

Scoop's Relief Pitch

Cucamonga Weekly in 55th Year

By DEE RIDPATH

CUCAMONGA — There's a large crack in the wall and ceiling of the ancient, early West style building that houses the Cucamonga Times.

It is the only chink in the armor of the weekly newspaper.

For the Cucamonga Times is, as its editor and publisher says, a "relief pitch from the metropolitan dailies."

Leslie L. Foster, editor and publisher, known better by the nickname "Scoop," expressed the policy of the newspaper as "framing the image of a friendly community."

He said that the format which is essentially the same as it was when the paper was established 55 years ago, will stay as it is in the future. "We've received a lot of favorable comment on it and the newcomers to this area like the paper because it represents a change of pace."

Like many long established business firms, the Cucamonga Times has carved its niche in the community, but like many old line businesses, it had a shaky beginning.

Foster says that the paper "had a precarious early existence. It had numerous editors. There were four in one year. Some left because of financial difficulties. One editor was chased out of town."

Irate Reader

Foster explained that one of the downtown merchants took exception to one of the early-day editor's editorials.

"He advanced upon the editor with a shotgun," Foster said, "with a wicked gleam in his eye." The life of the editor was saved by the quick intervention of the printer's devil, a young man employed to help out around the shop. But the editor decided that the climate was not suitable to his particular mood and he left town."

Foster allowed: "We don't write those kind of editorials anymore."

Scoop purchased the paper from the estate of the late R. A. Sweeten who owned it from 1917 until he died in 1952. Foster had worked 30 years for Sweeten before purchasing the paper. "I bought it to have a job and decided to go ahead with it," Foster grinned.

"We've been for Cucamonga all the way," he added in a moment of seriousness. "We paved the way for a county house numbering system. We gave that issue tremendous support



Method Old; News New

Leslie L. (Scoop) Foster, editor and publisher of the Cucamonga Times, smiles as he attends a familiar chore, that of making letters into words while

holding an old-fashioned "stick" device which keeps the letters in order. It is a routine operation for the publisher of the small weekly newspaper.

and as a result Cucamonga was the first community in the county to use the system. The house numbers get larger as you go south and larger as you go east.

Favored Incorporation

"We pushed hard for incorporation and we may push again.

"We get the 'blame' for keeping the library here when the Board of Supervisors wanted to take it out about 15 years ago. Today it is an expanding library branch.

"We played a prominent role in getting a fire department. We were in the middle of that fight all the way. Former Sen. Stanford C. Shaw, a Cucamonga attorney, was also helpful in the fight. I was secretary and a fireman the first 10 years after the Fire Department was organized. We got outstanding community support for that situation.

"The paper has been in the center of every community project for the last 55 years and we will be in the middle in the future. There's a lot of hot stuff going on in this community."

One of the current issues is to transform the downtown buildings into what Foster likes to call the "early Cucamonga" style of fronts. This would be a combination of early California, Spanish and a dash of Indian and western styling.

"It's a long range deal," Foster

said, "but we're going for it all the way."

Foster writes a front page column for each edition of the Times. In the Jan. 30 edition this year the editor made note that not one of the Cucamonga girls in the contest for Miss Cucamonga and Orange Show Queen claimed any baking talent.

Said he: "I feel that all contestants should bake an apple pie as an entrance qualification."

The following week Foster proclaimed "apple pie breaks are in order at the Cucamonga Times this week. After my comments last week about the queen entrants not claiming they could bake, Sue Lotz brought a fine apple pie (right from the oven) just to prove that she could bake. In press circles such incidents are referred to as fringe benefits." Miss Lotz, was a runnerup in the contest for queen.

This incident, as much as anything else, is living proof of the slogan with which Foster starts each column:

"The Finest Thing About Cucamonga is All the Nice Folks Who Live Here."

And Scoop is one of that fine group. As for the crack in the building caused by the Long Beach earthquake 35 years ago, Scoop says:

"We're gonna fix it one of these days."