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New dorm almost complete

by Nathan Muhanna
Collegian Staff

Almy Hall, Behrend's new dormitory, is still under construction.

The main building is scheduled to be completed by June 24. Upon completion, Housing and Food Services will post signs, furnish, and clean the new building.

Located on the ridge behind Tiffany Hall, Almy Hall will be co-ed and house 132 student. Up to 80 percent of whom will be honors students with the remaining 20 percent being traditional students.

The new dorm will feature double rooms, with four to a suite sharing a bathroom located between the double rooms. Each wing of the 5-story Almy Hall will have a living room with a view of Lake Erie.

"Almy Hall is going to be a beautiful building."

-Edward Mulfinger, Manager, Housing and Food Services

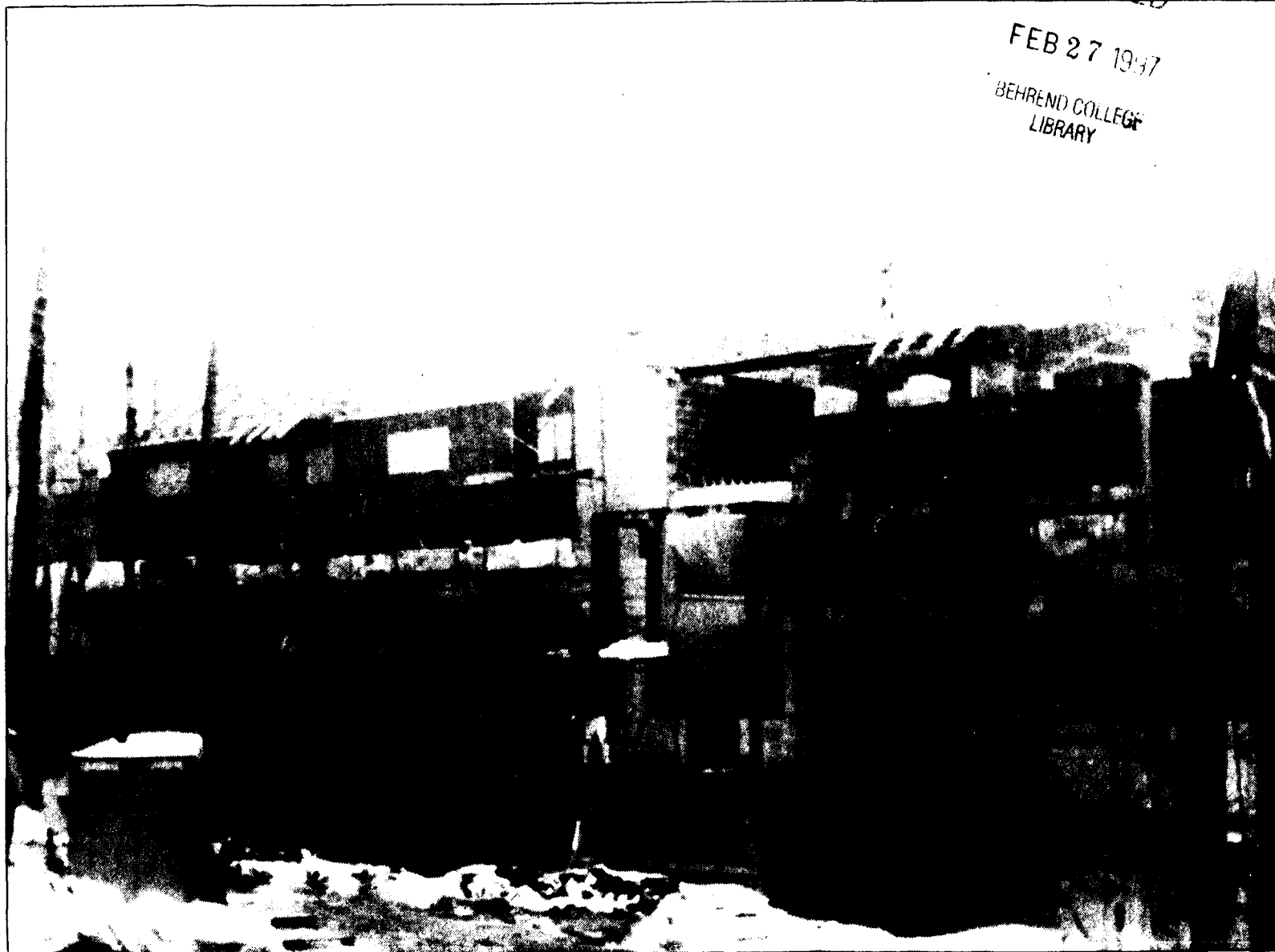
Other features of the new dorm include a possible copying machine room and laundry room on the 3rd floor, a large conference room on the 2nd floor, RA meeting rooms on the 1st and 4th floors, geothermal heating, card access (instead of a key), and a bridge to the rear entrance of the building from the parking lot.

S-Lot will be extended to provide parking for Almy Hall. Edward Mulfinger, the manager of Housing and Food Services, is excited about the new dormitory.

While going over the floor plans, he said that the new dorm "will take amenities to a whole new level. Almy Hall is going to be beautiful building."

Almy Hall is the first of three new dormitories to be constructed on the Behrend campus over the next few years. The other two dorms will each have occupancy of 200 and will be built in 1999 and 2001.

