

Letter to the Editor Honors deserve Almy Hall

Spring is here; so is the budget process

by Colleen Fromknecht
Collegian Staff

The birds are chirping and building their nests in the shrubs around campus. The plants are starting to push up through the soil in front of the Academic Building. The odor of exhaust permeates city streets as guys on Harleys appear. It is Spring!

Spring is a time of joy and merriment as we exit from the death grip of winter's clutches. But Spring also signifies the headache and frustrations of Student budgets. I cringe when I find out that the student organizations budgets are due to be turned in to the SGA.

The budget process is long, painful and frustrating for all parties concerned. In my opinion, I think there should be an easier way to streamline the budget process.

The mandatory budget meetings are a joke. The club Presidents and Treasurers who attend these meetings are treated like kindergarten children. All student organizations receive a budget package. This package is a useful tool which allows the student organization to have some guidelines which are considered acceptable or unacceptable with regard to funding. At the mandatory budget meeting a member of the staff proceeds to read from the information which is found in the budget packet. This not only wastes the students' time, but it is personally insulting to have to sit through a boring meeting when I can easily read the same information in the privacy of my home. I am getting a college education. Not only can I read well, I can also comprehend what I am reading. The mandatory meetings are a waste of time.

An alternate method could be used to educate students about the budget process. Why doesn't the staff hold a series of budget workshops? Students

who feel they need help in preparing an acceptable budget will sign up for these workshops. That way they can receive useful information which will help them in preparing their budgets.

A example of what is considered to be a good budget and a poor budget would also be useful. This can be included in the information packet each student receives.

I also believe that the SGA should pay for the cost of the copies they require each student organization to submit. Fifteen copies of a budget which runs from two pages or longer runs into a lot of cash which most organizations can't afford to pay. Fifteen copies are needed for SGA's convenience. If each organization turns in one copy, SGA should be responsible for any additional copies it needs.

The fifteen minute meetings each organization needs to hold with the SGA Budget Committee are also irrelevant. The only time a meeting should be set up with the Budget Committee is if the Committee has a question concerning the organization's budget or if the student organization requests the meeting.

Finally, some sort of incentive should be used to encourage the student organizations to turn their budgets in early. Preferential treatment is not a proper method to reward those organizations that are early with their budgets, but perhaps some recognition or other "perk" should be used to encourage student clubs to get their budgets in on time.

So while you are enjoying the wonderful spring days at Behrend, you should also spare a kind thought for all of the students who have to go through the dreaded budget process during the same time period. I'll think of you all as I'm catching the rays on the beach during Spring Break.

I am writing in response to the question of the week that was in the *Behrend College Collegian* on February 20, 1997, and to the follow-up cartoon that was in on February 27 dealing with Almy Hall, the new dorm that is set to open next semester. Ever since the announcement that it was going to consist of 80% honors students and 20% traditional students I have been bothered by the general resentment and misconstrued motions that the majority of students have about it. I feel that before students get upset about it being 80% honors they should take the time to understand the actual facts, and not base their opinions on the grumbling of a few misinformed people. I also believe that the question of the week was a very poor choice of the Collegian to run, and that the question was worded with extreme bias. What non-honors student that is asked point blank what he thinks about the fact that the new dorm is going to be 80% honors is going to say that he thinks it is wonderful? Human nature automatically makes people resentful of anything that may exclude them, and even though this new dorm DOES NOT exclude any students at Behrend, the general population of Behrend does not seem willing to admit this. Here are some of the facts.

Behrend has been planning on renovating an existing residence hall for a more extensive honors interest house for years now, but in the process of gathering information it was found that it is actually cheaper to build a new dorm than it is to remodel one of the dorms to fit ADA requirements. Also, this happened to come at a time when the number of students requesting housing at Behrend rose drastically, and the waiting list rose to around 300 students. It doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure out a perfect alternative to this problem. To nullify another complaint of many students, NONE of our tuition goes toward residence halls. Housing and Food Service is an independent department that does not reap tuition or government money.

Almy Hall will house 132 students, of which only 106 will be honors. The other 26 spaces are open to any student

at Behrend. When it is considered that the 32 spaces that were honors in Tiffany are now traditional rooms, honors is gaining 74 rooms. This is not all unreasonable, considering that the original plan was to add to the honors interest house. Another fact that students seem to forget is that two new dorms will open in the fall of 1999 and 2001, respectively, which will hold approximately 200 students each. These dorms will be totally traditional. Doing the math, that means that there will be an increase of 458 non honors rooms, and only 74 honors. Is that really unreasonable? There were 177 honors and scholars this semester, and that number will only continue to rise. This is a statistic that Behrend student should be proud of.

