

## Veishea partiers get out of hand



photo by Eric Almquist

### STREETS OF FIRE

Ames police disperse a crowd in the 500 block of Welch Avenue around 3 a.m. Friday. The crowd started a fire in the street using sections of a stage from a nearby party.

### by Eric Almquist

The tranquility of the birds singing, the rustling of wind through the trees and the ringing of the campanile was broken at 5 a.m. Friday morning by the sounds of street vacuums cleaning up Welch Avenue.

What happened during the five hours preceding the cleanup in the 500 block of Welch Avenue that required the sweepers to go into action is the story of a Veishea party getting out of hand and a small-scale riot occurring in a predominantly student section of Ames.

It was after the Ames Police had broken up a party at 530 Welch that a crowd, estimated by one eyewitness at 1,500 people and later confirmed at 1,000 by police, began to spill into the street, where it congregated. A

fire was subsequently started, beer bottles were thrown and an uprising occurred, requiring 30 police officers to bring it under control, according to the police officer in charge.

The trouble began just after 1

a.m. when the Ames Police closed down the Welch Avenue party and ushered the people into the front yard, according to one eyewitness. The witness added that the people had nowhere to go, so they congregated in the street.

Joe Heeren of Jewell, who was at a party across the street from the party thrown by a group that calls itself "Delta WU," said the people filled three quarters of the 500 block of Welch.

"There were solid people all the way across the street," Heeren said.

Ames Police Captain Larry Olson said, "We were trying to break up the party all night, and it went well, but after the crowd got big, there was no way we could control it with the number of officers we had."

After the crowd began to swell into the street, Olson said his officers just moved back to give time for additional officers to arrive. He said his men blocked the entrances to Welch to keep automobiles from moving into the "altercation."

Olson added that all of the Ames police officers not on duty at the time were called into service—some from the comfort of their beds—to help those already on the scene. He estimated that it took 30 to 45 minutes for all of the officers to arrive.

One witness said that before

the police moved to block off through traffic, cars driving down the street may have added to the confusion and incited the people to get more out of hand than they originally were.

"Cars were driving on Welch and then they would stop in front of where the party was being broken up. Then they would honk," Heeren said.

"There were a lot of people asking for it," he said. "One grey Monte Carlo went through the crowd twice and he was honking his horn and yelling things."

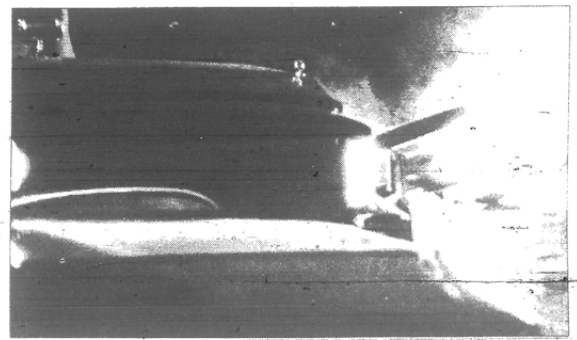
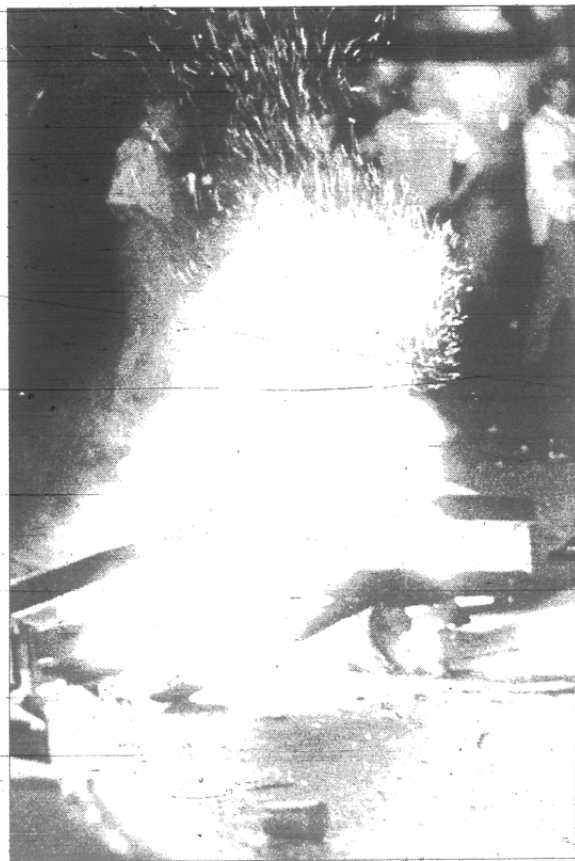
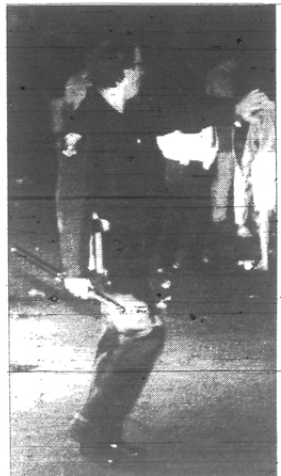
Paul Fix, IE 4, said he thought the crowd was relatively calm for its size.

