

Speaker explains the 'Art of Front Yards'

by Valerie Hammond
staff writer

The Pennsylvania Humanities Council attempted to give some insight on why front yards across the nation are usually designed similarly. On Wednesday night, Dr. Kevin Melchionne spoke about *The Art of Front Yards*, focusing mainly on how the front-yard became such an important aspect of the suburban lifestyle.

Part of the presentation by Melchionne included a slide show that featured the front yards of a regular suburban neighborhood. In the slides, many of the yards demonstrated conformity to the pattern of a traditional front yard. Melchionne said that the features of a traditional front yard included, "a neat lawn without visible division between neighbors' yards, planting or shrubbery at the foundation of the house that does not obscure the view of the house, a specimen ornamental tree, and a shade tree by the road." Most front yards do have these basic essentials, but some even have a bit more to offer, such as lawn ornaments. "But," Melchionne pointed out, "lawn ornaments aren't as common as you would think. Pink flamingos just aren't all that popular in today's society."

Melchionne also said, "the front yard has become a cultural practice." It is almost a tradition due to the fact that in some cases "it enhances the value of the property."

The basic idea of the American front lawn originally came from the aesthetic English garden. These gardens feature meandering paths, odd shaped ponds or streams, and some type of shrubbery. English gardens were initially imitated in public parks

