

Beacon

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SGA appoints new secretary

By Ayodele Jones
managing editor

The end of the year is here and while many of us are preparing for finals, the Student Government Association is already planning for the upcoming Spring semester. Michelle Benjamin, who is now the present secretary of SGA, announced her resignation, effective at the end of this semester.

There were two candidates vying for the job: Rose Forrest, 03 Communications, and Stephanie Nardello, 03 Political Science. Each candidate was given an opportunity to tell the Senate a brief statement on their qualifications.

Nardello, who is secretary of Lambda Sigma, said "I have the time to put into this and I would like the opportunity. I would never go into anything without giving 110%, and I am committed to giving my all for

SGA." Forrest decided to speak on her experience as a leader "I am layout editor of the *Beacon* and I am also secretary of the Commuter Council. My experience with government extends to my minor in political science and my major in Communications. I feel that I am fully qualified."

Each candidate had a few suggestions for improving SGA. Nardello noted "SGA is built on a solid foundation, the students, and I would only wish to improve communication among the students and everyone here." Forrest also agreed with Nardello, but she included some points of her own. "I would better publicity on campus and I would also try to get more commuter residents involved. In addition, I would attempt to get more organizations and groups involved by sending more representatives to SGA meetings."

Although it was a tough decision, Michelle Benjamin stated "I hope that the new secretary continues to keep up the work that I have done to make SGA run smoothly." After closed elections, Nardello was elected the new secretary of SGA for the upcoming semester.

In addition, Senators also discussed

plans for the upcoming SGA Book Sale, Book Swap. The book sale allows students to sell their books through SGA, thus making it cheaper for students to purchase their textbooks from fellow students. The students set the price for their books and SGA would then catalogue them and reimburse them at the end of the week.

The swap will be held during the week of January 11-15. Monday and Tuesday of that week students will be able to drop off their books (which will later be sold), Wednesday is the first day of buying books. The sale will continue until the end of the week and if any books are unsold, students can pick up their books on the last day, Friday. The hours for the book swap are the following: Monday 11-3 and 5-7, Tuesday 11-3 and 5-7 and Thursday 11-3 and 5-7 Wednesday 10-5 and Friday 11-3.

Andrea DiPlacido, 03 communications and SGA Vice-president said, "If everyone participates in the book sale that we are holding and it is successful we will have this every semester to serve the students, because that is what SGA is for."



Dr. Dean Baldwin, Director of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences.

photo by Andrea Zaffino

Students have opportunity to study in England

by Kristie Vitron
staff writer

Through the study abroad program offered here at Penn State Behrend, students can earn up to nine credits, live in first class campus housing, and experience another culture, for less than \$3000. This summer, with the help of Behrend's Dr. Dean Baldwin, students can attend the University College of Northampton, the Nene College, in England.

The program runs from July 6th to August 10th 1999. There are four weeks of classes and one week of travel. Students have the option of taking 3, 6, or 9 credits making the cost \$2000, \$2500, or \$2900. Students must also pay about \$600 for roundtrip airfare between here and England.

There are many things included in the cost. Students will each have their

own room in an apartment they will share with 4-5 other students. The apartment is equipped with a kitchen, lounge, and bathrooms. Breakfast is free and other meals are available at a low cost. Local cultural trips, transportation, and a one week long trip to London, Scotland, or Ireland are also included in the cost.

The eleven classes, which are each three credits, will transfer to Penn State. There are classes offered for varying majors as well as for general education. Some of the courses include British Literature, British History, Sociology, Economics, and Environmental classes. Dr. Baldwin will teach a few of the classes, but the rest will be taught by British professors.

This summer's program is hopefully only the first step in a long term relationship between Penn State Behrend and the Nene College. Dr. Baldwin hopes that by next year En-

glish students will have the opportunity to come here, while Behrend students travel to England for an entire semester.

