

A View From The Lighthouse

Say our name, say our name

We are... Penn State. Every one who has ever been to a Penn State football game knows that cheer. And there are some other things about Penn State that everyone knows. There are things about Behrend that everyone knows too. We all know not to try and get something to eat between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. in Bruno's. We all know that even though we have a balcony on the outside of the library, no one is allowed there. We all know that the one time we need to get money out the ATM machine that it will be broken. And there are other things that may seem less obvious, but everyone knows anyway. You know what we are talking about, the little code names that people have for things across campus: the ARC, the RUB desk, B.F.E. parking lot. But until recently, we here at the *Beacon* thought that everyone knew that we are just that, the *Beacon*. But suddenly it has been brought to our attention that apparently no one knows who we are... or when we come out... or that it's free to get the paper for that matter.

It all started about a year and a half ago when an administrator was giving us praise for having an exceptional college newspaper, and he was gushing about how much better it has been than in the past. That was great, and we were terribly pleased... until the administrator told us that he still ran to the racks every Thursday morning to get the new weekly edition. Well, that would have been great too, but we had been publishing our paper every Friday morning for about a semester and a half!

So after that kick in the teeth, we walked away with our heads lowered but with a new understanding of just how people viewed us here on campus. With that said, another story comes to mind of exactly how many people do not know that we have a school newspaper called *The Behrend Beacon*.

It was February 16, 2000, and a majority of the *Beacon* staff were sitting in Erie Hall for the supposed "last regular season game in Erie Hall ever," and we noticed a bunch of banners hung around the ceiling. After admiring all the banners, we thought that we should get one too that said *The Beacon*. It was then that we noticed that there was already one up there for us... only it said *The Collegian*, the name of Behrend's school newspaper about three and a half years ago! No one ever bothered to tell us that we could change the banner if we wanted to... but the real truth is that probably no one even noticed.

But this semester has to be the

worst one thus far with people not even knowing that their school newspaper is *The Behrend Beacon*.

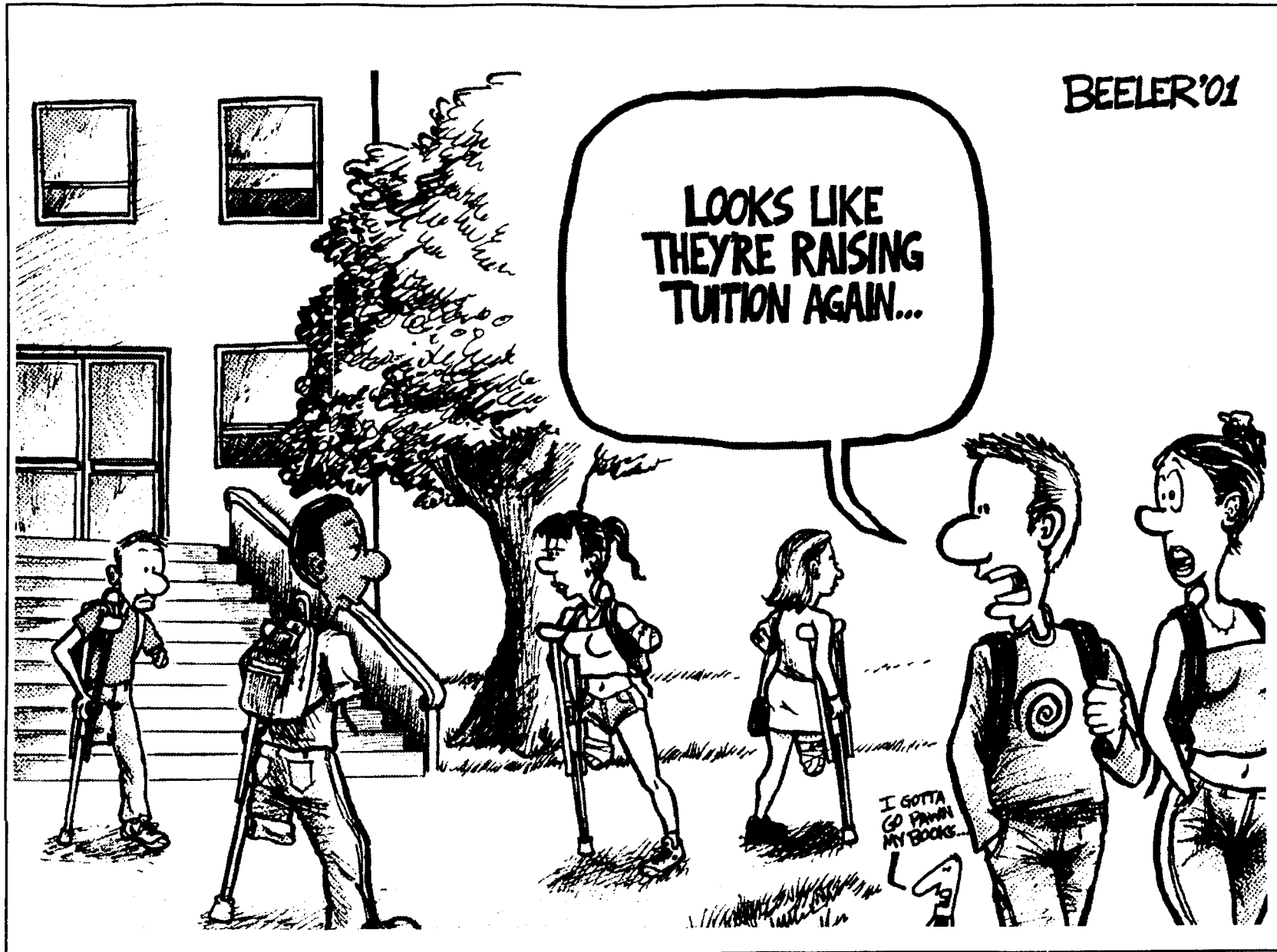
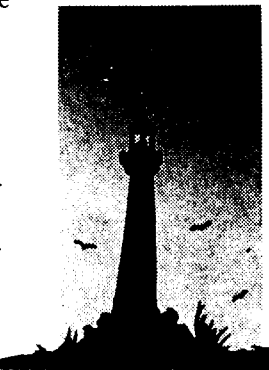
Because when members of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, and even old advisors for the *Beacon* are still calling it the *Collegian*, you know it's bad!