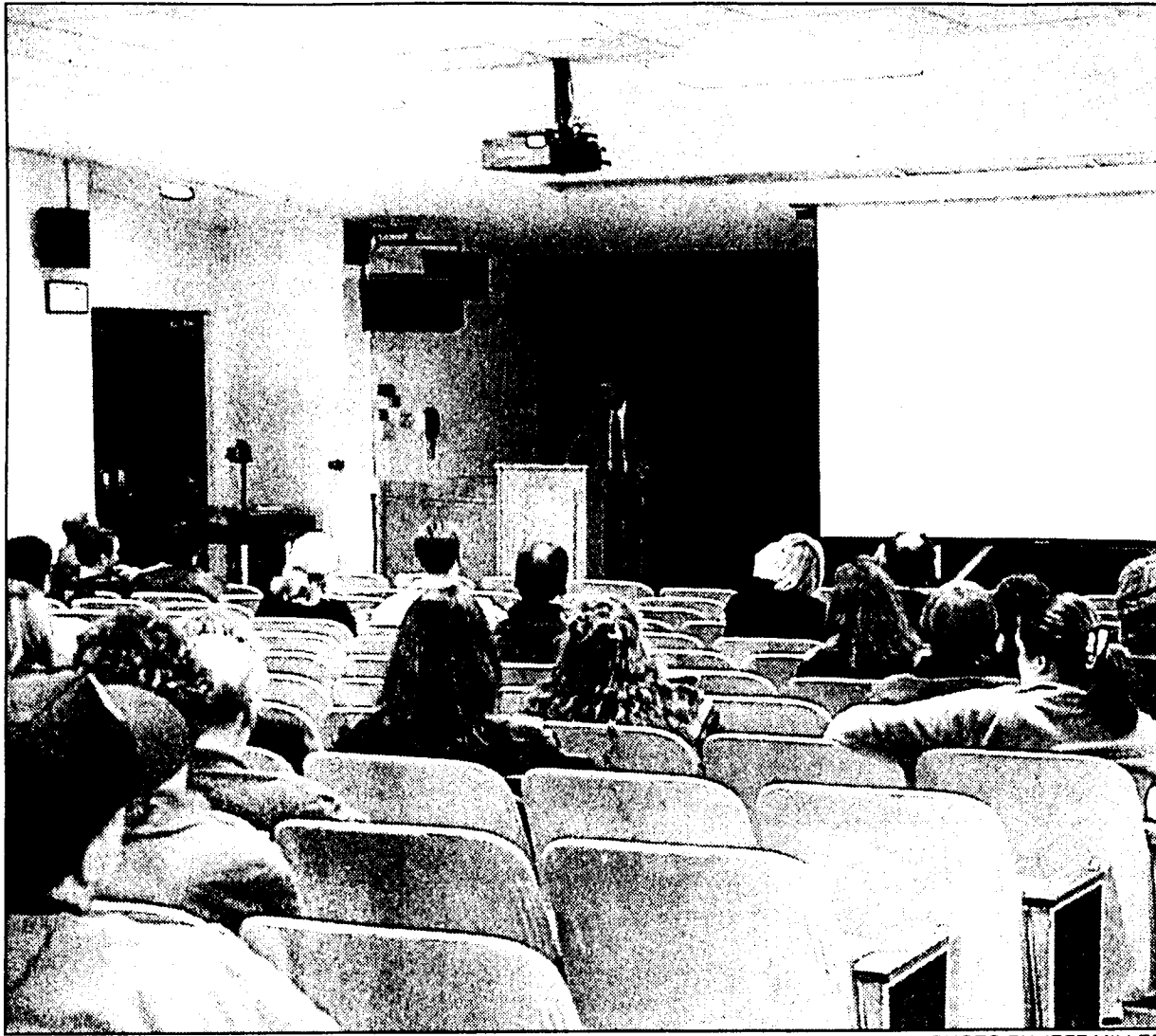


PHOTO BY JEFF MILLER

Dr. Kevin Melchionne speaks in the Reed Commons about the practice of decorating front yards.

and eventually became a part of everyday life, in the form of a front lawn. The reason the front lawn is still an important part of American culture is because it isn't too hard, according to Melchionne. "Its success lies in relatively easy maintenance," said Melchionne, indicating that all you have to do to keep it looking good is mow, prune, and weed flower gardens

from time to time.

One thing that has changed in the front yard in the past decade is the size and placement of new trees and shrubbery. Back in the fifties, when suburban life became popular, the lawns were prefabricated — just like the houses. Each lawn was given a few trees and shrubs that came right from the greenhouse. Today's new houses

are provided with trees and shrubs that look like they have been growing there for a while, almost like the house was built around them. This, of course, is not the case. Just like the trees and shrubs of the fifties, these newer ones are shipped in and planted to look like they have been there for ten to fifteen years.

Landslide continued from front page

a term that will not end until November.

Several weeks ago, opposing candidate Blair brought up the fact that Skillen's GPA was under 2.5 to the elections committee. Sherosky attempted to verify this rule, but could not find note of it in the constitution or in the bylaws. She also tried to find record of the vote in the club's minutes, but was unsuccessful in finding all of the minutes and therefore could not verify that SGA had in fact voted in the rule. Therefore, at the March 29 meeting, the members declared Skillen eligible to run.

However, before this week's meeting, the missing minutes were found, and the members had to decide what to do. Several suggestions were made: the entire ticket of both Miles and Skillen could be vetoed. Or, Skillen could be removed from the ticket. Also, the ticket could be left as it was, and if Miles won the election, she could then choose a new vice president, with the approval of the senators. After much heated debate, it was decided that Skillen should be allowed to run, as elections were already in progress.

Due to a loophole in the earlier decision, SGA is now left with the decision of whether or not Skillen should receive the stipend. The rule says that anyone on the executive board receiving a stipend must have the specified GPA; it says nothing about such a requirement for board members not receiving a stipend. Therefore, it was decided at the last meeting that SGA would wait to see if Skillen and Miles actually won, and then the members would decide what to do about the stipend. It is possible that Skillen will not be allowed to receive the stipend. No mention was made about further pursuit of the fact that Skillen is currently ZBT president, with a term that will overlap with his vice presidency.

Also discussed in the last meeting was the fact that a net send was sent to all networked computers at Behrend last week. The message encouraged readers to vote for Blair, and gave the URL for his web page. Students had to click OK in order for the message to disappear. While this

was not a disturbance to some students, it appeared on Power Point presentations in classes, some people thought that by clicking OK they had voted for Blair, and some students' computers were said to have frozen. It is still under scrutiny whether or not this action was a violation of University Policy.