I think that behind all of the grumbling that some people do is simple emotion - jealousy. There is a brand new, gorgeous dorm being built, and it is partially for a group that the majority of students are not a part of. Yes, I am a scholar. But I will graduate this semester, so this new dorm means nothing to me. Being a scholar is not all fun and games, and I have yet to feel at all like I am on a pedestal. (People can start putting me there any time!) I spent every day last summer working on a research project, and if I had not been lucky enough to get a fellowship for my work, I would have had to sacrifice a summers wages to be in the program. I am currently writing a thesis, and sometimes I have to remind myself why I am doing all of this. But I don't regret it at all, the benefits outweigh the problems by far. Maybe the "benefits" of the programs should be incentives for others to go above and beyond, and students should strive to become an honors student or scholar instead of complaining about those of us who are.

If students feel that the honors students have advantages that they want, then they should find a more productive way of voicing their dissatisfaction rather than complaining to other students. The

only way to get things done and to get respect is action, not immature, unsubstantiated complaints.

The Life House on campus in Lawrence Hall is very similar to the honor's hall, but it is actually on a LARGER scale. Students must request to live in the Life house, and there are close to 175 students in the program. Five wings of Lawrence Hall are devoted to the program, which makes the dorm 83% Life House. I don't recall hearing people complaining about that, even though it is exactly analogous to the situation with Almy Hall.

Students should know what they are talking about when the comment on a specific issue, either on campus or life in general. The facts are available for everyone, all it took for me was a couple of phone calls. I didn't even have to leave my room. Everyone was extremely willing to talk to me, and I learned a lot about Behrend and housing that was informative and interesting. So don't jump on the bandwagon and bash things just for fun, think about it first.

Regina Grimm
08 Biology

The editors have left The Collegian!!

The Collegian needs an Editor in Chief for the 1997-98 school year.

Applicants must submit the following to the Office of Student Affairs (Attn.: Dr. Chris Reber):

1. Statement of journalistic qualifications
2. Editorial philosophy
3. Assessment of *The Collegian's* strengths and weaknesses
4. Plans for organization of staff members

Deadline: March 21

All majors (including science and engineering!!) are encouraged to apply!!!

Questions??
898-6488
Jen or Danielle

♻ 1997, IDAHO PROD. ♻

Cloning controversy

by John Amorose
Collegian Staff

Cloning. The mere word conjures images of grotesque human carbon copies wreaking havoc in a smoldering, overpopulated shell of a former world. Or maybe you just think of a really bad Michael Keaton movie. Either way, most people do not think of cloning as being something which is advantageous to society.

Recently, the world was shocked by the news that Scottish scientists had successfully cloned a mammal. For the first time in history the DNA from an adult sheep was used to create a genetically identical lamb. This discovery has spawned serious debate amongst the world's ethicists and biologists, as well as the general population.

There are many advantages to the cloning of animals. Human proteins, which can be secreted in certain mammals' blood or milk, can now be mass-produced. These proteins, when missing in humans, can cause serious disease. Also, these proteins are presently very expensive, even too expensive to perform experiments that can lead to the possibility of cures for diseases such as cancer or heart disease.

Another advantage to animal cloning is the increase of the world's food supply. If we could clone animals such as cows, chickens, and pigs, more meat and milk would be made available to starving countries such as Somalia, lessening the economical burden on countries such as our own who spend billions of dollars annually to support these countries.

Goods from these animals, such as leather and wool products, could be made more plentiful and far less expensive, which should make animal rights supporters pretty happy. But do not fret, cloning could benefit you guys, too. Endangered species could be cloned, and after a few years of normal reproduction, they could return (or come close to returning) to original numbers, and no longer be endangered.

But in every life, a little rain must fall: cloning animals is not all fun and games. There could be serious environmental ramifications involved. The most severe would be the possible disruption of the food chain. With the

increase of a certain animal population through cloning, more of the plants and animals that are fed upon will be consumed. The impact of cloning will effect all creatures of the world in some way. Biologists will have to keep a watchful eye on these events.

The real question raised with the cloning of this Scottish lamb is the possible cloning of humans in the not too distant future. The US government has already begun creating laws to counteract this possibility. A congressional sub-committee, appointed by President Clinton, has passed a bill that would permanently forbid funding for human cloning, using the "playing God" defense for these restrictions (not that God does not need the rest!). This is where the bulk of the cloning controversy lies.

Recently, *USA Today* systematically slammed every positive aspect of the possibility of human cloning, and for a good reason. Our country cannot handle its current population level. What would happen if it doubled, or tripled in number? Unemployment and homelessness would spiral out of control. Also, a new form of racism would be created; these clones would be looked at as sub-human, causing a possible second American civil war.

