

THE BEHREND BEACON

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A Penn State Erie Student Publication

Vol. XLIX No. 3

September 7, 2001

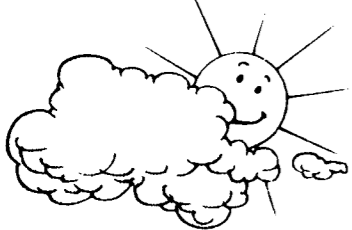
14 Pages



FALL 2001

WEATHER

Friday's forecast:
Partly cloudy



High: 80°
Low: 65°

Check page 2A for the weekend weather outlook.

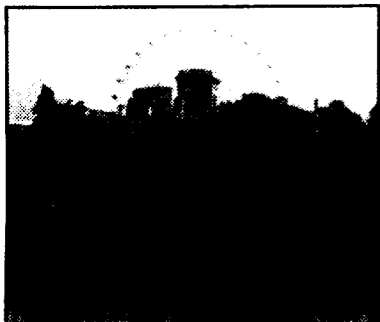
INSIDE

PAGE 3

Freshmen aren't the only new faces on the block. The first of a four-week series introduces the campus to these new members of the community.

PAGE 11

Several Behrend students made the trip to Northampton, England, this past summer. They also had the opportunity to see much of Europe.



PAGE 14

A monthly supplement, "Healthy Living" examines how to make the college experience just a little less stressful.

INDEX

News...2-3
Nat'l Campus...4-5
Editorial...6-7
Calendar...8
A & E...9
Features...10-11
Sports...12-13

CONTACT US

NEWSROOM: 898-6488
FAX US: 898-6019
ON THE WEB:
www.clubs.psu.edu/
beacononline/

E-MAIL: behrcoll5@aol.com

Offices are located downstairs in the Reed Union Building

The man sitting in the hot seat

by Liz Hayes
news editor

Massive road construction isn't the only change the Behrend community has faced this semester. Last May, just weeks before the academic year ended, Dr. John Lilley resigned after more than 20 years as Penn State Behrend's provost and dean. While this change may not seem to affect students on a daily basis, it will have a vast impact on the campus' future.

Lilley was only the third executive officer Behrend has had since its conception. A new provost means a change in the campus' leadership and possibly the campus vision.