Guidelines state that students may not send out mass emails or newsgroups, but it does not specifically mention net sends. SGA has no authority to punish Blair judicially for this action. In fact, Blair never officially admitted that he was the author of the net send. SGA determined that this action, along with the questionable practice of distributing large amounts of flyers in residence halls (a practice which falls under the University's policy of solicitation and is illegal) would not affect Blair's candidacy for president. SGA did, however, pass a motion that implored Blair to write a letter of apology to the campus for any inconvenience caused by his actions, a letter to be sent to the *Beacon* and published in the editorial section of the paper.

"Because it's the first contested election in awhile, there's been a lot of controversy over what are legal and not legal running procedures," said Sherosky before the results were known. "No matter what happens I can honestly say the no matter who wins we'll have an excellent Senate next semester with the variety of majors and personalities of new members."

The positions for senators were also contested this year. Eleven students were voted in: Sunny Webb, Chad Warren, Jennie Ellison, Brandi Hovis, Keenan Hansen, Traci Hamm, Melody Sherosky, Melissa Davis, Aaron Braun, Dawn Hartman, and Timothy Meyers. Matthew Wiertel and Jennifer Foulks were not elected. Michelle Benjamin won the secretary position, which was not contested.

At the last meeting, Ken Miller, dean of students and an advisor to SGA, implored the organization to form a new elections committee to clear up the discrepancies in the elections procedures before elections for first year senators in the fall.



2000 - 2001 PROPOSALS FUNDED THROUGH THE STUDENT ACTIVITY FEE

Club/Organization or Office Submitting Proposal	Proposal Title	Amount Funded
Club Volleyball Team	Volleyball Tournaments	\$ 900
Student Activities/RUB Info. Desk	Reed Wintorgarden Furniture	\$ 17,946
Student Activities Office	Cedar Point Trip	\$ 959
Student Activities Office	Concert Series	\$ 37,179
Student Activities Office	New Family Weekend Event	\$ 1,200
RUB Information Desk	Blue Bus Supplement	\$ 14,399
MCC/Diversity & Educational Equity	Diversity Through Poetry	\$ 2,500
The Behrend Beacon	Beacon	\$ 18,180
Center for Service Leadership	Current Issues Education Series	\$ 2,500
Ctr. for Service Leadership/Reality Check	Alternative Break Trips	\$ 2,600
Center for Service Leadership	Service Programs	\$ 2,300
Center for Service Leadership	Emerging Leaders Retreat	\$ 875
Center for Service Leadership	Fall Leadership Conference	\$ 9,000
Student Government Association	SGA Fall 2000 Supplemental Funding	\$ 9,500
Intramural & Recreation Programs	Supp. Intramural Officials Wages	\$ 4,000
Intramural & Recreation Programs	Equip./Certifying Instructors/Wages	\$ 3,750
Intramural & Recreation Programs	Equipment	\$ 750
Intramural & Recreation Programs	Outdoor Recreation Programs	\$ 1,000
Intramural & Recreation Programs	Other Recreation Programs	\$ 300
Office of Student Activities	Speaker Series	\$ 24,000
Office of Student Activities	Scheduler Plus 2000 Maintenance	\$ 2,000
Trigon	"Body Alchemy" Speaker/Presentation	\$ 2,500
Humanities & Social Sciences	Logan Wintorgarden Concert Series	\$ 5,346
JRC, LEB, SKN, & Hall Councils	Cider Rock	\$ 4,000
Athletic Department	Game Day Promotions	\$ 2,850
Athletic Department	Cheerleaders	\$ 1,800
Lion Entertainment Board	Lion Entertainment Board Funding	\$ 51,150
Office of Student Activities	Summer 2000 Programming	\$ 5,360
	Total amount funded:	\$ 228,844

Amount held for monthly disbursements beginning September/October 2000: \$ 24,316

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