"It was tame considering that there were about 1,000 people in the street," he said.

Ames Police Chief Dennis Ballantine was one of those called out of bed at 2 a.m. to assist the officers.

He likened the scene to Ash Bash in 1985, where the police and fire departments were called in to control a greek multi-house party on Ash Avenue when a

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# Disturbance compared to Ash Bash '85

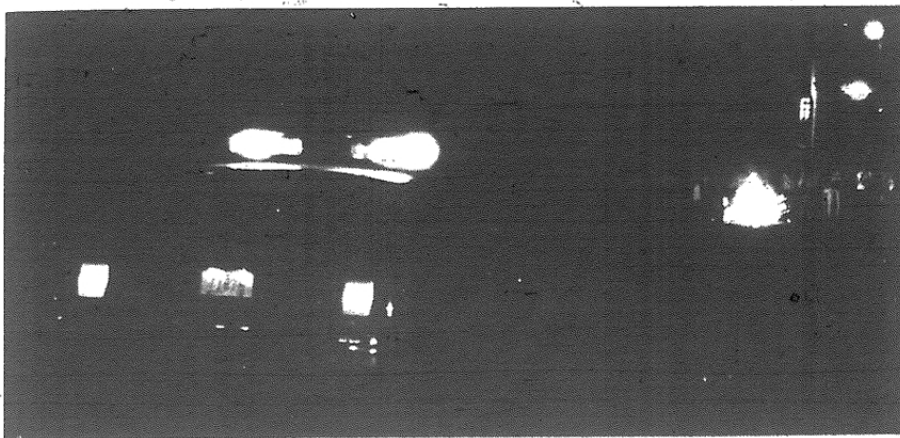


photo by Tom Hynds

Right — Ames Police arrest Scott Thompson, P Bus 1, on assault charges for throwing a bottle at a police officer.  
Above — A police car closes in to start dispersing the crowd.

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Veishea float was set ablaze after the parade.

"It is fairly similar to the Ash Bash of 1985," Ballantine said. "Certainly a case of ISU students that lost all common sense. They had too much alcohol and got out of hand."

One witness said he feared for his life at times during the uprising.

Joe Turner, ESM 6, was hosting a party in his front yard at 531 Welch Thursday night, and when the scene turned sour across the street the crowd began to flow into his yard.

"We did all we could to keep the crowd out of our yard," Turner said. "They could have come over here and taken anything they wanted."

Turner added that after the fire started they began looking his way for more things to burn. "They even offered us money for the couch we had in our front yard so they could burn it," he said.

About 2:45 a.m., the Ames Police began moving south on Welch Avenue to break up the brawl. Starting in the 400 block, they slowly drove three cars wide down the street while being assisted by walking officers on either side. As they made their way to the 500 block, they were met with cheers.

Olson said the reaction was not uncommon.

"In situations like this, we are often met with jeers and clapping," he said. "Tonight, how-

ever, more than 50 percent of the people were gone by the time we moved in and those that were here, left peacefully."

As they moved toward the fire, the police moved the crowd out of the street and onto the sidewalks and told them to go home. Most left peacefully.

However, two bottles were thrown at an officer who was in a police car and Scott Thompson, who threw the bottle, was arrested.

Thompson, P Bus 1, was taken into custody and charged Friday with assault, according to Sgt. Craig Reid of the Ames Police Department.

Thompson was the only one arrested and no injuries were reported, according to Reid.

Once the police had dispersed the crowd and cleared the street of people, the Ames Fire Department moved in to put out the fire.

Reflecting back on the events of the previous three hours, Captain Olson said things went well.

"There are two ways to break up a crowd. One is to attack it and cause a riot or wait and disperse it," he said. "We had to wait until we had the numbers to attack it and the wait helped because 50 percent of the people were gone by the time we finally moved in, which made it easier."

It took about twenty minutes for the police to disperse the crowd, and at about that time members of the ISU administration arrived on the scene.

Dean of Students Augustine

Pounds and Vice President for Student Affairs Thomas Thielen were both called when the crowd got out of control, and despite the time of day, both went to the scene.

Thielen said things were under police control by the time he arrived, but what he saw was not a cheery sight.

Surveying the remains of the fracas, including broken bottles, cans and cups and the charred remains of a stage, he agreed that the scene was similar to that of Ash Bash.

"By the time I got to Ash Bash the scene I saw at four that morning was cleaner than what I see now," Thielen said.

Pounds added, "We received a call that there was a disturbance. It was up to us if we wanted to come in, so we came to see if the students were causing any trouble."

"It is really disgusting as well as embarrassing for the city and the students who want to put on a good Veishea," Thielen said.

"We are fortunate that no one got hurt and I hope it doesn't relate to the rest of Veishea," Thielen said.



photo by Eric Almquist