The absolute worst example, though, is something that came to our attention just the other day. The story goes back to last semester when on one Friday morning, four members of the *Beacon* staff were forced to come back to the newspaper office at eight in the morning after being here until 3:30 a.m. the same morning for layout. The reason we were forced was because the Admissions and Public Relations Offices were putting together a new viewbook. You know, the one that arrived in the mail at your house that first made you interested in coming to Behrend.

Well, they forced us here in the morning to take some phony looking shots of all of us sitting around working in the office for this guidebook. We were happy to help and looked forward to seeing the finished product.

Unfortunately, when we got the book earlier this week, much to our dismay, right next to the picture of the four of us sitting around holding a newspaper that said THE BEHREND BEACON, there was a list of clubs and organizations and it listed us as THE COLLEGIAN! Now, correct us if we are wrong, but doesn't that make all of us here look a bit foolish that four students are reading a paper that clearly says THE BEHREND BEACON and then it says, "THE COLLEGIAN, student newspaper"? Yeah, that's what we thought too.

We just wanted to clear up some obvious confusion here on campus. Because even though we are proud of the product we put out week after week, it's not enough. Everyone on this campus should be proud too. After all, it's a paper that is published for students, by students and it is all about YOUR campus. So if you ever see an administrator running to our newspaper racks on Thursday morning, kindly point out to him/her that the paper has been coming out on Friday mornings for about two years now and that what he/she is reading is old news.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Questioning Police and Safety

When I first came to Behrend, the only things printed in the Police and Safety report were complaints about "aggressive squirrels" or people who lost their keys.

Now the reports are filled with cars being broken into, vandalism and other more serious threats. This is starting to piss me off.

Almost every weekend there are cars that are damaged in the BFE or Ohio lots. Windows are broken, the cars are keyed or the sideview mirrors ripped off. Why can't P&S do anything about this?

My main problem is very simple. Being a resident student for three years I have had the opportunity to observe Police and Safety many times. Every hour or so they drive around the lots. Occasionally they stop for 2 or 3 hours to talk to friends up in the apartments or just kill time. The only things I have EVER seen P&S do is ticket cars and harass people about drinking. Why don't they do their job and actually try to stop crimes?

I don't care if someone parks in a housing employee's spot, and they have to walk a little

bit (welcome to the students world, and we PAY to go here). I don't care if there is some drunk kid laying outside Reed. I do care about the safety and security of the parking lots and our cars.

Where in Police and Safety is there a word that means parking attendants? I don't pay \$150 dollars to park in an overcrowded lot, so I can be ticketed for staying five minutes too long in a temp spot, or so the P&S office can have \$1000 a piece flat screen monitors. I pay for the security of myself and my possessions. Now I don't feel unsafe at Behrend, but I am greatly concerned that the damages in the back lots that started last year continue to escalate.

How do we go about solving this? For starters, our security could spend a little bit more time in the back lots. One pass every couple of hours isn't going to dissuade anyone from vandalism. Try actually sitting back there for awhile during the "problem" times (that would be weekend nights).

How about having some one around in the office on the weekends too? My car was recently broken into, and when I tried to go to the office to

file a report, I was greeted with a "Sorry, no office hours on the weekends" sign. Does crime slow down on weekends? No, so why do our officers slow down?

It is common knowledge that on campus, our police have the same rights as the "real" police. They can arrest and detain people for any real crime and follow the same laws and regulations that the real police do. So shouldn't they have the same responsibilities to the security of the students?

I leave you with this. No one is pleased with the current parking situation, and Behrend is planning on expanding the lots and building new ones. If our police cannot even protect the lots that we have now, how will they even protect a larger area? It is about time for P&S to step forward and take some responsibilities and do their job, which is a hell of a lot broader than issuing tickets for people whose permits fall off.

