

## The Behrend Beacon

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

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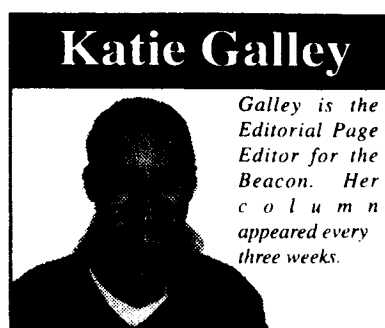
## Detours and Small Potatoes

### The nineties ruled! Or did they?

Can you believe that it is the end of the 1990's already? I sure can't! It just flew by. It seems like only yesterday that I was graduating sixth grade, and now it is almost the year 2000! All this reflecting is making me think about all the events that have happened in the nineties. I think that I will use my last editorial of the decade to talk about some of the biggest things that happened during the nineties. Of course, these are some of the biggest events according to me. You are welcome to your own opinion, and I encourage you to reflect and make your own list, too! I have divided the decade into ten categories and in each, I will list the thing that most sticks out in my mind. Here we go! These are in no particular order, by the way.

**Computers:** The winner here has to be the Internet! Now, I know that the Internet was officially invented before the nineties; however, it really took off in popularity in the nineties. And look how much it has changed our lives! We can now 'chat' with people that we have never met before at two in the morning. We have a limitless amount of information at the touch of a button and the connection of a phone jack. Who knew that the information super highway would revolutionize the way that we live? And here you thought it was only good for playing Quake.

**Sports:** This category was so easy to decide on, the thing that immediately popped into my head was



**Katie Galley**

Galley is the Editorial Page Editor for the Beacon. Her column appeared every three weeks.

the Homerun Race between Mark McGwire and Sammy Sosa. Let's face it, baseball pretty much sucked after the strike until last year. And all of a sudden there is this undying love for the game again. America's pastime indeed!

**Entertainment:** The Unsinkable Titanic rises to win this category. Now, as much as I would like to say that the winner is the X-Files, I can't. Titanic started off as a dream project for James Cameron and ended up being the highest grossing movie of all time. Who knew, eh? And since this category should also include music, the winner is WoodStock '99, but not really because of the music. The reason I picked this overrated event is because of the fiery culmination of it. Only in the nineties could a celebration of peace and love end in flames.

**Religion:** The death of Mother Teresa. Too bad her funeral was not as widely watched as Princess Diana's was.

**Environment:** The Exxon Valdez

oil spill takes the category, no question. I know, it happened in 1989, but the effects of it are still damaging our ocean and wildlife to this day. Congratulations Exxon!

**Science:** Baaaaaa! Okay, calm down Dolly, we all know that you were the most consequential scientific accomplishment of the nineties. Now we can clone anything! Sheep, cows, people, whatever. Is that a good thing or a bad thing, though? Oh, that's another editorial all together.

**Education:** Oh, where to start? So much has happened...between teachers bearing the children of students to gay prom dates, I almost don't know what to choose. However, I think what takes the cake in this category is all the school violence. Mainly school shootings, and even more specifically, Columbine. What is going on with kids these days? Please, don't get me started!

**Media:** I gave them their own category just because of their significance. And I promise I am not biased because our newspaper is a form of media. Look at all the media have done for us lately. They interrupt our favorite television shows with a 'Special Report'; they constantly beat into our heads the fact that JonBenet is still dead. And what can I say about OJ? He is the media king as far as I am concerned. Does he know how to get the ratings or what? But was the 12-hour coverage

of the Princess Diana funeral really necessary? Also, I do NOT need to see every moment of the search for JFK Jr.'s plane!

**Health:** Okay, this one took serious consideration. But after much debate and deliberation I came up with Viagra, um, no pun intended, I swear! This was the miracle blue pill that so many men were waiting for. Bob Dole did a little happy dance when he heard about it. In a close second was the HMO system, but I don't need to go there right now.

**Government:** Being an intern rules...unless you intern at the White House, and then you don't need any actual skills, just a good pair of knee pads. I can honestly say that the Impeachment Scandal was the most publicized government story of the nineties. Sure, we were all sick of hearing about it, but for once it was nice to see Bill Clinton squirm under pressure. By April he looked about a hundred years old. And despite his astronomically high acceptance ratings, I would like to thank him for bringing the presidency to an all time low.

So there you have it, my list of top ten influential things that happened in the 1990's. Disagree with my list? Tell me about it, I'll listen! Or maybe I will still be in hiding from the wackos that will emerge during Y2K. Good Luck and Happy New Year everyone!

