Editorial: Shooting raises questions

Only a week after Unity Day and the showing of the gun-control documentary Bowling for Columbine, Rider has had a shooting of its own. This also follows a concerted effort by the Greeks to make their parties protected, including a meeting on Oct. 8 focusing on safe social events.

Given this emphasis, how could Friday morning’s frightening crime have been prevented? And how will things change at Rider as a result?

Barely a week since the shooting, students meet a stricter screening when entering the campus after the gates close. But it’s things like this that sometimes make Rider seem more reactive than proactive. Not until something awful happens does Rider take the steps to make things safer; otherwise, changes take a very long time. After the 1993 murder, there was a brief period of very tight security, but that soon died out.

Should security be more strict? Should metal detectors be used at every event hosted here? One argument for the metal detectors is that if you have nothing to hide, they shouldn’t matter. But the cost could matter. Rider’s tuition is high enough as it is. In order to have screenings at events and to keep an eye on every single detail occurring on campus, thousands of dollars would have to be spent.

Having more security also brings up the same questions recent terrorism has raised. Where do you draw the line? How much do we want to limit our freedom to feel safe? There are already a great number of students who go home on weekends, and if Security doesn’t allow guests on campus past a certain hour, even more are going to leave. If their friends can’t come over, students who aren’t going to want to be here. Having stricter rules in the residence halls would make resident life more difficult than it already is.

It is also important to consider what instituting new rules and regulations would do to Rider’s reputation. Harm rules and metal detectors at sporting events would send a negative image about our school. Wouldn’t prospective students be nervous about going to a school that needs so much security? How much is too much? How do we stay safe yet at the same time keep all the liberties we enjoy so much? Although the police have apprehended the suspect in less than a week, these questions still need to be asked.

If Rider is going to institute stricter rules about what happens on campus, administrators should first ask the people who live and learn here. Students should have a voice in which freedoms they want to give up. Perhaps a poll, similar to the one for Homecoming King and Queen, should be conducted. That way the students will not feel so punished. Even an e-mail survey, similar to the one sent out for Daly’s, would be helpful.

At the same time, it is important to not be over-paranoid. It is not like a shooting is an everyday occurrence at Rider. Not to play down the incident, but a line must be drawn somewhere. For the time being, it is important to stay calm. Pay attention to any new policies that pop up and if you have a problem with them, say something. For the many resident students who call Rider home, staying happy is part of staying sane.

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From the Counseling Center: A gift for being kind

We all know that being nice to other people makes us feel all warm and gooey inside, but many of you have probably wondered whether or not being kind to others actually brings other rewards as well. Research suggests that the answer to this question is a definite yes. Several studies show that kindness is linked to physical and mental well-being.

In one study, a survey was sent out to volunteers asking them how they felt when they performed a kind act. The data showed that there was a clear cause-and-effect relationship between being helpful and having good health. The list of maladies that being kind have been shown to have a positive effect on include obesity, sleeplessness, headaches, backaches, depression, colds, the flu, arthritis, lupus, asthma, cancer and coronary artery disease.

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The administration has to balance its response. They must protect the campus community, but don’t suppress it.

This weekly editorial expresses the majority opinion of The Rider News editorial board and is written by the Opinion Editor.

Letters to the Editor: The Rider News welcomes letters on all subjects of interest to the campus community. Letters must be typed and include the name, address, phone number and signature of the author for verification. Send to The Rider News via e-mail (ridernews@rider.edu), campus mail or hand deliver to Centennial House. All letters must be received by midnight the Monday preceding publication. The Rider News reserves the right to edit all letters for space and clarity.

Quote of the Week: “Nothing fixes a thing so intensely in the memory as the wish to forget it.” — Michel de Montaigne