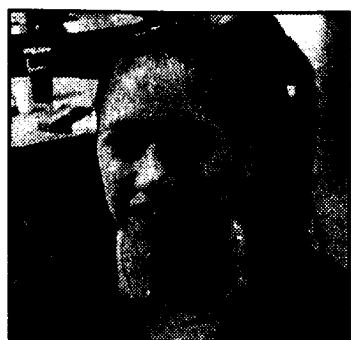


QUESTION OF THE WEEK

What was your most valuable possession ever stolen?



"My purse got stolen out of my car — I had all of the doors locked except one."

Bethany Prince
Biology, 02



"My pride."

Joe Sciuli
MET, 06



"Someone stole my bike out of my house."

Katie Weigold
Plastics Engineering, 06



"I'm an engineering major . . . my TI-86 calculator was stolen last semester."

Mick Mattich
Met, 06



"Money."

Ray Budenhoeffer
General Business, 04

FROM FRONT PAGE

BLUE BUS

McCoy finds the situation of low ridership frustrating because of efforts made to cater to the needs of students requesting the service.

In spring 2000, McCoy and Rizzo worked with Commuter Council and the SGA transportation committee to find out what students wanted out of the Blue Bus. Surveys were sent to commuter students whose responses initiated a commuter route that runs three times a day, Monday-Friday.

Some students requested a route that would take them to downtown Erie, or make the bus available until 2:00 a.m.

"We've done all of that and have expanded it by 40 hours a week. Still no one is riding the buses," said McCoy. "I've done more outreach in the past year than has ever been done based on students concerns about not know what is going on and when." McCoy is disappointed that more students that need the Blue Bus haven't gotten involved in publicizing the service.

Because of this decrease in ridership, the service has extended beyond just its routes. Driver Barb Doud uses her discretion in giving students rides that are off of the Blue Bus route. "Barb bends over backwards for students," said McCoy.

This lack of involvement among students and decrease in ridership could contribute to the SAF Committee's decision on its future.

There is mixed reaction among students dealing with the future of the Blue Bus. Some students feel that the service is necessary given the location of Behrend in comparison to local restaurants and shopping centers. Others feel that the service should remain, but should serve as a function for student organizations rather than individual use.

Most students interviewed, however, feel that the cost is not justified. Students, for the most part, are only willing to support the Blue Bus if there is enough ridership to meet the costs.

"Given the figures, my opinion is that it's not feasible," said SGA's Miles.

According to McCoy, other options for the future could include the purchase of a van. However, McCoy points out that Behrend would be required to purchase a van that is wheelchair accessible. This would limit seating to six students at one time. According to past records of use, rarely are there occurrences where more than six students are using the Blue Bus at one time.

A problem that could arise with the purchase of a van is that some students could be turned away. There are some occasions, though limited, where more than six students ride the bus at one time. McCoy feels turning students away would not be good for the future of off campus transportation.

There is no middle ground when it comes to an alternative form of transportation. There is no vehicle available that would be a compromise between a van and a bus. The bus that Student Activities is requesting funding for through SAF is the smallest bus available.

"It really doesn't matter what we buy and how we buy it," said McCoy. "The goal is to have a route that will allow all of our students that pay the student activity fee, to have a route that they will use."

McCoy urges students who have opinions on the future of the Blue Bus to help in planning a more effective route. "I hope that there are students willing to play an active role in designing a route system that is satisfactory," said McCoy. Anyone interested can sign up at the RUB Information desk.

The second SAF meeting will be on Wednesday, April 18, from noon to 1:30 p.m. in the MISC Studio. The meeting is open to the public and encourages student participation.

FROM FRONT PAGE

NEW MAJORS

science material to satisfy graduate school entrance requirements.

Dr. Ford present Behrend's new baccalaureate degree in software engineering. The degree will include engineering design, computer science, information systems, and project management design. The curriculum will also provide the opportunity to study object-oriented design, software design, digital systems, software test and verification, operating systems, and data communications.

The degree will also include a capstone project in which students will work in teams to design, manage, and implement a software system.