Name withheld by request

It's not my fault?



Beyond the Cheap Colored Lights
Liz Hayes
news editor

"It's not my fault." When my fellow Beaconians and I first heard our iMac proclaim these words, it was the funniest thing we had heard in months — and trust me, between all the nut cases working on our weekly paper, we hear a lot of funny things; we even keep a list of all the great things we have said to regale each other with at a later time. After the first utterance of the lime iMac, we left our error messages on longer than necessary just to hear the computer say those inane words... "It's not my fault."

But the more I think about it, the more profound the iMac's message seems. And though it may be tragic to hear profundity from an inanimate machine that crashes every time we try to run two programs at once, such is the way of today's culture. Just how pervasive is this idea of faultlessness that we have projected it onto our computers? "It's not my fault" has not only become an easy excuse, but also the motto of our generation.

Let me present a situation for you. Though it is in detail false, the overall trend should be pretty familiar to my college peers. Last week a fellow student wasn't productive because of circumstances completely beyond his control. On Sunday night he developed a strange rash on his hands that prevented him from typing his English essay. On Monday the rash was so obvious that he couldn't go to class because of its unsightliness. Tuesday he missed all of his classes because of a doctor's appointment

regarding this rash. Wednesday he went to one class (the one latest in the day) but didn't have any work done because the medication he was on made him feel ill. Wednesday night he called off work to get his work done, but was so tired that he went to bed early.

Thursday he went to class, and told all his professors his sob story and was excused his absences. Thursday night he decided that he deserved a break, so he blew off the evening and hung out with his friends. Friday he missed all of his classes again, this time due to the after-effects of hanging out with his friends the night before. But, he still had the rash excuse to get him off the hook. The weekend passes, and little gets done — maybe he gets caught up to the beginning of the week before. The English paper gets turned in a week late. And now he is behind, and will probably stay behind all semester. Why? Because of that rash, of course.

Now, I don't really have any friends who have had a suspicious rash lately (to my knowledge). But I have many friends and acquaintances that have fallen prey to this example. Maybe, just maybe, I have even been in a similar situation. Be it an illness, a death, a break-up, a hellacious party, several killer assignments in a row, whatever. Something alters the pattern, and we get behind.

But is it our fault? Of course not! We were victims of circumstances beyond our control. We try and try and try, but superior forces keep right on pushing us back. We would have persevered if only that one thing hadn't happened. And after the fact, we just can't seem to drag ourselves out from under it.

So, we are now a society of victims. The TV show should be renamed *Victim* in order to properly reflect our culture's attitudes. Survivors don't whine about how "The Man" or "Big Brother" or that darned cough/ cold/ flu/ strep throat/ bronchitis/ mononucleosis/ meningitis/ terminal cancer kept them down. Survivors don't blame all the fault in their lives on that one event or series of events that affected them. Survivors

don't go on national television and blame all their problems on that one time their friends kicked them off the island. That is what victims do. And let's be honest, that is what we really are.

Personally, I think it is much more credible to be a survivor than a victim. A survivor moves on with life and lets the past be just that — the past. Yeah, the past will always be there shaping the future, but it will only dictate that future if you let it. I think that is a choice we all have to make. Should we let the past bring us down 24/7, or should we put it in perspective and move on? I know which I would prefer to do. It is much easier said than done, but I don't think it impossible.

Next time, instead of saying "It's not my fault," try to say something else. For instance, "Yeah, I screwed up, but I won't do it again." Because let's face it, that rash wasn't that bad. You could have typed that paper on Sunday. It was just another excuse to put it off for one more day. And that rash wasn't the reason you were behind all week. Putting off the work and partying with the friends all weekend (and that weekend started on Wednesday, not Friday) put you behind. If it prevents you from getting the work done, don't tell the profs it was the rash — they may be out there sometimes, but I bet they know the truth. And stop whining to your friends that your life is crap and you can't change that. The only reason it is crap is because you let it be crap. It is your fault!

The way things are working right now, we should be called the Generation V for Victim. We should all be sportin' scarlet Vs on our chests (and that V ain't for Virgin). We should change the Queen song to "We are the victims, my friends. And we'll keep on whining to the end." It's pretty sad that the lime iMac has been programmed to our whiney mentality. "It's not my fault?" No wonder the iMac never gets anything done — it was created by us!

Hayes' column appears every three weeks.

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Editor-in-Chief

Jason Snyder

Managing Editor

Jeff Miller

News Editors

Liz Hayes

Erin McCarty (assistant)

Editorial Page Editor

Katie Gallely

Features Editors

Karl Benacci

Jermaine Hardy

Arts & Entertainment Editor

Deanna Symoski

Sports Editors

Ahby Long

Jeanine Noce (assistant)

Wire Service Editor

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Ann Marie Havey

Business Manager

Kristine Harakal

Public Relations Manager

Ainslie Ulmer

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Doug Smith

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Melissa Proba

Advisor

Robert Speel

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