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Sen. Rick Santorum holds town hall meeting on welfare reform

by Anne Rajotte
managing editor

US Senator Rick Santorum visited Behrend on Monday morning to hold a town hall meeting concerning social security reform.

Many students and faculty plus a few area senior citizens turned out to hear Senator Santorum's own ideas for a different social security system.

Santorum, a Penn State alumni, is preparing to introduce a bill to the Senate that would drastically change the social security system in the United States. He asked the audience if they thought that social security would still be paying benefits when they were ready to retire. He noted that none of the students raised their hands and commented, "It's hard to be upbeat in context to a government that seems indifferent to your needs."

Santorum went on to give a brief history of social security and why the system needs to be changed. He emphasized that the percentage that people pay to social security has risen from about \$30 per year when the program began to 12.4% of income today.

"The temporary, but serious glitch of the baby boom generation," is a

major reason why the system should be reformed, he said. He feels that an optimistic estimation of when Social Security will go bankrupt is 2029. He stated that the way the social security system has always been remedied was to raise taxes and cut benefits. "That's a problem for all of you... I don't think that's an idea anyone in working America should support," he said.

"Social security for working people is not a good deal anymore. It used to be a great deal," commented Santorum. He went on to say, "Generations of Americans got more out of social security than they put in." He used the famous story of Ida Fuller, who retired shortly after the social security program was implemented. Ida Fuller paid only \$22 into social security, but by the time she

died, she had received over \$100,000 in benefits. However, Santorum added that a majority of Americans support the current system not because of the benefits they will receive, but because of the benefits their parents receive.

Santorum's plan would partially privatize social security. Four percent of each dollar earned would be placed in a personal account. That money could then be invested in mutual funds that would be approved by the government. When a person retired, they would buy an annuity with the money that had accumulated from their investments. Santorum argues, that even if the investment returns 4.5%, which is one percent less than an average investment return, recipients will be better off than under the current system. Also, any money in the account

would be given to survivors, instead of to the government.

Another benefit of the new program, according to Santorum, is that increased investments may strengthen the economy by increasing corporate profits. He stated that you can, "do no worse, but you can do better."

There were mixed reactions to Santorum's ideas. Helen Brown, the 21st congressional district American Association of Retired Persons representative, commented, "Communities are beginning to talk about it. Something does need to be done." Christian Maguire, 04 accounting, stated, "I think it is a good idea because our generation will have social security income when we retire as opposed to the present system, where we won't."



photo by Jason Blake

Erie's Bicentennial Tower rises above a warehouse on Erie's Presque Isle Bay (see story page 10).

SGA hears budget appeals

by Joet Kolano
staff writer

The Student Government Association wrapped up the year with the final budget allocations for next year. Trigon members disapproved of the allocation that they received which fell short of their request of \$4747.50. Trigon's purpose is to educate the community about gay and lesbian issues. It is a lot harder for students to be open about their membership in this club because as Assistant Coordinator of Residence Life Dan Merson said, "People don't risk physical violence by coming out for the engineering club or choir."

Trigon asked for money to provide "brochures that will provide those who are afraid to step forward with information." The brochures will be

for the students here at Behrend as well as prospective students, high schools, community centers, and youth groups. Trigon President Chris Caraballo said that his organization wants to "create an environment where (gay and lesbian) students feel safe to come to."

When it came time to decide whether or not to grant Trigon the \$150.00 needed for their brochures, the Greeks came to the rescue. In order to keep the budget balanced, the money was taken from the "High on the Hill" Tau Kappa Epsilon and Theta Phi Alpha Co-sponsorship allocation. Chris Rizzo, Director of Student Activities, said that he would reimburse "High on the Hill" with money from his office account. Thanks to him, a lot of headaches

were spared. Had it not been for his offer, the Budget Committee would have had to make many changes in order to find funding for the new allocations.

Trigon was also unhappy that they were not provided with the money needed for speakers. They had requested to have gay and lesbian speakers but were told to look to Multi-Cultural Council or the Speaker Series, neither of which mentioned any such speaker. MCC said that they would look into having a joint speaker with them, and Trigon seemed eager to discuss this possibility.

At the close of the meeting, SGA President Mike Zampetti said, "I'd like to applaud the budget committee for all their efforts." He also thanked everyone else for a fun and exciting year.

Collegian names new editorial staff

by Andrea Zaffino
editor in chief

The year is winding down now and as students, faculty, and staff are getting ready to fulfill their summer plans, many of the student groups on campus are looking ahead to the Fall semester. Just last week the new members of SGA were confirmed and have begun the planning for next year. Much of the same is going on with the student newspaper, *The Collegian*.

The first and most prominent change that most will notice is the name change of the paper to the *Behrend College Beacon*. The new editorial staff for next year is completely in place. Anne Rajotte, who was the Managing Editor for the past two semesters has been officially named as the Editor in Chief, and will pick up on her duties with an orientation issue at the end of August. Rajotte is excited about her position for next Fall and plans to continue in the spirit of change that took place over the past year. "I plan to continue many of the changes started in this year's *Collegian*," she said.

