

A View From The Lighthouse

The day the music died...

So you finally saved up enough money to buy that CD burner. Everything is installed and raring to go. The Napster gods are awaiting your presence. Oh, wait...no more Napster?

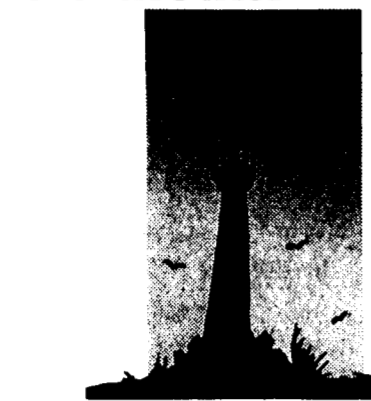
First, the world was told that they would have to pay a small fee to use Napster monthly. There was uproar; many accused Shawn Fanning of selling out. Many more blamed Metallica. But it got worse. The latest announcements have revealed that Napster will be shut down completely. The Napster website reads "the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals has ruled against Napster...Napster is not shut down, but under this decision it could be."

It has all come down to money. Whatever happened to making music for the thrill of playing? Where did the sheer love of writing influential lyrics disappear to? Oh, that's right...Metallica's bank account. (Aren't they rich enough already?) Essentially, because a few anal-retentive band members decided to be greedy, everyone else gets hurt.

Napster is a great way for new bands to get their name out. A section on Napster called the "New Artists Program" lets subscribers discover new and upcoming bands and solo acts. Not only is this a boost for the bands, but it also provides something unique to listen to for the user. Just how many Dave songs can one really download? All the bands and artists that care about playing and sharing their music and thoughts have now been shutout. Their voices are no longer heard.

The major problem involves copyright infringement. Some may remember last year when an enormous amount of Napster subscribers received letters claiming that their use of the music-trading program was illegal. Hence, the war began. Trading went on as usual, Napster gained mostly positive publicity, and now over 50,000,000 people are registered with the service. The masses may soon have to look for other ways to obtain their music...like buying actual CDs. But wait, record sales actually went up since the birth of Napster. Take that, Metallica. Oh, that's right, everyone hates you now.

In actuality, though it originally seemed harsh, paying a small fee for Napster use seems trivial. Fifteen bucks seems like nothing compared to the amount of CDs that could be burned over the course of a month or the thousands of songs that could be played through computer speakers while writing that impossible term



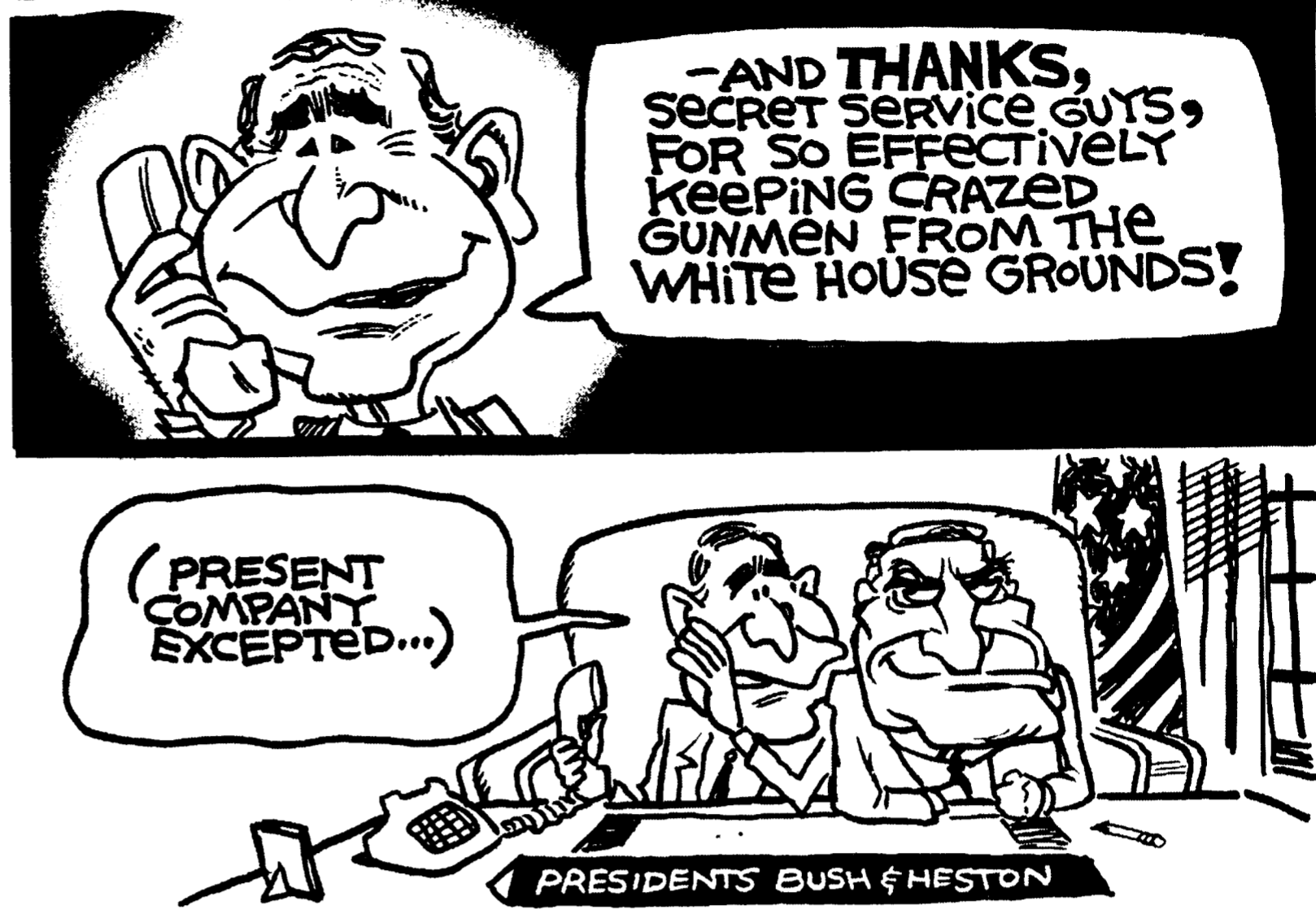
paper. No, a fee isn't going to make everyone happy, but at this point it seems that there will be a fee or there will be no more Napster at all. It seems that new file-sharing programs should be popping up everywhere now that Napster is about to meet its fate, and they are, but if the court decision holds, these sites will quickly be shut down also.