The worst possible scenario would be if the cloning procedure slipped into the wrong hands. Some lunatic could try to follow in the steps of Adolph Hitler and try to clone a master race. What if this guy is obsessed with Bob Saget from *Full House*? Do we need a million of him running around? I have nightmares just thinking about it!

There could be some good that comes out of human cloning, though. For the first time in history, you could be at two places at one time. You could sleep through your morning classes by simply ordering your clone to go in your place. Also, truly "good" people could be cloned; another Mother Theresa, John F. Kennedy or Jenny McCarthy would definitely make the world a better place to live.

The emerging world of cloning will have to be one which is explored very slowly and carefully. But if all risks are considered, I feel that new and beneficial things will come from cloning, but watch out. There are an awful lot of sicko's out there.

Reed River

By Mike DeSantis
Collegian Staff

Row, row, row your boat, gently down the river? No...Gorge? No...Stream? No I got it--the sidewalks!!

Once again, March, the month that comes in like a lion and out like a lamb, is upon us. Not only that, but following March comes April, the month whose showers brings May flowers.

I have no problem with Erie or its sometimes dreaded weather. Well, if you were not out the last time it rained, or you live under a rock, I will explain why you should get your rubbers and waders ready.

The reason is that Behrend's drainage is horrible.

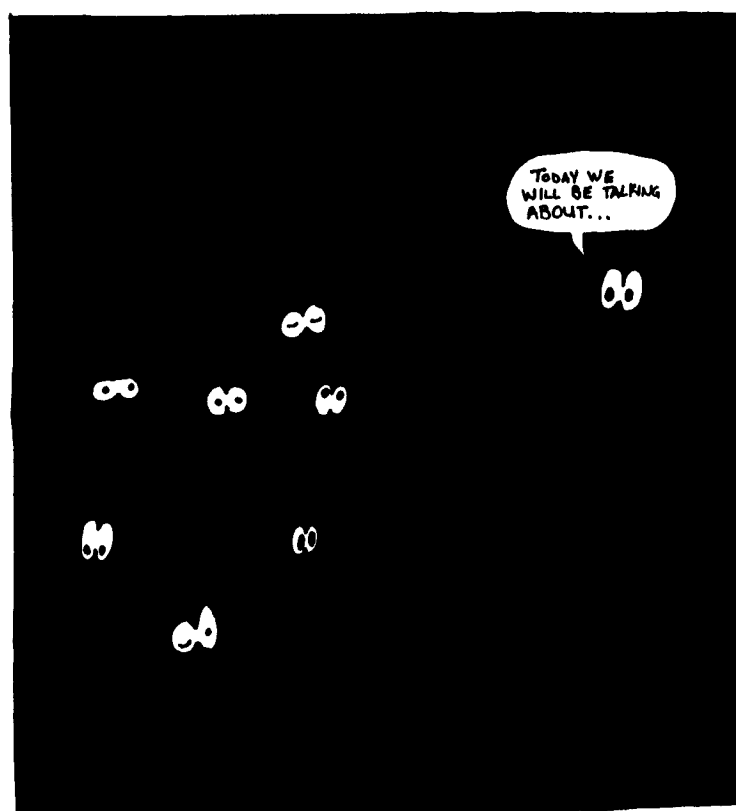
Whenever it rains, the sidewalk and the stairs on the side of the Reed Building become what one of my friends has dubbed the "Reed River," equipped with working waterfalls and a place to kayak. As a matter of fact, the last time it rained I believe that I saw people fishing. The water is at least 6 inches deep.

Even after the rain departs there are still puddles at the bottom of the stairs several inches deep. This makes the

students jump off the steps onto the sidewalk. This is not a good idea for some students because jumping can be dangerous. They could fall and hurt themselves and possibly drown.

After the steps comes the path leading from the Reed Building to the Science and other buildings. The water for the "Reed River" then goes right across the path in a 2 inch deep stream, once again making it a challenge to walk from Reed to the rest of campus. And when you finally are able to board the ferry to the other side of campus and are dropped off right in front of the Nick Building, you end up in a huge swimming hole. Tons of fun.

This is why I have decided to forewarn the student body to get their swimming gear ready, because if Penn State doesn't get their act together and fix this problem, you will need it. Don't worry though, because I heard a rumor that the backroom will start renting out kayaks to help you get to class. If the season is really rain-filled, they might even turn the Blue Van into the Blue Boat. Well, good luck, and as the Boy Scout motto says, "Be Prepared."



What Thursday classes at Behrend are beginning to look like.

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