Rajotte's previous position of Managing Editor will be filled by Ayodele Jones, who was a general assignment reporter this past year. "Ayodele is a hard worker and will be a great asset to the 'Beacon'," Rajotte says of Jones. Jones is pleased by the challenge she will be faced with next year. Of this she said, "This is a great opportunity for me to learn leadership skills and to gain managerial experience."

There will be two News Editors in place. Ik Chan Kang, who picked up the position earlier this semester, will be joined next year by Will Jordan who was a beat reporter covering weekly events this semester.

The Associate Editor, Brian Ashbaugh, who was in charge of the Calendar section of the paper, will be replaced by Mark Greenbank a beat reporter who covered articles on academic programs for the paper this past semester.

The Features Editor, Jon Stubbs, the Sports Editor, Dylan Stewart, and the Photography Editor, Jason Blake, will all be resuming their current positions

for next semester's *Beacon*. Layout Editor Nathan Mitchell will be assisted by newcomer to the paper Rose Forrest. Mitchell is confident that Forrest will work out well for the upcoming semester. "I think she [Forrest] will work out very well and the help will surely be appreciated."

The Editorial section will be enhanced with six additional columnists above the current three. Staying on as Advertising Manager will be RJ Frelin, who will be joined in his duties by Erin Edinger and Carey Smith. Jaime Davis has been named as next year's Business Manager.

With everything in place on the editorial board, the staff's current mission is recruiting competent reporters to help cover important events and issues on and around the campus.

Returning Features Editor Jon Stubbs is looking forward to his position next year. "I'm excited about writing and editing for the paper next year."

Improving dorms a slow process

by Damion Miller
staff writer

"The furniture is old and falling apart," stated Josh Ennis, 02 Geoenvironmental Engineering. Ennis thinks that it can be better, but he got used to it. What is it that Ennis got used to? The dormitories on campus are what many students end up getting used to. Students have been complaining amongst themselves about the quality of living arrangements in Behrend campus residences.

Some of the complaints range from the quality of the furniture to the ability to hear through the walls. Ed Hanlan, 08 MIS, disliked the rules and regulations of the dorms. After getting into the apartments, which are more expensive, Hanlan would never return to the dorms to live. One reason was that, "I like the kitchens", stated Hanlan. Jaime Ellis, 04 International Marketing, lives in Almy Hall. Ellis stated, "I don't think I can go back and live in the dorms. We have brand new furniture, so I can't complain." Most students never want to go back to the dorms after they leave, even though it is more convenient, cheaper, and easier to meet people. Dan Denning, 02 Chemical Engineering, used to live in Niagara Hall. Now Denning lives in the suites and he said, "I like it very much." Denning was aware of the benefits of living in dorms but it was not enough to convince him to go

back.

Does anyone like the dorms? Patrick Kramer, 02 Environmental Resource Management, stated, "Pretty good dorm. I don't really mind it." Kramer lives in Niagara and was satisfied with his quarters. From a Resident Assistant's point of view, "I like dorms, I get to meet a lot of people," stated Jason Ruhlman, 08 Mechanical Engineering. Ruhlman is an R.A. for Lawrence Hall. Some of his thoughts were that the dorms were convenient, there is a lot of in-

"Housing drives enrollment, if you can't live here, then you won't want to come here."

Ed Mulfingher
Manager of Housing and Food Services

teraction, there are many people, the furniture is terrible but you learned to respect others' privacy. These two individuals stand up for the rest of students who feel that the dorms are a great place to live.

Ed Mulfingher, manager of Housing and Food Services, understands the complaints about the furniture and the walls. Mulfingher wants students to know why things are the way they are. Some of the facts that he pointed out are:

*The dorms have 25 year old furniture in them.

*Niagara Hall was built in 1970, Lawrence in 1972, and Perry is the oldest. Perry will be celebrating its

30th anniversary, it was built in 1968.

*The walls and doors are specially made to resist fire. (They are supposed to contain a fire inside of a room).

*There are concrete walls because they are great for fire protection.

The dorms are old, admitted Mulfingher, but he wanted to point out that there were projects underway to bring the old dorms up to date. For example:

*1995-1996. The bathroom partitions were put up in Perry & Lawrence Hall.

*1995-1996. The lobby furniture of Perry was replaced.

*1995-1996. The lobby furniture of Niagara and the chairs of the Apartments were reupholstered.

*1995-1996. 150 new mattresses were bought, and more will be bought every other year from then on.

*The heat in Perry was repiped so that students had their own individual regulators. Before, there were 2 regulators per floor in Perry. That meant that if one student changed the temperature everyone could feel the effect on that end of the hall.

*The lobbies received new carpets, and 10 new carpets and 24 new doors were put in the apartments.

Everything that housing does is based upon its budget. Furniture and equipment is replaced based upon how bad and old it is. Most of the

Dorms continued on page 2



photo courtesy of Robert Speel

This year's editor in chief Andrea Zaffino (right) congratulates next year's editor in chief Anne Rajotte (left).