There are many benefits from studying abroad. Because many employers look favorably at people with international experience, the University's aim is to have 20% of its students study abroad. Students will gain this foreign culture through their British instructors and classmates as well as traveling throughout the country.

Dr. Baldwin feels that "This is a wonderful opportunity for students, and I hope that they will take advantage of it." Interested students can contact Baldwin at dxh11@psu.edu. Because space is limited, students should act soon. A \$500 deposit is due by February 28, and the rest of the balance is due by May 28.

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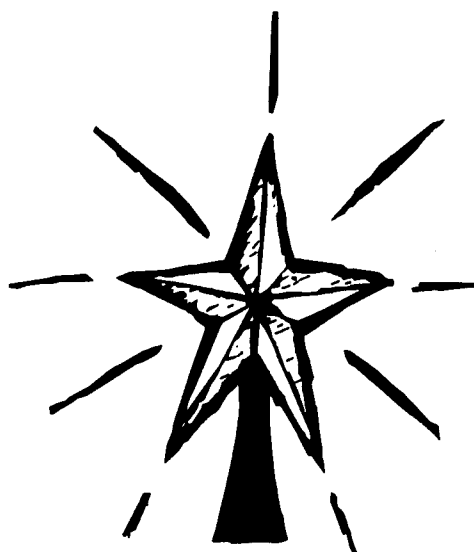
Men's and Women's basketball

Astronomy Open House: What was the Christmas Star?

Behrend science professor Robert Knacke discusses theories on Christmas star.

by Sarah Edwards
staff writer

Over Christmas carols and cookies, Dr. Roger Knacke, Director of the School of Science, discussed the star of Bethlehem at the astronomy series and how it actually might not be a star at all. Knacke said that in the Bible there are two accounts of Jesus's birth, but only one of these accounts discusses the star. Matthew wrote his account in Greek and in Greek the meaning of the word star



can be interpreted as any celestial event. Also, Matthew says that the star was moving. The reasons that Knacke feels that whatever happened during Jesus's birth was not a star is that a star would not be moving across the sky.

Knacke narrows his theory of what the star could have been to either a comet or an alignment of the planets. The comet theory takes effect based on the theory that in 66

A.D. a comet appeared over Jerusalem. The comet theory is questioned due to historical records. The theory Knacke feels could very well be true is that the planets Jupiter and Saturn were becoming realigned. In the process of realigning, they look conjoined, which

means they appear closer than they actually are. In December of the year 7 B.C., which was when Jesus was actually born, Mars also conjoined with Jupiter and Saturn. Even though this theory is very probable the star will always be a mystery because

there is no actual proof of what the wisemen saw on that holy night.

On a lighter note, there also was a new object seen in the sky lately. Knacke was lucky enough to have a picture of the unidentified object. It appeared to have a red shiny nose and seemed to be leading a sleigh. If you spot it watch out "Cause Santa is coming to Town. Merry Christmas!!!"

Beacon leadership is changing

By Anne Rajotte
editor in chief

The leadership of the *Beacon* is changing hands for the Spring semester.

Will Jordan, a third semester Communication major will take over as editor in chief in January. Jordan has worked as a staff writer for the *Beacon* in the past and is currently news

editor.

"I am very much looking forward to the challenges of being the editor in chief of the *Beacon*. Hopefully, next semester will run as smoothly or smoother than this semester," stated Jordan.

Ayodele Jones will retain her position as managing editor. "I am greatly looking forward to the new semester with Will as editor in chief, but I will

also look back on the last semester in which Anne Rajotte taught everybody the ropes and she will sorely miss."

Also returning is Features editor Jon Stubbs, Sports editor Jason Snyder, Layout editors Mike Perkins and Rose Forrest, Advertising managers Erin Edinger and Carey Smith, Business manager Jaime Davis, and

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Will Jordan, left, is the new editor in chief. Anne Rajotte, right, will be spending the spring semester in Austria

photo by Andrea Zaffino