

Blue Bus: Here to stay?

by Andrea Bolton
staff writer

The Blue Bus was the topic of a meeting on Monday, February 12, in which a group of Behrend students gathered with Mr. Chris Rizzo, director of Student Activities, and Ms. Stacey McCoy, accounting clerk and student activities assistant, to discuss the future of the bus.

Rizzo began the focus group by listening to student criticism on how the bus schedule is currently run, and opened the floor for suggestions and ideas on what should be changed.

According to Rizzo, the Blue Bus had the highest usage rates when it was brand-new. This past year, ridership has dropped tremendously. Rizzo said that last year the school attempted to have the bus make a loop through downtown Erie as a service for commuter students that did not have cars. Unfortunately, there were not many students that took advantage of this service.

In offering free pizza and soda at the meeting, Rizzo and McCoy were seeking student input. They asked students why

they currently use the Blue Bus, and what can be done to encourage other students to take advantage of this service. Rizzo found that the bus is used for shopping, entertainment (namely Tinseltown), transportation for some on-campus students that work at the mall, and when students want to be shuttled around campus. He also found that students are looking for advertising and more visible signs to remind them that they have the option of using the Blue Bus for transportation.

Currently, the Blue Bus has a set schedule, which begins with a loop through campus to pick up students, then it travels through Wesleyville, makes a dash to upper Peach Street, and stops at the Millcreek Mall. At the end of the day, the Blue Bus arrives back at Behrend. Some of the route's stops include K-mart on upper Peach Street, WalMart, the Millcreek Mall, and PNC Bank.

Some of the student suggestions and complaints were that the Blue Bus is never on time and that it is ugly. Some students said that the bus is so ugly they are embarrassed to use it in public. Other

students said that the Blue Bus schedule is too complex. There is just too much information on one sheet of paper. Students said that they are looking for an easier way to read the chart that explains where the bus will be at all times of the day, rather, than a list of the times that the route begins each day.

Some students suggested that the Blue Bus does not need to make as many stops. Sometimes the drivers sit and wait at a particular stop even when they know there is no one there to pick up. Students also added that the routes could be shortened, or the bus could travel off the route at the request of the riders. Other students added that if they saw a sign or poster in the lobby of their residence hall, they would possibly remember that the bus is at their service, and take advantage of it.

For now, the bus is scheduled to keep running, but its future is undetermined. Any individual that has suggestions for the future of the Blue Bus can contact McCoy at sgm2@psu.edu or Rizzo at clr4@psu.edu. Both individuals mentioned that they would greatly appreciate the input.

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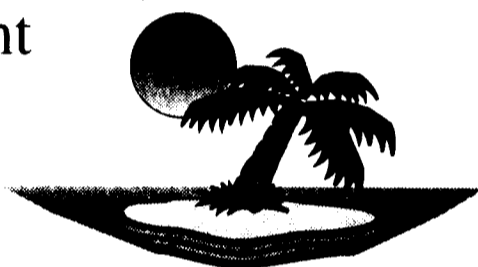
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2001-2002 STUDENT ACTIVITY FEE CALL FOR PROPOSALS



The Student Activity Fee Committee is preparing to allocate funds for the 2001-02 academic year. Funding Proposal Request forms are available at the Reed Union Building (RUB) Information Desk, the SGA Office, the Office of Student Activities, or the Office of Student Affairs. An on-line form and complete guidelines are available at <http://www.pserie.psu.edu/affairs/saf/index.htm>.

The proposal submission deadline is March 2, 2001 by 5 p.m. in the Office of Student Affairs

New for 2001-2002

In order to emphasize weekend events, priority will be given to the funding of one-time events that occur prior to Fall Break (October 9th and 10th, 2001). Examples include dances, trips, speaker events, etc. On-going proposals such as the Blue Bus, Beacon, Speaker Series should be submitted as usual.

Proposals for events scheduled later in the fall semester will also be considered, particularly when contract fees/planning must occur prior to September 10, 2001.

The SAF Committee has decided to limit the funding of transportation expenses to a maximum of one-half of the total expense. Speaker contracts are limited to \$3,000 inclusive of all expenses (i.e. speaking contract, travel and lodging costs, receptions, etc.)

With the increased number of requests for funding, QUALITY of the proposal is critical. Please include written estimates for expenses associated with the funding requests. Incomplete or poor quality proposals will be returned to the submitter.

The Student Activity Fee will meet monthly beginning on September 10, 2001 to consider additional requests.

Excluded from funding consideration are salaries, major building renovations, and construction of new facilities. Student activity fee revenues cannot be used to replace activities currently supported through general University funds. Student activity fee revenues may be used for the following purposes.

GENERAL STUDENT ACTIVITY FEE FUNDING CATEGORIES

- CAMPUS ACTIVITIES which enhance out-of-class experiences for students.
- EQUIPMENT which facilitates opportunities for student involvement and campus-wide programming.
- FACILITIES UPGRADES in direct support of out-of-class experiences.
- PROGRAM SUPPORT to meet campus-wide programming needs, such as lecture series, music programs, cultural events, and entertainment.
- RECREATION, including support for club sports, intramurals, open recreation, and facilities and equipment which support these needs.
- DIVERSE POPULATIONS AND ISSUES, including programs and activities which support and/or enhance diversity and non-traditional activities.
- SELECTED SUPPORT SERVICES