounds of Cry Blue.

Greek Week: Honoring the Past, Embracing the Future
September 16 - 21

Monday:
Sample Greek Deserts
10AM-Dave Davis Lobby
“Greek Myth as Equipment for Living”
by Robert Hall, PhD
11:30 AM CAC-109

Tuesday:
Greek Band Orpheus
11 AM - 1 PM Harbordside
Kefi Greek Dancers & Commentary
5:30 PM CAC-Core

Wednesday:
“Great Myths & Tarot Cards”
by Valerie Kimbell
11:30 AM CAC-109

Thursday:
“Greek Dance: From Belly to Line Dancing”
by Valerie Kimbell
11:30 AM CAC-109
Movie: “Jason & the Argonauts”
1:30 & 5:30 PM CAC-109

Friday:
“A Celebration of Greek Heritage”
Nan Colton’s “Classical Legend: Timeless Adventures,” Lavendia
Greek Dancers & refreshments
7 - 9:30 PM CAC-Core

Saturday:
Grekian Family Fest
10 AM CAC-Core
“Classical Adventure Tales,” Kefi
Greek Dancers, Greek make-n-take crafts, refreshments & more.

Looking for a great deal on fun stuff?

USF Fun Stuff
Non-Credit Courses
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 9 - 23

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USF Fun Stuff
Non-Credit Courses
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 9 - 23

Kickin’ Cardio Combos
Wednesdays & Fridays beginning September 11 at 9 AM. Fee: $4/class

Introduction to the Tarot
6-week course beginning Thursday September 12. Fee: $40/course

Meditation Class
Mondays beginning September 16 at 7 PM. Fee: FREE!

Middle Eastern Bellydancing
Tuesdays beginning September 17 at 6:30 PM. Fee: $5/class

Developing Intuition
6-week course beginning Wed. September 18 at noon. Fee: $40/course

Yoga Workshop
Thursdays beginning September 26 at 7 PM. Fee: $5/class

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## Death and taxes — taxes are death

We are in the middle of a presidential election year with exciting possibilities and grave implications. Taxation and debt have a stranglehold on our economy and our future. The time to do something about it is now.

For the first time in more than 40 years, the Republicans control both houses of Congress. We have a chance to discard the yoke of oppressive taxes and the tyranny they invoke. Fortunately, we can use democratic institutions to make these changes without suffering the bloodshed and disruption that usually accompany such a revolt. (Remember the Boston Tea Party?)

Our tax code now has more words in it than the Bible! It has become so convoluted and corrupted with decades of pandering and vote buying that it has lost any hint of integrity. A Republican president, along with a Republican Congress, will scrap this patchwork of corruption and write a clear fair code.

Our federal debt is heading out of control. We are now spending about a third of the money the IRS takes in just to pay the interest on the debt. Imagine any family or business trying to survive like that.

You say, “It has not affected me.” Well, so far it has not, at least not terribly. Although the federal government has a huge debt, financial institutions at home and abroad have been willing to continue to lend the government money. If, however, we show we are unable to control our spending (i.e., vote for Bill Clinton and continue the status quo), these financial institutions may change their minds.

Under such circumstances, the federal government will have to print money to pay the debt. Inflation will escalate, and the dollar will crash like the peso. All of our savings would be worthless, and those on a fixed income would find themselves with even less purchasing power.

Bob Dole and the Republican Congress have promised to pass an amendment requiring a balanced budget, and they promise to balance that budget. This would relax the fears of financial institutions and lower inflation and interest rates. Meanwhile, the economy would grow.

Much debate on social issues—like abortion, crime, drugs, welfare, busing, affirmative action, gay people in the military, the role of the family and funding for the arts—will follow. The Republican Party does not have all the answers. These problems have been argued back and forth for decades. Like a prism, they look completely different when viewed from the different standpoints of compassion, justice, faith, morality, selfishness, selflessness and science.

Accordingly, for one to decide on one party or another based on social position is impractical. One should look at the definable issue of economics and vote accordingly. Remember, without a strong economy, we will have no power to effect the social changes necessary for our families and neighborhoods to prosper—much less our nation.

## Making the choice: Mac or IBM

### “IBM is the way of the world.”

“No, no, no. Macintosh was designed for real humans.”

Sound familiar? It should. It’s the on-going and tiring debate between two irreconcilable computer camps.

While working in the computer lab here at USF, the question of which machine I would buy was posed to me daily. I’ve used both systems and found each have their distinct advantages and disadvantages. I’ll sift through the rhetoric of it all, but first I’ll make known my computer experience.

