

## Watermelon Queen selected; Miss Liz Heller reigns

**June 9, 1965**

The pretty brunet who had just been chosen by her fellow students to reign as the first Watermelon queen of the University of California, San Diego, leaned gingerly out over the railing on the seventh floor stairwell to look at the cement plaza far below.

As she did a cheer went up from her colleagues assembled below immediately followed by a chant, "Throw it, throw it, throw it."

But a Watermelon Queen can't be hasty. After all, she was the first Watermelon queen ever elected at UCSD and she was to be instrumental in the very first watermelon toss. First, as is often the case with campus queens, pictures had to be taken.

Posing prettily was no problem for Miss Elizabeth Heller, an 18-year-old freshman from Pasadena. Her dark hair and smiling features were just what the photographers wanted. Even the height of the seventh story landing did not bother her for campus queens are supposed to be ready for anything dealing with publicity.

Liz, as the other students call her, and her friends had just finished a rough three-hour physics test. For many of them it meant the end of final exams and the start of summer vacation. Tossing a watermelon off the seventh floor stairwell of Building B was just the thing needed to rid them of the frustrations of the physics exam and start the summer fun.

Anyway, it is well known that everyone has always wondered what happens to a watermelon when dropped from that height.

The chant went up again from below and this time, photographers or not, Queen Liz knew her subjects were getting restless. With one last wave to the crowd below, she gathered the 20.6 pound watermelon from student body president Larry Baker, hoisted it like a shot putter with her right arm, closed her eyes, and gave a mighty heave toward open space.

The melon sailed in a graceful arch past seven stories of curious onlookers lining the balconies and suddenly exploded with a loud "POP" in the cement plaza like a giant green and red firecracker. Thousands of tiny pieces of watermelon flew in every direction forming a perfect symmetrical cartwheel for those who watched from above.

The student body judicial council members, measuring tape in hand, immediately set out to find the piece or seed which had traveled the farthest. Finally, directly north, a seed was found 91 feet from the impact area. Since this was the first watermelon toss, the distance will stand as a record for at least a year.

Next spring, perhaps following another physics test, the new freshman class will select a new Watermelon Queen, pick out a new watermelon, and try to break the record.

However, everyone on hand for this year's drop agreed that Miss Liz Heller had done an expert job for the first time. After all, where does one get experience in watermelon tossing?

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