

A Day in the Life

BRIAN ASHBAUGH

Student involvement important in making changes

About three years ago I came to Behrend in search of knowledge that I otherwise could not have acquired outside of college -- first as a struggling Engineering student trying to figure out the complexities of calculus and the mechanical aspects of our world and now as a creative writing English student trying to understand the rhetoric of my own language. "A Day in the Life" is not only the title of my tri-weekly column in the Collegian, but it's also a great song from the Beatles' Sgt. Pepper album which ends with the line "I'd love to turn you on." Throughout the semester I've tried to inform Behrend students by "turning on" the reader to the different decisions being made by administration which affect our lives on campus.

Turning on students to the state of Behrend was the main priority of my column this semester. But to tell you the truth, the research I put into "A Day in the Life" turned me on to the certain aspects of campus life that I probably would have missed otherwise. It also helped me understand the way decisions are really made here. I hope that others will come to their own conclusions about their academic lifestyle and take appropriate action.

These are only two instances in which our life at Behrend needs to be improved. There are also improvements being made to campus to aid our learning process. My first column of the semester was about how plans are being made to redesign the Academic Building making it more comfortable to learn. I was particularly pleased with the inclusion of a group of students in the decision making process. After getting back from my class in 57 Academic (a room with no windows) on Tuesday morning, I realized that these changes are in dire need. Hopefully the renovations will be made soon and the money can be collected to do so.

A Day in The Life appeared every three weeks in The Behrend Collegian.

The Behrend College Collegian
published weekly by the students of Penn State Erie, The Behrend College

Editor in Chief Andrea M. Zuffino	Sports Editor Dylan Stewart
Managing Editor Anne M. Rajotte	Associate Editor Brian Ashbaugh
Layout Editor Nathan Mitchell	Advertising Manager RJ Frelin
Photography Editor Jason Blake	Advisor Robert Speel
Business Manager Dana Greenhouse	Advisor Alan Parker
Features Editor Jon Stubbs	
News Editor Ik Chan Kang	

Postal Information: The Collegian is published weekly by the students of Penn State Erie, The Behrend College: First Floor, The J. Elmer Reed Union Building, Station Road, Erie, PA 16563. The Collegian can be reached by calling (814) 898-6488 or (814) 898-6019 (FAX). ISSN 1071-9288.

Letter Policy: The Collegian encourages letters to the editor. Letters should include the address, phone number, semester standing and major of the writer. Writers can mail their letters to behrcoll2@aol.com. Letters must be received no later than 5pm Tuesday for inclusion in that week's issue.

EDITORIALS

Library funding badly needed

Anybody who has ever gone to the Penn State Behrend library to do research knows that if they want up to date information on their topic, they won't have much luck. It's true that the building itself is a very beautiful structure and has the potential for becoming an exceptional location for research not only for college students but also for community members.

Libraries at University Park looks closely at Behrend's library and takes steps toward improving our collection. We are lagging behind other colleges in terms of the quality of our library.

The administrators that deal with the library clearly are working to get the funding we need. However, they are dependent on University Park. The budget has been getting larger over the past few years, but it is not enough to bring our library to the caliber of libraries at comparable colleges. Currently, most students go to Gannon's library to do much of their research. Behrend students shouldn't have to be dependent on the resources of other colleges for their work.

The library is one of the facilities that has the ability to help the campus become more prominent within the Penn State system. Recently the Business School received \$20 million to enhance its program. Part of this money will go to the library, however most of this will be of benefit only to those within the School of Business, and no other programs or areas of study. This must improve; the Behrend College needs an entity like an outstanding library to help recruit high caliber students as well as professors and other faculty and staff that plan on using their college library for research.

The struggle with Police and Safety has been constant throughout this school year. I outlined an inci-

Social Security reform does affect students

Pennsylvania Senator Rick Santorum was on the Behrend campus last Monday for a town meeting to address social security issues within the United States. His plan in general is to partially privatize social security to keep the entire system from becoming insolvent in future years.

was established in the early 1930s, most people did not even live to the age of 65. Today however the average retired person lives 10-15 years longer than this, and the system can no longer work efficiently using the guidelines under which the system was founded.

