



Helpline answers all

By Lynn Silhasek

What do you do when you get a phone call from a person asking for help because his teeth turned black after eating some soup?

Merrit Warren doesn't laugh. Nor does he hang up.

As a staff member of Helpline, he reaches for the Betty Crocker Cookbook. Or the world almanac. Or the Poison Control Center telephone number if everything else fails.

Warren and the six other students who staff the campus telephone information and counseling service (Helpline) don't get calls about black teeth every night.

More than trivia questions

The calls they do receive include more than just the "how-far-is-it-from-Lincoln-to-Bozeman, Montana," trivia question, according to Craig Johnson, Helpline director.

Those who have dialed Helpline's number, 472-3311, include people with drinking problems, people wanting information about venereal disease, and people who are just lonely, Warren said.

According to Johnson, Helpline receives one or two personal crisis calls a day. The procedure for these calls is to provide "emotional first aid," to help the people feel better at the end of the call by getting them to talk about their feelings, Johnson said.

Helpline staff members then may refer the person to other community agencies that can provide long-term counseling or treatment, he said.

Advice limited

Phone counselors are limited in the amount of advice they can give callers "because all the person has to do is hang up the phone" if he or she doesn't like what the counselor says, Johnson said.

Another factor limiting phone counseling is that a large part of communication is nonverbal "and we can't tell (facial expressions and gestures) over the phone," he said.

Most callers, (including both students and faculty) who phone about personal problems call because they find it easier to talk to counselors and remain anonymous than to talk to a person face to face, Johnson said.

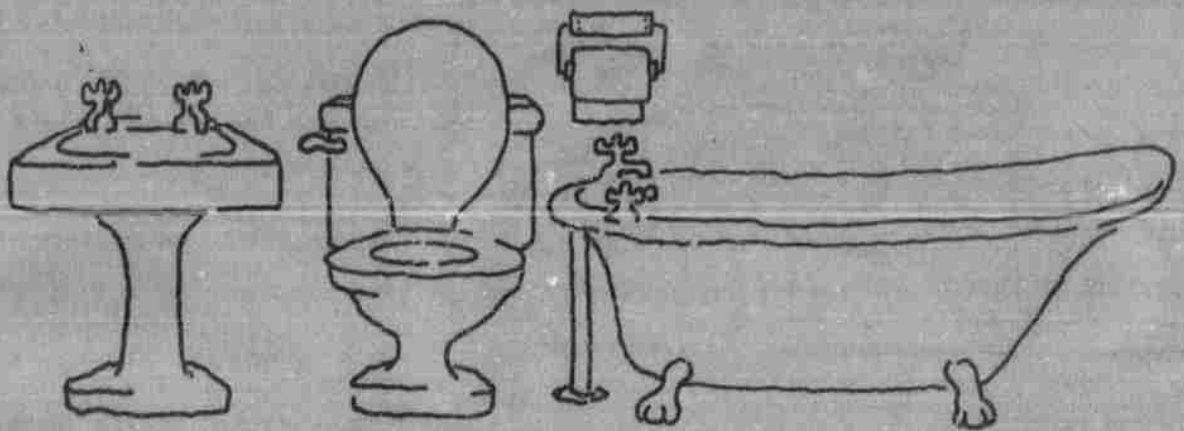
Requests for phone numbers

But nearly 35 per cent of the 2,000 calls Helpline receives monthly are requests for student phone numbers and addresses, Johnson said. Helpline has names, numbers and addresses of currently enrolled students.

And in preparation for the trivia calls, staff members have on hand a battery of maps, bulletins, textbooks, statistics and an index containing information about everything from the name of Sky King's airplane ("Songbird") to the names of Santa's reindeer.

And a calculator, for requests such as, "How many kernels of corn are in a 50-lb. bag of seed corn?"

The answer? Johnson said he told the caller to take a random sample of 250 kernels, weigh them and transfer the weight into pounds. Divide the pounds by 250, and then by 50 pounds, he said, and the answer will be within 5 per cent of the correct number.



How's your bathroom consciousness?...

feeling incomplete about your bathroom...raise your consciousness level at our color-coordinated-everything-for-the-bath-store..wicker furniture, gorgeous linens, unheard of toilet seats....

Grand opening this week....

(across from King Dollar on Vine)
weekdays 10-6 thursday 10-9 saturday 10-4

coordinated
Fashions
ofashions
COORDINATED BATH FASHIONS
Giebelhaus Plumbing & Heating Inc.
832 N. 27th 432-4915

Do You Have Your Football Mug Yet?

For the person who has everything...

For recreation
For your room
For the office



(only \$2⁵⁰ for the mug & 6 filler cups)

J.B.'s Big Boy

701 N. 27th at 27th & Vine

FRIDAY ONLY

6.98 ALBUMS
YOUR CHOICE

3.99 EACH

with this ad (Limit 1 per Customer)
at the

MUSIC SPOT

3943 So. 48th St.

"LOWEST PRICES IN TOWN"