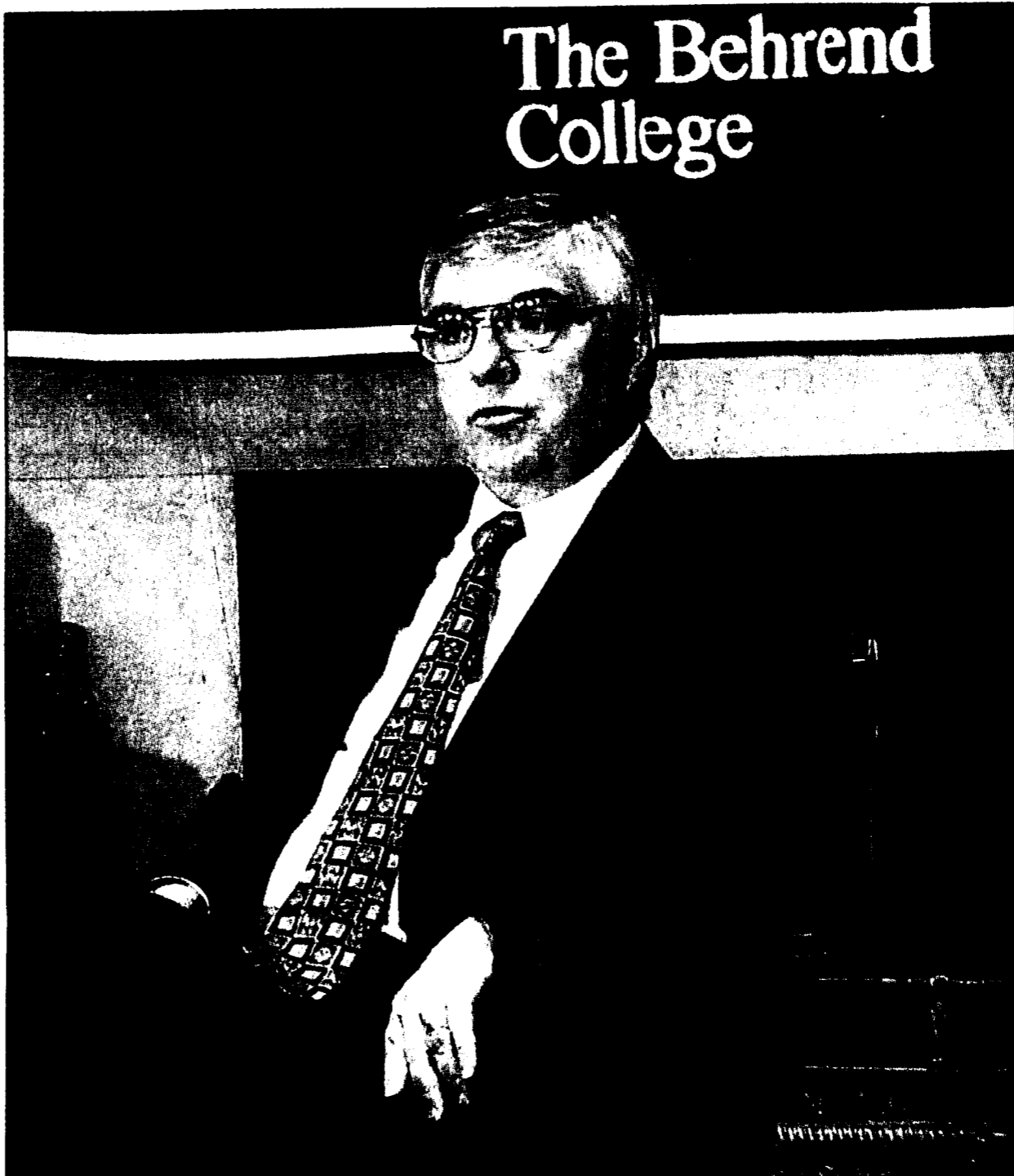
Lilley has since moved to the University of Nevada, Reno, to assume the role of president. Dr. Jack Burke, formerly senior associate provost and senior associate dean, has since stepped up to fill the role of interim provost and dean.

Burke, who worked beside Lilley for the past 20 years, says he is comfortable with his temporary role. "There was not a lot of transition for me, but there is a lot more work."

Burke said while he is working with the same people and in the same office, his responsibilities have changed and expanded. Whereas he was more the man behind the scenes, he now has to assume a much more public role. He now has to travel more, especially to University Park, and he is involved with more community events.

But Burke is not the only one with more to do. Since he plans to step back into his former role once a new, permanent provost is chosen, no one has been assigned to fill his old position. Instead, many people in the Provost's Office and elsewhere have taken on more responsibilities.

Burke said Associate Provost and Associate Dean Robert Light has



FILE PHOTO

Last May, Dr. John Lilley held a press conference to announce his resignation from Penn State Behrend. Dr. Jack Burke (pictured above) was then named interim provost and dean until the search committee chooses a new, permanent provost.

stepped in to relieve Burke of some of his former duties. Ken Miller, director of student affairs, is assisting Burke with strategic planning. And the Department of

Higher Education at University Park has also provided assistance.

A search committee was established through the University in August to choose a new provost.

Dr. William G. Cale, Jr., the dean and campus executive officer from Penn State Altoona, is chairing the committee. The remaining 15 committee members consist of

Behrend students, faculty, staff, and administration, as well as administrators from University Park. As Burke pointed out, the University is controlling the search, not Behrend specifically.

