



# THE BEHREND BEACON

A Penn State Erie Student Publication

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16 Pages



FALL 2001

### WEATHER

Friday's forecast:  
Rainy



High: 58°  
Low: 38°

Check page 2a for the weekend weather outlook.

### INSIDE

#### PAGE 9

**MAKING THE 'PAGE'**  
Student Jill Page went down the catwalk at the Miss Pennsylvania pageant. Look inside to see if she won the tiara.

#### PAGE 10

**PEACH STREET HOT SPOTS**  
Come on — is there really any other street worth knowing in Erie? If you aren't 21 and can't spend a weekend cruising the bars on State, Peach Street is Erie.

#### PAGE 13

**CHRISTMAS SPENDING**  
Christmas: Will it make or break the economy? While charity for others is a good thing, it might be a bad thing for us.

#### PAGE 14&16

**BASKETBALL BLUES**  
The men and women aren't quite up to speed yet, but don't worry — the season is far from over.

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## Au revoir, Erie. Bonjour, Paris!



PHOTO BY KEVIN FALLON

It's been a busy week for Dr. Gary Viebranz (conducting) and the Behrend Concert Band. On Tuesday, the group played a bon voyage concert at the Raymond Blasco Memorial Library (pictured above) in downtown Erie to gain some public exposure and practice playing in a concert hall setting. The band played on Thursday night in the McGarvey Commons, along with the Concert Choir, under the direction of Dr. Daniel Barnard. Barnard also composed one of the musical pieces the Concert Band will play in Paris. For more about the musical groups, turn to page 8.

## Ophelia Project in action at Behrend

by Kevin Fallon  
staff writer

Imagine you are failing most of your classes. On top of that you live in a world with extreme pressure to fit in, use drugs, and have sex. You also have a poor home life and feel like you have no one to talk to. For many kids in high school this is a reality. A new organization at Behrend is working to help them deal with these issues.

The Ophelia Advisory Council was created to help middle and high school-age kids. Many of these young people have serious troubles; others just want someone to talk to.

The OAC works closely with local schools to provide mentoring and guidance to teens. Being a mentor means being a role model, a friend, and a guide to a young person. Members of the OAC say just having a positive presence in someone's life can make all the difference.

Erika Dauber and Yelana Kerr, co-presidents of the OAC, praise the benefits of mentoring.

"It makes teens feel like they are not alone," said Dauber. "It gives them a feeling of being empowered and alive. It gives them someone in the world that cares about them and is there just for them."

"It is very helpful to kids because they have a person there for them that they can count on like a friend," added Kerr. "It gives the mentees a sense of stability in their lives, especially since

many of the mentees have unstable family lives, behavioral problems, feel lonely or depressed or are outcasts in school."

And it is not just the kids who benefit from mentoring. "When you men-



PHOTO BY LIZ HAYES

Erika Dauber and Yelana Kerr are the co-presidents of the Ophelia Advisory Council, the Behrend chapter of the Ophelia Project. Members act as mentors to local school-age children, helping them to overcome the burdens of adolescence and growing up in a sometimes difficult society.

tor you feel a sense of satisfaction in knowing you are making a difference in someone's life," said Kerr. "The mentees also impact your own life and help you change for the better."

However, mentoring takes time and results do not happen over night. But

the OAC insists the long-term effects of having a mentor are great. "Mentoring isn't for those who need instant results. The results come later in life because it helps kids become better people," said Dauber.

younger teenagers more than any other age group because younger kids look up to older kids because they think they're cool. They don't see college students as parents, teachers, or adults but more as friends. They are able to open up and form bonds with college students. The college students are then able to help them and provide guidance and support," said Kerr.

The Ophelia Project was started four years ago by Sue Wellman, a professor at Edinboro University, and a group of mothers in response to the book, "Reviving Ophelia: Saving the Selves of Adolescent Girls," by Dr. Mary Pipher. As a college and high school teacher, Wellman noticed many problems girls were facing growing up in today's culture, such as eating disorders, aggression, pregnancy, promiscuity, depression, addictions, and low self-esteem.

Pipher diagnosed the problem as being the way the culture views girls and women. She found the problem was in a society that focuses on appearance and is so media-saturated that girls lose their sense of self and try to become what the culture says they should be.

Wellman started the Ophelia Project with the intent of ultimately changing the way society views women and to provide a safe environment in which girls can develop into

A major qualification needed to become a mentor is the willingness to make a time commitment and build a bond with a young person. In addition, college students can offer something to mentoring others cannot.

"College-age students can impact

younger teenagers more than any other age group because younger kids look up to older kids because they think they're cool. They don't see college students as parents, teachers, or adults but more as friends. They are able to open up and form bonds with college students. The college students are then able to help them and provide guidance and support," said Kerr.

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**OPHELIA PROJECT**  
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## Comm. women go 'From College to Career'

by Erin McCarty  
assistant news editor

Thursday evening at 7 p.m., about 30 Behrend students and faculty gathered in the living room of the Smith Chapel to hear a panel discussion about career opportunities in the communications field. "From College to Career," sponsored by Behrend's newly formed Association for Women in Communications, featured five women working in various communications-related careers. Club president Sarah Orr introduced the evening, thanking the guest panelists for their participation and the club members for helping the event to take place.

Cathy S. Mester, senior lecturer in communications at Behrend, spoke first. The only speaker with a visual aid, she spelled out the word "ACADEMIA" with slips of paper hanging over the edge of the podium. Each letter represented a reason why students in communications might consider a career in academia. She suggested academia for those who like adolescents or young adults, critical thinking, aiding people, different experiences every day, the education community, mental challenges, inquisitive study, and an active lifestyle. Although she was unable to stay for the question and answer session which occurred after

**COLLEGE TO CAREER**  
continued on page 3a

## Professor receives research award



by Nick Capozzoli  
contributing writer

Kenneth J. Fisher, Professor of Engineering and head of Mechanical Engineering Technology at Penn State Behrend, was recently honored with the Ben C. Sparks Medal by The American Society of Mechanical Engineers International.

Fisher was presented with the medal for his exemplary contributions to education and research in mechanical engineering at the International Mechanical Engineering Congress and Exposition

**FISHER AWARD**  
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