At about 10 years old, my parents bought me a Commodore VIC 20 with 4K of RAM (my newest IBM compatible has 32 megabytes of RAM, about an 8,000% increase, and 2 gigabytes of hard drive memory). I remember when my Dad got our first “real computer.” It was an IBM.

### Apple 2E with 64K of RAM—we had arrived! But things kept growing and changing and the PC mentality had its affect. I, too, joined the PC mantra: “IBM owns the world.” Nevertheless, my own anti-establishment sentiment makes me support the Apple concept. Besides, there has to be a little guy out there to keep the big boys on their toes.

Bascially, four things should be considered when purchasing a home computer: price, compatibility, reliability and user friendliness. IBM compatibles tend to be lower priced because of competition. In fact, a comparable PC could run five hundred dollars less than a Mac. One should consider, though, that with many companies building PC Pentium-based units, quality may be lacking with some models.

If you opt to buy a Mac, you can rest assured it is well-built and well-supported. But because of the recent corporate restructuring of Apple, Macs carry some instability. Their instability is related to a marketing scheme that makes one company the manufacturer of Macs. Only Apple can build a Mac, and no one else is welcome to join in. By not allowing the Mac to be cloned, Apple Corporation has shrunk their market.

In contrast, the PC operating system is so widely cloned that almost 85 percent of the personal computers in the world are PC compatible.
Whatever you do, don't eat my twinkies

I just made a major lifestyle change. A roommate has walked into my life—again. Call it an attempt to rediscover my youth or a feeble attempt to save money. I'm not sure which.

One thing’s for certain however. It’s nice to open the fridge and see more than a bottle of ketchup and some left over Chinese food which is about to breed some kind of new worm-like species. Kind of like those old Japanese monster movies — *It Came from the Frozen Food Section or The Chow Mein That Devoured St. Petersburg.* I can always count on my roommate to have something that isn’t too far past the expiration date.

And roommates always have a supply of things you run out of at the most inopportune times. Toilet paper, toothpaste and shampoo top the list. The odds of both of you running out of these at the same time are roughly the same as the Bucs going to the Super Bowl. Another plus is having an entire closet of somebody else’s clothes, especially when you let the laundry pile up a bit. Talk about your monster movies, you should see my closet. Of course, underwear is off limits. I don’t care how desperate I am, wearing somebody else’s underwear is down right disgusting. Well, another guy’s underwear anyway.

**CHOICE**

*continued from page 11.*

this tremendous market share that catches the eye of computer shoppers. We all want to know we can get whatever piece of software (or hardware) we fancy. But remember, as many as 10,000 software programs exist for the Mac—how many does one need?

Apple’s ease of use has created a massive effort to equal the Apple concept of using software. We all want to know we can programs exist for the Mac—how many does one need? Windows 95 is simply a massive effort to equal the Apple concept of using folders and visual metaphors instead of the text based command structure of MS-DOS.

One could also say that PC’s are obsolete the day after you buy them. Old PC hardware is usually useless, and Mac hardware tends have a longer life span. In addition, the idea of “Plug and Play” hardware has been a reality in Macs for 10 years. “Plug and Play” is a term for Windows 95 ability to detect a new piece of hardware and automatically make configurations that once had to be made manually by the user.

One last word of advice. Whatever system you buy, get at least 16 megabytes of RAM, at least one gigabyte hard drive, and a 28.8 baud modem for surfing the Internet. When possible, add on a 16-bit sound card for multimedia applications and a CD-ROM drive.

By the way, that reminds me, I tried to live with a female roommate for a few months. I didn’t attempt to wear her underwear, but we still didn’t get along really well. All she talked about was her cat and her boyfriend, both of whom were equally talkative. Needless to say, I spent a lot of time in my room that semester.

You can’t, however, ignore the negatives of having a co-habiting life form. Harrowing experiences do occur. Like when you’ve been looking forward to eating that last Twinkie and drinking that tall glass of milk after a long day of work and school, only to find the milk jug with half a swig left and an empty Twinkie wrapper on the counter.

It makes you want to do bad things man, bad things.

Bill, my current roommate, and I used to live with another guy who actually hid his food in his room. I guess he hoped the smell of dirty laundry would protect his stash from us. All this did, however, was revert us back to our primitive instincts and sent us searching for the Oreos and beef jerky like hunters after a woolly mammoth.

Actually, it was after one of those expeditions that I nearly got busted. I was stuffing my face with the aforementioned Oreos when I heard the front door open. I was caught literally with my hand in the cookie jar.