"It is pretty new. Penn State Behrend is definitely at the front end of the trend," stated Dr. Ford. "No other Penn State location offers a BA in this field," Ford added. A degree in software engineering could enable a student to apply for a professional engineering license. Ford also said that he could foresee a time when

government and industry would sanction licensing in software engineering. He added that this was speculative, however.

Many of the senior design projects accounted with these majors will take part in national student competitions. Many of them will also be sponsored by regional industry.

Software engineering positions accounted for 52% of new jobs listed in a recent Internet job database study. Such companies as IBM, Intel, General Electric, and Chrysler have hired Penn State Behrend's engineering graduates.

Such internationally recognized schools as Cal Tech, Case Western Reserve, Notre Dame, Penn State, and Stanford University have accepted Penn State engineering students for graduate study.

Students (as well as faculty) interested in engineering and computer science are encouraged to attend the information seminar.

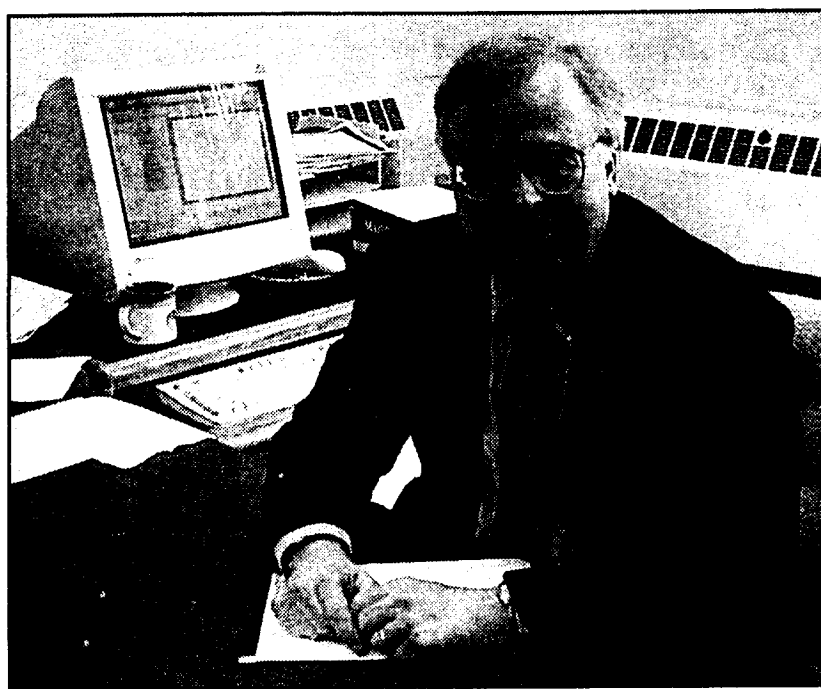


PHOTO BY BECKY WEINDORF

The School of Science and the School of Engineering and Engineering Technology will be jointly administering the new computer degrees. Dr. Roger Knacke is the director of the School of Science.

THEFTS

placed in some of the computer labs to monitor activity. And other security measures are taking place to help reduce theft.

"We are working on a completely different installation method," said Loreti. With these changes to Behrend equipment, Loreti believes theft should be deterred.

"I would encourage anyone with information that would help us resolve the case to get in touch with us at 898-6101 and they can talk with any of the Police service officers or myself," said Donahue.

Other equipment stolen this semester included two projectors from the engineering complex. The projectors were removed from Nick 170 and the engineering computer lab,

"Whoever walked in and took this projector [was also] stealing the ability of the college to provide quality education."

William Donahue,
manager of Police and Safety

Witkowski 109. The thefts were reported on January 7.

These crimes were a third degree felony and are part of an alarming trend of rising theft that has hit the campus in the last year or so, Donahue said at the time of the theft. Donahue recalled that he has not seen theft to this degree in all seven years of his tenure at Behrend.

The maximum penalty for a third degree felony in Pennsylvania is a fine of up to \$15,000 and a prison sentence of up to seven years.

In February, as far as possible motives were concerned, Donahue speculated that reasons could range from simple vandalism to resale for profit. The crimes could also involve someone who wanted the equipment for personal use, or who simply didn't want to have class that day.

"The crimes in the past year have been more serious than we normally deal with," stated Donahue.

Three major areas of theft concern are the engineering complex, which houses millions of dollars worth of equipment, the media labs in the Library, and the computer centers located throughout the campus.

