

**QUESTION OF THE WEEK**

*Do you think that the police harass racial minorities?*



"Yes — they are singled out in society — their stories aren't going to be treated as credible as a white person's stories."

Chad Eades  
DUS, 02



"I have personally never witnessed it — I don't think it happens."

Gina Zmijewski  
GAS, 08



"Yes, I do think some police officers do discriminate. Officials of cities should try to implement a diversity workshop to better . . . handle ethnic groups."

Sharise Finley  
Marketing, 04



"No, but I think that they are singled out too much."

Jordan Kloss  
MIS, 02



"Some cops out there will do that, but I feel that most are fair."

Tim Durst  
Management, 06

# Niagara Hall student torches room, building evacuated

by Liz Hayes  
news editor

In the wee hours of the morning on Tuesday, April 17, a student in Niagara apparently tried to make a blow torch out of an aerosol can and ended up setting a bonfire on the floor.

At 1:41 a.m. a fire was lit in a third-floor room in Niagara Hall when a student used a lighter to ignite an aerosol can, according to Police and Safety Services. The can then caught on fire and was dropped onto the floor, which then caused the fire to spread to materials on the floor and behind a refrigerator, stated this report.

After failing to smother the fire with a blanket, the student retrieved a dry chemical fire extinguisher from the hallway and put out the fire, P&S said.

Niagara's fire alarm system sounded as intended, alerting P&S and local safety officials, including the Brookside Volunteer Fire Department. M. G. Syed, the residence coordinator for Niagara and Lawrence Halls living in Niagara, promptly evacuated the building. Niagara students waited out the incident in the Perry Hall lobby until they were allowed back into the building at approximately 2:45 a.m.

Housing and Food Services purchases fire-retardant furniture for the residence halls, so damage was limited to approximately \$780. Currently Niagara Hall does not contain sprinklers; only Ohio and Almy Halls do. Housing plans to install sprinklers in the suites and in several apartments this summer, and in the remaining apartments and the traditional residence halls in the summer of 2002 — which would include Niagara.

According to P&S, the incident is still under investigation, so no official actions have been taken by the University against the student or students involved. According to Nancy Panapento, associate director of student affairs, those involved will eventually go through the standard University process. The student(s) will be referred to judicial affairs and will undergo investigation. Actions could range from deferred suspension — the student(s) would be able to attend classes but not participate in extracurricular activities — to expulsion. After the University hands out a sanction, the student(s) will have the opportunity to accept or appeal this sanction at a disciplinary conference.

# Moore attempts to organize senior class gift project

by John Federowicz  
staff writer

"Stop griping and start giving" is a rallying cry to all future Behrend senior classes who are tired of being ineffective and yearning to be productive.

With a new program launched by Behrend next year and supervised by Kevin Moore, the campus' new alumni relations director, the school hopes to incorporate a long-standing tradition of senior class "gift-giving" from Penn State University into local campus student life.

While his job is to spearhead the initial push for organized donations for the campus, Moore stated that after student gift-giving committees are elected, he will be more of an advisor and negotiator with University administration, adopting a strictly "hands off" approach. The goal is to make senior class gift-giving an entirely student driven project.

Whether the senior gifts take the

form of scholarship allocation or on-campus beautification is up to the student-elected, student-run committees. Not only does this give Behrend students autonomy over actual campus milestones, it also encourages open debate and group participation.

Students must therefore arrive at a financially manageable, administration-approved brainchild; at the same time, they must initiate fund-raisers in order to bring their collegiate vision to fruition. All-in-all, senior class gift-giving is a dynamic process that allows students to earn the experience of conceptualization, implementation, and finally realization of their dreams to weave an intimate piece of themselves into the historic tapestry of the campus.

Through senior class gift-giving, "the senior class is truly given an opportunity to leave their mark on campus," added Moore.

Though this is the first time Behrend has undertaken this project, Moore is confident that

senior gift-giving will be as viable here as it is at University Park. With a long history of graduating class gifts, University Park's annals of senior projects are impressive; among its roster of past senior donations are portraits, civil war commemorative tablets, student aid funds, gateways, busts of eminent figures, the clock for the Old Main tower, scholarships, book collections, memorial class ivies, and, most recently, this year's project in-the-works — rows of Shepherd's crook lights to line the walkways of Old Main.

Moore suggests that with an average fundraising total of between \$85,000 and \$100,000 for University Park gift giving, it is a realistic forecast to project that Behrend, with 10% of the student population of its parent university, will be able to raise about \$8,500 to \$10,000 for its own senior class gift. Moore is confident that University Park's student devotion to their alma mater will ignite Behrend's own school spirit flame.



FILE PHOTO

Kevin Moore began as the new Alumni Relations Director at the beginning of this year. In addition to cultivating the growing crowd of Behrend alumni, Moore works with current student groups like the Lion Ambassadors.

# Children, college students, books, and a pig suit

by Hillary Hawranko  
staff writer

Story time as a child may have been taken for granted by many, but not every child has the opportunity to enjoy having stories read to him or her. Erie is one of 150 cities in the United States with a high rate of illiteracy among children. The First Book Erie organization works to provide children with books so that they can learn to read.

As part of this organization, the Penn State Behrend Bookstore has received 4,000 books and \$10,000 in order to provide books to needy families in the area. In conjunction with this donation, the Bookstore has also been offering a "Read to Kids" program twice a year for the past two and a half years. Under the coordination of Jan Gatti, assistant manager of the Bookstore, and volunteered help from Alpha Sigma



PHOTO BY NEIL MAKADIA

The sisters of ASA (one of whom is in the pig suit), assisted the Bookstore in providing a reading program for kids on Saturday.

Alpha sorority, this program has been a success.

The two-week program began on Saturday, April 14, in the Bookstore.

Galbreath, a sister of Alpha Sigma Alpha, read the story enthusiastically to the audience. Denise Nowacinski, also a member of the sorority, dressed in a costume as the pig character from the story. Nowacinski entertained the children by dancing, posing for pictures, and signing autographs.

In previous years, the "Read to Kids" program has improved literacy to children of all ages. A costumed character related to the story being read adds entertainment and makes reading fun for children.

The first costumed character event sponsored by the bookstore was Dr. Suess' *The Cat in the Hat*. The second character and book read was *Felix the Rabbit*. The latter story focused on third and fourth graders and taught a lesson in geography as Felix traveled around the world. Last semester the sisters of Alpha Sigma Alpha showed an in-

terest in the program and volunteered to dress in the Jesse Bear costume and read to children at local grade schools, libraries, and in the bookstore.

The Bookstore has been making numerous attempts to lower the illiteracy rate among children in Erie. There is a children's book section in the Bookstore for education majors who need to build up a library of children's books. A discount is offered to such students as encouragement to share a reading experience with children.

As a whole, the First Book Erie organization has also been working to raise money for books to donate to families in the area. On May 2, Baskin Robbins in the Millcreek Mall will be giving away free scoops of ice cream between 6:00 and 9:00 p.m. For every scoop they give away, money will be donated to the First Book Erie organization.

Sales

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