Honestly, what's the big deal? What's next? Is the radio bound to be outlawed? The general public doesn't directly pay for what they hear over the airwaves. A kid listening to a friend's CD doesn't have to pay a fee, nor will be accused of copyright infringement. All Napster consists of is trading music. The songs aren't being sold with the profit going to Fanning's wallet. Even if a fee was charged for monthly usage, record companies would see this money, not Fanning. Chances are, the bands would rarely see any of the profit either. Once again, the record executives are getting rich off of other's talent.

It isn't as if all musical artists are in on the evil conspiracy either. Napster's website lists a plethora of prestigious artists that are in favor of the service. Madonna, Dave Matthews, Dave Grohl, Moby, Fred Durst, and even B.B. King have voiced their support for Napster. Most find it downright silly that such a beneficial service, to the listener and the artist, could be shut down because of greed. Some artists have even attempted to release songs and albums over their band's personal websites, but again the record companies have halted the right to free music. As a side note to the record execs, please remember that your companies wouldn't be anywhere without the talent of these bands.

America now waits to find out the next step in the proceedings. Napster users are frantically downloading songs day and night to try to stock up on as many songs and comedy files as they can before the harsh winter of copyright infringement comes. Shawn Fanning, we salute you. Keep up the fight. Besides, where else can one hear Britney swearing up a storm?

STAFF: BUNES
SACK



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Getting the facts straight about Police and Safety

Dear Editor,

In response to a previous letter to the editor regarding Police and Safety, I have a few remarks. First, the anonymous author of that letter needs to get his or her facts straight. On the front page of the very same issue of the Beacon was an article stating that there have been eight reports of car vandalism, not several every weekend.

Second, no one here at Behrend is particularly happy about the parking situation. We all have to hike at least half a mile to our parked cars. Deal with it or leave your car at home.

Third, no matter how well trained and well staffed a law enforcement agency is, they can't be everywhere at once. So until the world is rid of jerks that vandalize other people's property, vandalism is going to occur.

Fourth, I wonder if the anonymous author has met any of the P and S officers. I have been a night assistant for one and a half years and in that time have gotten to know most of the officers. The officers are not interested in just

harassing people. If they were, they would be using more physical measures similar to those used by local law enforcement officials when dealing with students. As far as harassing students about drinking, my experience with the officers has been that they are mostly concerned about the student's own safety and the safety of others. I also wonder what kind of relationship between a law enforcement agency and the population it serves the anonymous author feels is appropriate. I personally would rather have a police force that says hello and interacts with students in a positive way than a Gestapo like authoritarian institution.

In conclusion, I think the author of the fore stated letter to the editor needs to be complaining about the immature individuals that commit senseless acts of vandalism and not those who are trying to keep the problem under control. And by the way, I am not afraid to sign my name to my own opinion.