Worming my way out of that mess seemed impossible, because talking with a mouth full of those delicious little cookies was more difficult than finding something to do in St. Petersburg after 9 p.m. Luckily, it was Bill — my partner in crime — not the other roommate. He happily joined in on the carnage.

Although I enjoyed them, those Oreos proved to me that privacy is a luxury where conspiring roommates are concerned.

Fortunately, Bill and I have known each other since seventh grade, so privacy isn’t much of an issue. Except for those embarrassing moments when one of us is suppose to be out for the night, only to come barging in unexpectedly while the other is having a particularly romantic moment with a female friend. Enough said.

Money’s another issue when having a roommate. Saving it never happens. All those nights you were good and cooked at home when you lived alone are quickly replaced by running to Bennigan’s for a few drinks or calling Hungry Howie’s for a large pepperoni pizza with Cajun crust.

I’ve had more pizza in the past two months than all of last year combined. Bad things, man, bad things.

Overall, however, the positives usually outweigh the negatives of having a roommate. Having one is kind of having a co-cker spaniel. Bill, for one, is always happy to see me. Now if I can get him to stop peeing on the floor when I get home, everything will be perfect. I have to go now. I think the chow mein is about to do it’sself in the top shelf of the freezer.

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ground lights that serve as a signal. Their color is an indicator to pilots regarding their plane’s altitude and approach to the airport. They can be seen from as far away as three miles, allowing sufficient time for pilots to make any necessary adjustments said Watkins.

Practice exercises known as “touch and go” require pilots to approach the airport, briefly touch down and take off again. Watkins said these exercises are forbidden on runway 6/24, the runway that handles air traffic over the campus. Additionally, 6/24 is closed from 9 p.m. to 7 a.m. daily.

Finally, Watkins said there are few of the approaches to Whitted that are over water, lowering the possibilities of accidents amid population.

Of course, the Federal Aviation Administration does its share to insure safety.

Planes are required by the FAA to be annually inspected by a licensed mechanic. Any mechanical problem must be corrected or the plane is grounded. Fines are levied against pilots not in compliance.

According to Watkins, the FAA does background checks on all applying for a pilot’s license. Those having a history of drug abuse, suicide or depression will in most cases be denied a license. If a licensed pilot ever receives a DUI, his license is revoked.

Pilots must also undergo a one hour ground review and a one hour air testing at the hands of a certified FAA inspector every two years. These measures do help.

“No aircraft has ever actually wound up on campus,” said Bill Dorr, a law enforcement officer who has served on the campus police force 24 years.

With a per-month average of over 10,000 operations (take-offs and landings) at Whitted, there have been only three recent accidents. A Piper Cherokee went down on Sixth Street South in April of 1995.

A V-25 Bonanza went into the Bay just north of the Pier in June of 1996 and a Piper Aztec splashed down in the Bay one month later.

Going back 12 years, Whitted has experienced 19 accidents. That’s 19 events in about 2,280,000 operations.

Such a low accident rate per operation reaffirms Watkins’ faith in air travel. “You are eight times more likely to have an accident on the way to the airport than on a plane.”

Ron Mønseth, owner of Bay Air at Whitted for 13 years, agrees. “Accidents are remote, and are usually only fatal to those on board when they involve small aircraft,” he said.

“If one hit the new campus library, the roof might be disturbed.”

Bill Busston of the Experimental Aircraft Association explained another safety feature regarding flying. “Unlike automobile accidents where things happen so fast, most aircraft accidents involve more than one thing going wrong.” Busston’s point: Because it’s usually a chain of errors that cause most mishaps, pilots have more time to correct a problem.

Watts discussed another calming fact: No airplane flying in or out of Whitted ever carries toxic or explosive materials.

In spite of extensive preventive measures and numerous safety regulations, however, Watkins said, “You can never guarantee that an accident will not happen.” With that said, is the university prepared to deal with an airplane mishap if one ever occurred?

“We feel confident we can deal with any emergency in an effective manner,” said Dean Heller. The university’s Emergency Operations Plan enables Heller to speak with confidence. It’s purpose — as spelled out in its multitude of pages — sets the course of action to be taken during any on-campus emergency, including airplane crashes.

The plan, which is available for public perusal, establishes a Campus Emergency Operations Staff — a group of 14; including the campus dean, the university directors and the U.S. Army Reserve. According to Heller, they meet twice a year to insure they are prepared to fulfill their responsibilities as outlined in the plan.

“We have our procedures in place to deal with an airplane crash if it happens,” Heller said.