

Remembering Lauffer: Athl

by Michelle McKean
Collegian Staff

Behrend lost more than an administrator when Herb Lauffer died; Behrend lost a man who affected the lives of everyone he touched.

Herb Lauffer put all of himself into everything.

On Jan. 10, Lauffer passed away due to heart related problems at the Cleveland Clinic.

"He will be missed in a different way by everyone."

- Robert Schenker
Behrend Registrar

Lauffer was part of the athletic department at Penn State Behrend for 29 years, serving as the athletic director for the past 16 years.

Initially, Lauffer was the men's tennis coach and later continued with 23 years as the head of the men's soccer program.

According to Lauffer himself, "academics first" is a tradition at Behrend.

"There is no question that we want our programs to be successful, but it's more than bringing the ball up the court or up the field. If you learn what is taught in the classroom as well as on the athletic field, then you should be a better person and better prepared to step into another arena of competition, your chosen career," said Lauffer in *The Behrend Quarterly* in 1989.

Lauffer was born in Butler, PA in 1941. He attended both Slippery Rock High School and College graduating with



a Bachelor of Science degree in health, physical education and recreation. He continued his education at West Virginia University earning a Master of Science degree in physical education. Lauffer's motivation led him to be Penn State-Behrend's winningest coach in history in addition to bringing four new sports to Behrend,

adding to the original eight. According to a tribute letter, Lauffer helped to guide Behrend Athletics from "NAIA Junior College status to NCAA Division III and Eastern College Athletic Conference membership." Lauffer also produced several NSCAA regional All-Americans and All-Conference Players. Soccer players from as

Youth Soccer Association and initiated the Penn State-Behrend Athletic Hall of Fame.

Part of his career involved directing soccer camps and youth programs. Lauffer was also the co-director of the Wolverine's soccer camp at Grove City College.

When Erie was in danger of losing baseball, Lauffer jumped in and offered suggestions.

Lauffer was well known beyond the Erie community as well.

out of New York City.

Extremely knowledgeable in his field, Lauffer published several articles and was a guest speaker at various social gatherings.

In addition to coaching, Lauffer taught many physical and health education courses at Behrend. He was also committed to making the \$10 million sports complex a reality for Behrend.

Lauffer's deep concern for others perfected the balance between his

"Great athletes... weigh the risk vs. the reward and often choose the reward."

- Herb Lauffer
Published in USA Today, March 6, 1990

In 1990, when Hank Gather collapsed in the middle of a basketball game, Lauffer was quoted in *USA Today*.

The front-page of the March 6 *USA Today* quoted Lauffer, "Great athletes... weigh the risk vs. the reward and often choose the reward."

Erik Brady, *USA Today* writer, went on to list Lauffer as an expert in athletic competition.

professional position and his friendship with the Athletic Department.