His proposal is one of many plans being discussed currently to bring reform to the present system. He is correct that the system is definitely in need of some kind of change. The way social security works now is the average elderly person today collects far more than what they paid in including interest. When the system

Senator Santorum's idea was legitimate; however it seems to be a little more complicated than necessary. The idea of private investing is a good one as long as there is some kind of safety net for those who tend not to invest wisely to still get enough in returns for a comfortable retirement. Yet, all the intricacies of Santorum's policies seem to be a little unneces-

sary. There is no question that social security needs to be changed. Last year alone, the federal government spent over \$350 billion on social security, it was the largest item in the budget, and six percent of every earned dollar is taken out for the same purpose. It's getting to the point in this country where if there is not some kind of change, the system will be bankrupt by the time most college students today would benefit from it. It is very necessary that the issue is addressed before it comes to this point. It is also up to younger people to pay attention to this issue and push for a change, or they will be faced the consequences later in life.

Behrend attitudes toward race

by Joet Kolano
guest columnist

If curiosity killed the cat then, "meow." Over spring break, an incident occurred that got me thinking about racism and prejudice. That same day, I sat down and thought of some questions to ask a few random college-age individuals and I received some of the exact responses that I had imagined. My quest began at Washington and Jefferson College, in the library, and finished here. The students that were willing to answer the questions provided some very insightful input.

I have always been bothered by the hypocrisy of people when it comes to racism. Almost every day an issue arises concerning two or more individuals of different races. Racist

jokes run rampant, negative attitudes about minorities are expressed, and cold stares are felt.

What sparked my interest on this subject was a dating relationship that I noticed. This relationship received many different reactions because the couple was "mixed." One was white and the other was Asian. Most people did not seem to mind the couple, while others hid their disapproval until the two were out of sight or earshot. It disgusted me. I wondered that if it were not that one was white (as the people previously mentioned were) if it would make a difference. Say, what if it were an African-American and an Asian? Well, I took this question to the public and I received some surprising answers.

First I asked the subjects what they thought about interracial relationships. Then I asked how they viewed people of their own race involved in interracial relationships and their partners. Third, I inquired if they had a problem with interracial relationships if neither of the two individuals were of their race. The following are a few of the responses from those asked:

"I don't think that I personally would date a person from another race, but I don't condemn those who choose to."

"Not OK for me—OK for others but I feel bad for the children."

"I don't mind them."

"I don't like it." Own race—"Trash." Partner—"Loser." But it is



okay if neither are white as this subject's was.

"Never." Own race—"White trash." Partner—"Dirt." Not okay even if of different races.

"They are fine with me." Own race—"They are cool with me if that's what floats their boat." Partner—"Cool."

"In this day and age, I think interracial relationships are fine and should be accepted."

This subject was very accepting of others nonetheless.

"I think that it's a good thing. Race shouldn't matter in a relationship."

"Nay. Not possible. Too many problems as far as how society views the relationship." Own race—"Like a sellout, the way they look at me, they feel bad as if they've done wrong." Partner—"Hey, like I view my friends, it's all good."

"I would not be against it, but I am not actively pursuing."

"Who cares?"

"Doesn't bother me." Both the people are viewed as "Brave and secure."

When asked if they thought that the level of prejudice and racism had improved, most of the subjects

replied positively saying that they thought it has. Other answers included:

"Actual prejudice has improved over the years, but the 'tension' among different groups has tended to increase."

"The playing field, though far from even, is leveling. It will, inevitably, be a slow and frustrating process."

"I feel cultures will always clash. It will always be a factor of life."

"I think many blacks have a chip on their shoulder and this irritates the white people."

"From what I have read and seen, both prejudice and racism has come a long way in being improved. Maybe I'm bad in judging whether there is a problem, I come from relatively white neighborhoods, and schools that were mostly white. From what I have seen, I am proud to say it has gotten much better. Perhaps one day we'll reach a point when nobody will understand what we mean when we say those words ('prejudice' and 'racism'). Unfortunately, true eradication may never happen."

"It's become worse, the jobs that blacks get they probably don't de-

serve."

"I don't feel levels of prejudice and racism have improved because of deep grown feelings of hatred and stereotypical viewpoints."

"Prejudice and racism are not worse, just more deeply entrenched."

"I think it's about the same if not worse. It's just not as openly shown as it once was."

"I feel that racism still exists, and is very prevalent. But I feel that most people, in my experiences, will keep their prejudices to themselves."

"Yes, they have improved over the years even if people aren't doing it on purpose. People are seeing more of other races on TV, in public, etc. and are starting to think nothing of it."

"I think that relations have improved but not nearly enough."

"On some levels it has improved. For example, legally, people cannot be discriminated against. In some ways, it is the same or worse. People still segregate themselves and still hold strong prejudicial beliefs."

If there were one thing that they could change, some suggestions were:

Race continued on page 5