An advertisement for the provost position was placed this week in the Chronicle of Higher Education, a periodical published nationally. Also, letters soliciting nominations will be sent out to colleges and universities nationwide.

A candidate should have "a thorough familiarity with the philosophy and responsibilities of a large, research-oriented institution," according to the ad. Also, "prior experience in academic administration with responsibility for personnel, programs, and/or research is required."

Burke said the candidate will need the ability to "articulate a vision for the college, both within the University and within the community." He or she will need to be familiar with the collegiate environment where there is shared governance. And, "that person will need a sense of humor," Burke joked.

"Basically, someone who walks on water," he added.

According to the ad, the committee will begin reviewing applications in mid-October. Then, the committee will begin narrowing down the candidates, Burke said. It will make several rounds of cuts until a final small number will be submitted to University President Graham Spanier for review.

Burke said the committee plans to have a new candidate in place by July 2002.

Meanwhile, Burke will continue to see to the daily operation of the campus. Several ongoing projects are topmost on his to-do list this year. Among his priorities are the Research and Economic Development Center, increased housing, enrollment management, and faculty recruitment.

Students VIZualize way to GPA improvement

by Rob Walsh
staff writer

For many, the manipulation of visual objects begins and ends with virtual gunfights and home runs and 64-bit plumbers — all courtesy of the graphically entertaining video game business. This practice of maneuvering electronic pixels has been harnessed by Penn State Behrend, reducing the mottled educational prospects of popular video gaming and allowing Behrend students to sharpen their mental skills.

Through the aid of a FELT grant from University Park, the web-based VIZ program was created. The project allows students to gain valuable practice in spatial mediums like mental rotation and object perception — practice that has proven beneficial in engineering, science, and just about every professional field imaginable.

The arguably simple task of visualizing a green apple and slowly turning that apple upside-down can potentially increase a student's GPA and class performance. Six Behrend students, with majors ranging from psychology to engineering to communications, continue to participate in the program, gaining not only valuable mental training but also modest economic compensation.

Their involvement encompasses

detailed surveys, training sessions tailored to each student's skill level, video construction, and a broad range of activities central to spatial development.

Projects like VIZ exemplify the bounty of available student resources at Behrend. "I never got supported the way they do," said Dr. Dawn Blasko, associate professor of psychology. "Students can apply for grants twice a year, and there are opportunities that don't exist in a lot of other places."

Blasko supervised VIZ along with Kathy Holliday-Darr, instructor of engineering graphics; Carla Torgerson, instructional designer; and John Kerwin, assistant professor of communications. They have seen the project win the Frank Oppenheimer

Award in Engineering Design and have even loaned use of the program to other impressed institutions.

Perhaps the greatest feature of VIZ is the inherent accessibility to the Internet: Students can evaluate the project with relative ease. The focus of accessibility has been a buttress for

the development of student resources at Behrend, especially in comparison with the dearth of opportunity at larger venues.

VIZUALIZE

continued on page 2



PHOTO BY KRISTIN RODGERS

Kathy Holliday-Darr, left, and Dr. Dawn Blasko are two of several Behrend faculty collaborating on the VIZ project.

Pilgrimage to Stratford planned

by Becky Weindorf
copy editor

An opportunity for students to travel and experience Shakespeare isn't just for English majors anymore.

From biology to math to engineering students, anyone with an itch to scratch the surface of the Bard's works can do so on a trip to the Shakespeare Festival in historical Stratford, Ontario, on Saturday, Sept. 29.

Students have a choice of attending one live performance of "Henry IV, Part 1" or "Twelfth Night" during the day-long trip to the festival.

Students of all majors and schools are encouraged to take advantage of this opportunity. In the past, the festival has been very popular with liberal arts students, but members of various schools at Behrend have also made the "pilgrimage" to the Canadian reproduction of England's Stratford-upon-Avon.

STRATFORD

continued on page 2