## A view from the lighthouse

### Those were the days! The semester in review.

Wars, rain, rape, and school spirit, that pretty much sums up the semester. Well, that's not everything that happened, but those were the most talked about things here at the Beacon.

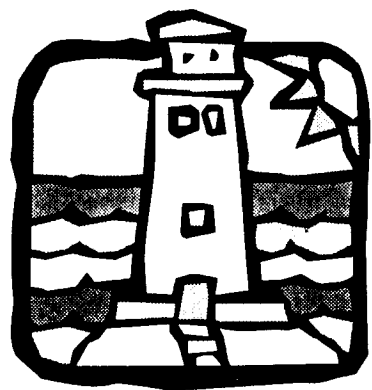
The semester started off with a war between Perry and Niagara Halls. It was an all out battle to the death for the bench from the front porch of Niagara. It was dirty and devious and in the end it was a stalemate, each side receiving a bench. Benches for everyone!

The Floods of '99 were the best! How many times can you say you slid down the lawn behind Brunos's on your belly?! Probably almost never. Hope you weren't scared that the campus was going to wash away because here in the Beacon office it was a virtual wave pool.

On a more serious note the infiltration of 'The Real World' here on campus shook up the campus community. The alleged attempted sexual assault was shocking to us all. It reminded us that Behrend is not free from real life problems.

Did you notice the sports teams here at Behrend rocked this semester?! The women's and men's soccer teams and the women's tennis team all won the AMCC titles. And the men's basketball team is undefeated so far this semester. The women's basketball team is on their way to another AMCC title. And that leads us into...school spirit!

School spirit is at an all time high



at Behrend! There are spirit stations around every bend, and the new jazz band and dance team are helping to liven things up all the time.

So many famous people visited us here on campus this fall. The comedian/political satirist Al Franken came and enlightened us with his witty remarks about Dean Lilley and life in general. There was also the heated debate between Carville and Buchanan.

One of the biggest things that happened around here on campus was the arrival of our new iMac at the Beacon office! This little baby can go from zero to 60 in well under an hour! That means that you, the students, get a better and more improved paper! Yeah!

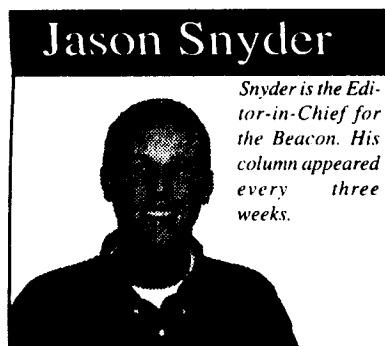
Even though this is a relatively short list, it shows some of the best and worst of the semester. Thanks to everyone for a great five months, hope everyone survives Y2K and we'll see you next year!

## Join me in Reality

### The human spirit alive in '99

If we were to look back over the span of the last 100 years, we would find one recurring theme that grabs the attention of everyone with a heart. The human spirit. We pick the moments that tug at our emotions and give us something we can take with us into the future. And even though we have come up with a way of measuring things in correspondence with the millennium, we still can't leave out the touching moments in 1999 that gave us a perfect example of the human spirit which seems to be so much more difficult to come across these days.

On April 20 of this year, an average high school with normal students and caring teachers experienced the tragedy that opened up the eyes of America to the scary fact that violence is taking over our culture. In the "safe" confines of the classroom, two neglected high school students opened fire on their peers in the quiet and peaceful Columbine High school. The details were exploited through



**Jason Snyder**

Snyder is the Editor-in-Chief for the Beacon. His column appeared every three weeks.

the media who used the tragic events of that day as their own tool to rake in the dollars. Students, whose friends were just killed, were shoved in front of news cameras with microphones forced in their faces. The sadness really hit the country when they looked at the next morning's newspaper to find teenagers and families having to endure the most traumatic times of their lives.

But shortly after the bodies were laid to rest and the memorials were complete, conversation turned to gun control and safety in our schools. The

community still mourned, but the country was on to "bigger" issues. The story ended with no real closure and no happy ending. Until now. The human spirit is alive and well at Columbine High School, with their football team winning the State Championship just this past week.

Of course you can't judge the recovery of such a tragedy with a sport's accomplishment, but the support of the school and faculty was overwhelming. The horrific events that happened can't be forgotten by the students that witnessed them, but the heart of the students at Columbine High School can't be questioned. They are a perfect example of the courage that Americans find so respectable and have honored since the beginning of our time.