"He gave us confidence and freedom along with



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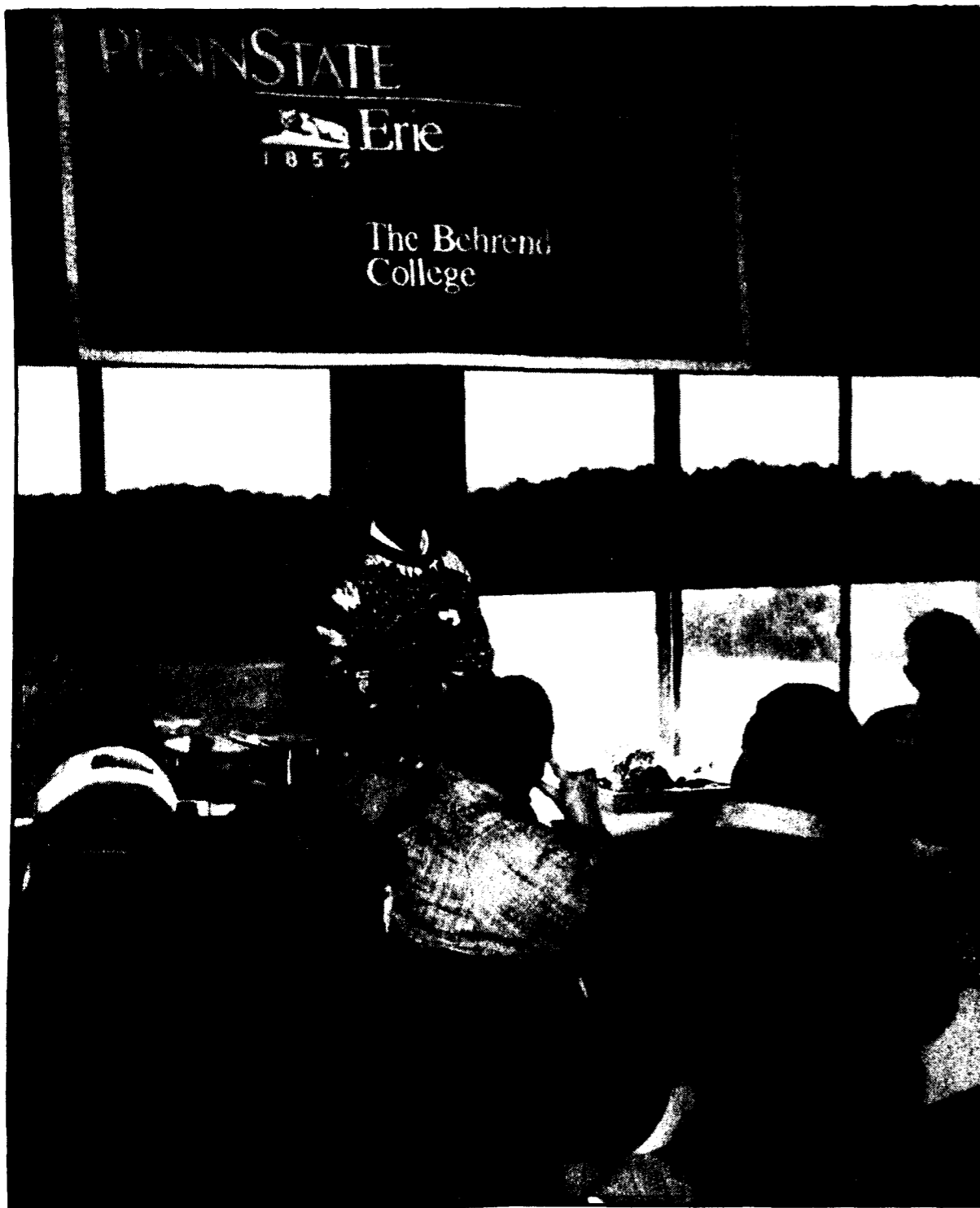
- Herb Lauffer

far as New Jersey came to his funeral service.

Lauffer not only touched Behrend with his excellence, but reached out into the community.

He was the founder and president of the Erie

After the March 6 edition, Lauffer received four requests to participate in radio programs and was requested to appear on a nationally syndicated documentary program



Loss of a friend, boss, loved one

by Matt Flizga
Sports Editor

On Jan. 10, the Behrend community lost a boss, a friend and a loved one, with the passing of Athletic Director Herb Lauffer. He will always be remembered for his efforts to make Behrend a better place for students.

I had the unique opportunity to work with Mr. Lauffer in the athletic office and interview him for various newspaper articles. I also got to know him on a personal level. Mr. Lauffer was never too busy to take the time to get to know his students. He always asked how I was doing and offered to help anytime I had a problem.

The aspect of Mr. Lauffer that I admired the most was the way he treated me. A lot of people ask me what's up? Or how I was doing? But

few do it with such care. Mr. Lauffer wasn't just making idle chatter; he really cared how I was doing.

On the professional level he treated me with respect. He never treated me like an insignificant college sports writer, he treated me as if I were writing for the *New York Times*.

I've known Mr. Lauffer as a personable and cheerful man since I met him. The first day of classes my freshman year I found myself sitting in the athletic office waiting to talk with Coach Niland.

In came a bright-eyed and energetic Mr. Lauffer, he paused and asked if he could help me with anything. I said that I was waiting to talk to the basketball coach, and we were immediate friends. We introduced

ourselves, shook hands and then talked for the next half an hour.

Mr. Lauffer helped me get my work study job in the athletic department, he convinced me to become involved with the newspaper, and always encouraged me to go after my goals. He always had confidence in me and treated me as an equal.

After his tragic death, I spent three days reliving my memories of Mr. Lauffer. I saw everything he did for the Behrend community and for me. I realized how lucky I was to have had the opportunity to get to know Mr. Lauffer and how much I will miss him in my life.

In Mr. Lauffer I saw many things that I admire and respect. I also realized that I saw in him the type of person I would like to become.