Almy Hall received its name from Thomas Almy, a sailing master who commandeered the ship "Somers" during the War of 1812.



How many men does it take to build a dorm? We don't know that, but we know it takes 80 percent honor students to fill it.

Mike Nies/Collegian Photographer

STRAIGHT out... Court rules no on group

By PATRICIA K. COLE
Collegian Staff Writer

STRAIGHT would not have been beneficial to the University community, image or educational climate, according to the Undergraduate Student Government Supreme Court's official majority decision.

"We didn't do the easiest thing. We didn't do the most popular thing. We did the right thing," said Associate Justice Jit Chatterjee, who wrote the opinion because he is the most senior voting member on the court.

The decision, which was released yesterday afternoon, describes the court's main reasons for denying a charter to the Students Reinforcing Adherence In General Heterosexual Tradition. According to their mission statement, STRAIGHT was supposed to be a group which would provide students with a forum to "express their views regarding their refusal to accept or support homosexuality."

"Two words -- they rock," Duane Gildea said of USG.

Gildea, political co-director of the Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Student Association, added, "My respect for them grows daily. . . . I didn't know it was going to be so well thought out."

STRAIGHT President Darin Loccarini had a different reaction. He said the reasons behind the decision applied a double standard to his group.

"It's hypocritical from start to finish," Loccarini said. "Things that don't apply to other organizations apply to us because of who we're opposing."

Loccarini added he intends to appeal the decision through the University appeals process or to the state courts if necessary.

Because the court viewed the group as being more anti-homosexual than pro-heterosexual,

as the name implies, the court said the group had no well-defined, long-term goals. However, the question of STRAIGHT becoming intolerant or violent was not a factor in the court's decision, according to the majority opinion.

"That would have been a different group had they done what their initials imply," Chatterjee said.

Another problem was that officers and members of STRAIGHT had different agendas and goals, which failed to create a cohesive group, according to the decision.

"It doesn't matter because every member of an organization doesn't have to be in agreement," Loccarini said. He said the response he has received through E-mail has been in support of the group's mission statement and purpose.

Gildea said all executive members of LGBSA are in agreement about STRAIGHT's mission statement and long-term goals.

The court said such a group "would have created much bitterness and tension in the Penn State community . . ."

But the decision might have created more discussion in the community.

"The issue of homosexuality has taken a back seat to the issue of equal representation," Loccarini said. "To see many of the LGBSA people here at a place that has been a place of hostility to them, I'm delighted."

Crowds of students from both

"We did the right thing."

*--Jit Chatterjee
USG Supreme Court*

LGBSA and STRAIGHT gathered in front of the Willard Building to discuss the decision. Many seemed to feel the issue was one of constitutional rights, but the decision states that the court is not denying STRAIGHT any First Amendment rights.

"It's hypocritical from start to finish."

*--Darin Loccarini
STRAIGHT*

"They're there. They are gathering there to discuss and talk about the decision. They're assembling," Chatterjee said. "We're not infringing upon their rights."

Jon Feinberg, co-coordinator of the Penn State chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union, said the national and state chapters of ACLU will be looking to the decision. They will attempt to determine if the decision and the purpose of STRAIGHT is an adequate compromise between gay, lesbian and bisexual rights and First Amendment rights.

The only thing the decision is stopping STRAIGHT from doing is using general funds and University rooms and facilities for general meetings.

The group can still apply for programming funds from the Student Organization Budget Committee, which come out of the \$25 student activity fee.

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Dancing for a cause



Wiggling at the Thon: Behrend students Greg Welsch and Jessica Schwab did more than "a little dance" this past weekend at University Park's 25th annual Dance A Thon.

by Doreen Foutz
News Editor

Good Morning America! Tune into ABC on Wednesday, March 26 for a look at the dancers from 'Thon '97.

They danced and danced and literally danced the night away last weekend at the annual dance-a-thon at University Park.

Greg Welsch, sophomore business marketing major, and Jessica Schwab, sophomore BLASC major, represented Penn State Behrend at the Interfraternity/Panhellenic Dance Marathon in University Park.

The dancers raised \$1,528,425.64 as they celebrated the 25th anniversary of the largest student-run philanthropic event in the nation. The event is popular because of its size and its cause, "I decided to go because it was for a good cause and it was one of the largest student-run philanthropies in the country," Schwab said.

The money was raised, as it is

every year, for the Four Diamonds Fund, which benefits families of children who have been diagnosed with cancer.

The children being supported through the Four Diamonds Fund were at the 'Thon, and were great motivators, "The kids that were

Last year there were no participants from any other Penn State locations, other than University Park. However, a massive campaign changed all of that this year. Students representing eleven commonwealth campuses and

"The kids that were benefitting from the fundraising were there and they really helped to motivate us and let us see what goal we were working towards."

-Jessica Schwab

benefitting from the fundraising were there and they really helped to motivate us and let us see what goal we were working towards."

At midnight on Saturday, halfway through the event, Penn State athletes, cheerleaders, the Nittany Lion, the Blue Band, and even Joe Paterno himself showed up and threw a pep rally for the dancers.

Penn State Behrend participated, contributing a total of \$20,000.

Locally, Schwab and Welsch raised approximately \$800 in memory of John Wittmer, who died of cancer in June.

His mother Sharon, and her husband Tom were in the audience over the weekend to show their support.

"We had a great time and it was definitely worth it," Schwab said.