The idea of the human spirit continued into the summer where the year's most dynamic event occurred. During a career that was headed for many successes, Lance Armstrong was told he had a disease that would

most likely end his life. After surgery and a successful recovery, Armstrong began on his road back to the streets of the Tour de France. Eventually he would be leading the pack and pulling away from the best bicyclists in the world.

It had been a while since a story where an individual defied all odds to just get back to where he once was. But Armstrong went further and reestablished the idea that anything is possible if you put your mind to it.

1999 might be a year unfortunate enough to be caught in the hoopla of the excitement of the new millennium. Everything is being measured in respect to the century or the millennium, but 1999 did continue to bring the world events that touched the hearts of many. The idea of human spirit continues to live and will always prove prevalent in the years, centuries and millenniums to come.

## Letter to the Editor:

Dear Editor,

As President of Peek 'n Peak, I commend the Beacon on its recent article highlighting winter activities at the resort. Staff writer Katie Przepyszny did a fine job communicating all of the winter services and restaurants our resort offers. The Peek also has a variety of summer activities, including two eighteen hole golf courses, a new miniature golf course, and a newly-installed outdoor pool with a cabana bar and

waterslide. Two golf pro shops and restaurants are also open in the summer. Please feel free to visit in the spring and experience our summer activities! Again, thank you for the wonderful article on the resort. We enjoy having the Behrend Ski Club and ski class come to the Peek and hope to see more Behrend students in the coming year!

Sincerely,  
Norbert J. Cross, President  
Peek 'n Peak

## National Commentary

### This Message On Media Ethics Brought To You By ... Jerry Springer?

by Terry Jackson  
Knight-Ridder Newspapers

If the ringmaster of television's No. 1 rock 'em, sock 'em sleazefest should ever decide to re-enter politics, he could be mayor of Cincinnati, that used to be his slogans.

Springer, in an ultraslick defense of his syndicated Have-I-Got-A-Surprise-for-You TV show pitched to several hundred University of Miami students last week, said he's giving the common man, woman and anyone sexually in between their rightful shot at being a momentary celebrity.

If Princess Diana could go on TV and reveal intimate details of her eating disorder and infidelity in her marriage, then why shouldn't an unsophisticated nobody from Nebraska be given the same opportunity? He said that. Really.

In a speech marginally devoted to the topic of ethics in the media, he said a lot of other things, too. He called his show "stupid," "a Friday night frat party" where people scratch and pull

each other's hair, but then he praised "The Jerry Springer Show" as a noble blow against the white, upper-middle-class attitude that he says rules television.

He said it's TV newscasts and newspapers that unnecessarily hurt people, exposing them to ridicule against their wishes. He said that doesn't happen on his show where, in front of millions of viewers, spouses learn their mates are cheating on them or daughters tell their mothers they are hookers.

He said that every guest is given a checklist of 21 surprises they could be hit with on his show, and buried among them is the one real shocker. "We don't exploit people," he said. "No one goes on who doesn't check yes next to every one of those items. They agree they would be OK discussing all those things. They beg to be on the show."

He also said, and I believe, that those people who beg to be on the show are real, not actors or con artists, though it's depressing to think

there are that many people out there living "la vida" bizarre. He said those who think his show is unconscionable trash are "elitists" who ignore the real pornography on the airwaves, the lying politicians on C-SPAN, the unnecessary investigation into President Clinton's sex life.

Then he wrapped his show up in a Constitution argument for freedom, if "The Jerry Springer Show" disappears, then "ER" and the evening news will one day be in jeopardy. All in all, Springer's tap dance on the stage at UM's Gusman Hall was an utterly disingenuous display by a man who is laughing at his guests and audience, all the way to the bank.

He and his producers are making millions of dollars by exploiting, yes, Jerry, exploiting, an unfortunate psychotic need in some people to get on television, no matter the consequences. He's also exploiting an equally unfortunate need for his audience to be voyeurs on lives more messed up than their own.

Springer justifies doing that by

pointing to other media excesses, Howard Stern, sensationalized local news, coverage of O.J. Simpson, and saying he thinks his show is ethically superior.

That's the argument children use when they do something they know is wrong, "Howie stole the candy bar at the store and all I did was eat it." With the promise of a plane ticket, a hotel room, a few meals and a couple of minutes on national TV, Springer gets people to humiliate themselves and others in the name of entertainment.

He told his UM audience it would be elitist to suggest he's wrong to do this just because his guests aren't well-educated or rich. Well, here's another take on that argument: It's far more elitist, and unethical, for a well-educated, media sophisticate to make a fortune off people willing to trade dignity and privacy for 15 minutes of airtime. Rather than lecturing anyone on ethics, Springer should be trying to adopt some.