Amanda McKain

Why no escorts from Police and Safety?

Dear Editor,

This letter is in response to the Police and Safety report that was printed in the February 9 *Beacon*. Police and Safety were requested to provide an escort to the Logan House by a female student. The summary stated REQUEST DENIED because the escort was needed for 9:00 AM. The excuse that P&S gave was that they don't escort anyone when it is light out. First of all, if the student requested an escort she obviously felt uncomfortable walking to the Logan House alone. That in itself should justify an escort. Secondly, what the hell could P & S be doing at 9:00 AM that would keep them from providing an escort. Isn't this situation exactly what the escort program is all about? If it's actually a policy that P&S do not escort students during the day, they should seriously reconsider this.

Brian Forsman
Troy Shafer
Dan Cargioli

Note: After Spring Break the *Beacon* will no longer run letters to the editor that are not signed. Thank you.

Police and Safety not the ones to blame



Caught in the 'Spyder' Web

Jason Snyder
editor-in-chief

Imagine sitting in your 1:00 class,

listening to your professor lecture continuously about facts that will most likely appear on your next exam. Trying to jot down as much information as you can in your notebook, you suddenly remember that you were supposed to read chapter three in your text for a quiz you will have in your 2:00 class. You get out your book to start reading when a friend of yours who obviously doesn't care about what the professor is saying starts telling you about what happened at last night's party.

So you have a decision to make. Do you...a) continue to jot down notes so you can pass your next exam, b) read chapter three so you have some facts straight for your 2:00 quiz, c) listen to the latest Behrend gossip in hopes of keeping up to date with what's going on at this campus, or d) all of the above.

It's obvious that the only answer that it can't be is "d." I mean, there's no way you can take notes on a lecture, read a book, and listen to your friend all at one time. The more you read your book, the less notes you have. The more you listen to your friend, the worse you will do on your quiz. And the more you actually listen to your professor, the less up-to-date you will be with the latest Behrend gossip.

So if we realize that it's impossible to do three

things at once, then how can we demand Behrend's Police and Safety to do the same thing?

Granted, there's not an overabundance of campus crime that should be taking up all of Police and Safety's time, but there are some other duties they are required to do that are just plain ridiculous. This week's "Police and Safety report" (page 2) states that our officers who are supposed to be occupying all their time in investigating the vandalism happening on campus while giving students escorts to buildings they don't want to have to walk to, had to respond to calls dealing with loud and obnoxious students and overflowing toilets.

This doesn't include the help they must provide for people that lock their keys in their car or need office doors open. Believe me when I say that the Police and Safety report that appears in the *Beacon* every week is not the entire police log. There are multiple pages of calls made to Police and Safety that the officers must report to.

It always makes me chuckle to hear students complaining that Police and Safety "wastes" their time ticketing cars without permits. "How dare the officers spend their time ticketing illegally parked cars while there are vandals running rampant on campus!"

If I'm paying over \$150 to park on this campus per semester, you bet I want Police and Safety walking through the lots ticketing the students that think they can go through the semester on a free ride. I'll admit that I was pretty miffed when I approached my car earlier this semester to find a ticket on my windshield on the first day that students were required to have their permit, but you can bet the first thing I did after that was buy my parking permit for the semester.

It would be nice to be able to say that all crime can be stopped before it even happens, which appears to be the expectations of students here on

campus. However, statistically, most criminals are caught after the crime is committed through investigations, not while the crime is actually taking place.

We continue to blame Police and Safety for crimes that happen on campus. Do we blame the Erie Police for crimes that happen in Erie? Do we expect the Erie Police to be so good, that they can catch all crime before it even happens? It would be ignorant to say that a qualified police force should be able to do this.

So let's make up our mind. Do we want Police and Safety to sit up in the parking lots to watch for the vandals while the rest of the campus goes unprotected? Do we want Police and Safety giving people escorts in broad daylight as opposed to investigating the crimes going on at Behrend? The more we expect our officers to protect one part of the campus, the less they can protect others.

Let's start putting the blame on the people that deserve it. It's the irresponsibility of students that need Police and Safety assistance for being passed out on their dorm room floors that take away from the functions our officers should be performing. It's the fact that there are students that don't follow proper parking procedures that "waste" our officers' time ticketing them. And it's the ridiculously childish vandals that roam the campus at night ripping sideview mirrors off of cars because they don't have any respect for themselves that put Police and Safety in parking lots while underage drinkers are passed out because they are too cool to know when to stop.

When students begin to start taking responsibility for themselves, Police and Safety can start protecting this campus. Until then, we just keep permitting vandals to act like high school kids.

Snyder's column appears every three weeks.

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