VIZ



PHOTO BY NEIL MAKADIA

Dr. Dawn Blasko (left), associate professor of psychology, will be working with Behrend students on the VIZ web project. Also pictured in this photograph is student Jessica Tuross (right).

them on and off campus.

The primary goal of VIZ is for Behrend to have a web-based tool to assess and provide spatial skill training. There are two types of spatial skills that are currently assessed on the site: mental rotation and spatial perception. A third type, spatial visualization, will be developed this summer.

The psychology students involved in the project are Jennifer Enas and Jessica Tuross. The engineering students include Jill Johnson, Kathleen Scarpino, Kyle French, and Adam Wagner. The psychology and engineering students will help design and evaluate the spatial visualization activities. The communications students, Karen Simpson and Nicole Harlan, will assist with filming, digitizing, and producing brief animations and quicktime movies.

Blasko and Holliday-Darr are currently in the process of creating soft-

ware that will allow easy testing and scoring of incoming first year engineering students visualization skills. The program will consist of exercises that are short, fun, and should be easy for the students with poor visualization skills to use. As soon as students complete an activity on the site, it will provide immediate feedback, so the students will be able to learn from their mistakes.

VIZ will be used first in engineering graphics classes with college freshmen. The plan is to eventually have the program available to high schools and outreach programs to help prepare students interested in fields that require visualization skills.

The work on VIZ this summer is being funded by the Behrend Undergraduate Student Research Grant Program for 2001. The goal of this grant program is to encourage and support undergraduate research opportunities.

PHOTO GALLERY

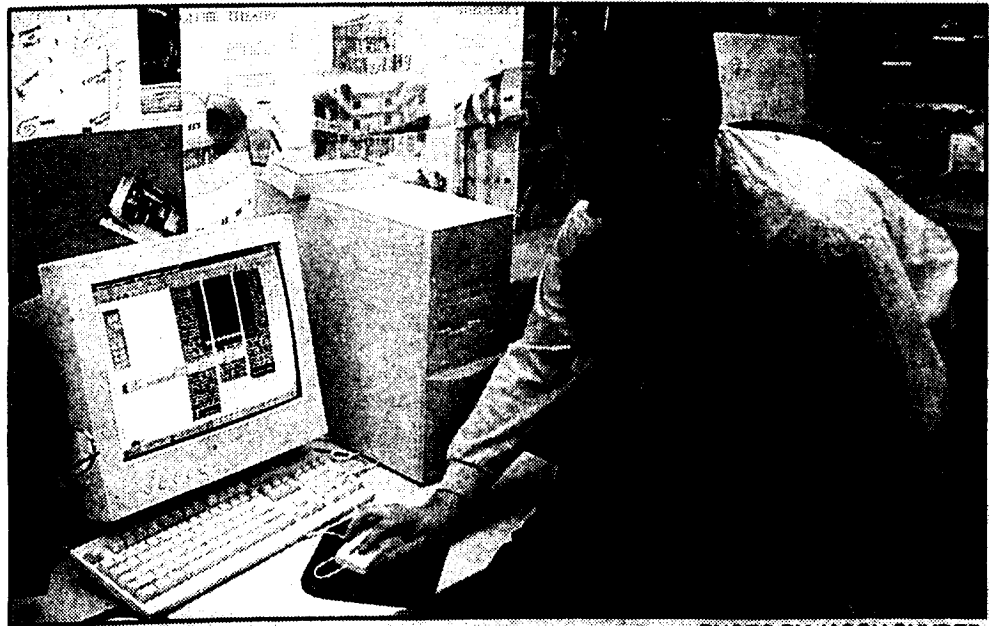


PHOTO BY JASON SNYDER

ABOVE: Rob Wynne, editor of the *Beacon's* wire service pages and auto page, assists Melissa Kammerer, a student at Fairview High School, with the school's newspaper. Members of the *Beacon* visited Fairview on Tuesday.

RIGHT: The annual International Dinner was held last Sunday in the Reed Commons. The focus this year was on Asian countries. Pictured here is one of the country displays featured in the Wintergarden.



PHOTO BY LIZ HAYES

JOIN . . . THE BEHREND
BEACON

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