

A View From The Lighthouse

Let's get it together

It isn't only snow that is falling this season. On Monday, the gutter on Erie Hall fell. Since Behrend's gymnasium is falling apart, it's superb that the ARC is open. Oh... wait... wasn't that supposed to be open back in September? Or was it earlier? The now projected date for the availability of the ARC is sometime in February. Students coming back from spring break who were scheduled for ESACT classes in the ARC once again found refuge in Erie Hall—after having to trek up the road to the ARC. The graduating class of 2004 would like to be able to utilize the pool, the indoor track, and the weight room sometime before 2005. Until then, students have been forbidden from the ARC.



Isn't it evil enough that teachers are forced to work in a miniature office in a trailer? Heaven forbid that a gale storm would hit and play dominoes with the boxes on wheels.

Many classes require that the students stay on top of current events. Yet, it is difficult to read the newspaper when the machine won't even open. No, there isn't anything wrong with the Behrend ID cards; it's the machine. Yes, those newspapers are free to students, but it doesn't help much when the students can't get the free newspaper. We at the *Beacon* have discovered the secret to opening the machine without a crowbar: push and pull.

Another problem? Parking, it's cold, enough said.

Let's not forget that the extension of the Bayfront Highway is to be in place soon, destroying not only the current Child Care Center, but also increasing traffic jams and possibly accidents. It takes long enough to get off of campus at the 2 p.m. rush, now commuters won't be able to get home in time to get a good night's rest and still make it to their 11 a.m. class.

Behrend, thank you for trying to make this campus a better and more interesting place, but please do it in a reasonable amount of time. Projects such as the ARC and REDC sound great on paper, but they are no use to students without the building actually being there. Colleges are constantly attempting to attract more students. More students means more tuition, hence more revenue for convenient facilities. If Behrend has those facilities in a rapid time period, it only means that the campus is more attractive to potential students. Behrend, let's get it together.

Over winter break, the Erie news was laced with the \$30 million grant given to Behrend to build the Research and Economic Development Center (REDC). The REDC is to be home to the School of Business and also the school of Engineering/Engineering Technology. REDC will be a great asset to Penn State Erie, when it does open. However, this building has been in queue for about ten years now. The point? Behrend seems to have trouble with finishing projects on time, if at all. All the buildings and new developments that the students are hearing about now will most likely never affect them. It is great that in the future Behrend students will have the opportunity to utilize all the facilities, but in the meantime, the current students just get jealous of what they will never have.

To further illustrate, the million dollar staircase behind Perry Hall still lacks handicap access. Over the summer, the elevator was to be started. However, it's now January, and it is still inaccessible. Last semester, the stairs were disgusting and mud filled. It should not require knee-high fishing boots to climb stairs. The most recent development has been the addition of security cameras at the top and the bottom of the stairwell. But what about the middle?

In the trailers, home to the offices of many faculty members, restrooms are absent. Why do our poor faculty members have to hike through the avalanches of snow just to use a lavatory? It should be a given convenience.

SOCKS WASHED UP AS FIRST FELINE... CLINTONS WON'T TAKE HIM ON MOVE



Let it snow!!!

Hello. My name is Liz Hayes. And I am here today to confess to all of you that I like winter. I like snow. It takes a lot to make that confession. Snow is an addiction of mine that I am not even willing to try to overcome. And I don't have a problem. I am only at this meeting because my friends made me come... ooops, sorry, wrong addiction.

But the confession was true. And while such a drastic statement will surely cause snowballs to lob at my head on the way to my next class or cars to accelerate past me in order to spray muddy slush all over my pants while I'm walking in the parking lot, I can remain quiet no longer. Now, there are many things about Erie that I will gladly gripe about: overabundance of old, senile people; overabundance of bigoted Republicans; overabundance of places that close at 8:00 p.m.; overabundance of Country Fairs; overabundance of really odd smells; overabundance of people who don't know what shopping buggies, tractor trailers, gumbands, and Sheetz are. But I won't complain about the snow.

And I would like to know where the rest of you get off complaining about Erie weather. For as far back as I can remember (which, granted, in the whole realm of things isn't really that long, but for the sake of argument...) the city of Erie has been located next to a large lake, henceforth called Lake Erie. Now I understand that geography is no longer the strong point of most high school kids, but I like to think that the majority of people knew that, or could at least logically sort out that relationship—the city of Erie being next to the lake Erie. And since the majority of students here come from Pennsylvania or nearby states, I think most of you knew that Erie was in a region that receives what is known as lake effect snow. Now I won't get into how the term "lake effect snow" came into use to reduce confusion, but it is usually a good assumption that if the region has its own type of snow, that region gets quite a bit of it.

The point that I am strenuously trying to muddle my way to is this: If you knew Erie got a lot of snow, and you didn't like it, why the H-E-double-hockey-sticks did you come here?



Beyond the Cheap
Colored Lights
Liz Hayes

About how many campuses the commonwealth (a.k.a. state) has—you could have picked one of those instead. Or go to another college that doesn't get so much snow. Even those MIS or plastics majors can surely get a reasonably similar education elsewhere. You might not be able to beat the price, but if the weather is so influential to your mood, pay the extra money to be happy.

Maybe there are a handful of people who aren't from the area and didn't know about the weather. Though how you managed to find out about this hole-in-the-wall school while remaining ignorant to the weather conditions of the "third largest city in the state of Pennsylvania" (that doesn't say much for the fourth largest city of PA, does it) is beyond me. But now you know that Erie gets its share of winter weather. And you don't like it. Here's a suggestion: leave! Run far away and don't look back. Do not pass go, do not collect \$200, do not try to grab one last piece of tasty Bruno's pizza. GO! Erie has enough native cynics bashing it all the time to house many more. So go back to your home and you will never have to hear the words "lake effect snow" again except when you are watching The Weather Channel, trying to figure out where the jet stream goes after it hits the coast of Maine.

And what about the loyal citizens of Erie... sorry, had to pause to collect myself... who whine about their own weather? What is up with you guys? You have lived here for how long and you are still whining about it? More to the point, why are you still here? Again, go to another

campus. Go to another school. Heck, go to another country so you can learn that what a truly intercultural education really is. College was your shot to escape and live somewhere else before you get sucked into the void of Erie forever. And it may not be too late, so if you can, leave before you slide off the cliff into the lake too.

As for myself, while I may continue to complain somewhat hypocritically about the snow removal abilities of our campus and the city, I will rarely complain about the weather itself (especially not after people read this editorial). I will complain about the fact that a week after the last snowflake there are still sidewalks, parking lots, and roadways interrupted by moguls of snow. I will whine about the accident-inducing Himalayas of snow plowed up to the corners of roads and parking lots. I will gripe about the priceless parking spaces that were rendered almost useless by snow drifts upon my return to campus. I will grumble about the ice on the sidewalks that haven't seen a sign of salt or shovel since the beginning of time. I will cringe at the snow removal abilities of a city that should be prepared to deal with a lot of snow. And I will swear at the drivers who can't seem to master the concepts of winter driving.

But I will also be the lone figure standing in her room early in the morning grinning foolishly at the equally foolish weatherpersons on The Weather Channel as they announce another four to six for Erie. I will be the one person complaining that we need more snow to cover up the dirty snow so that it remains pretty. I will be the one looking up at the happy little trees because they look picturesque covered in snow. I will be the one to object to breaking the icicles. I will be the one to egg on the snowball fight, to insist on one more time down the slopes, and to argue for one more donut in the parking lot. And I will be the one to continue pissing everyone off by singing "Let it Snow" in the middle of March.

Hayes' column appears every three weeks.

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