

The Behrend Beacon

published weekly by the students of Penn State Erie, the Behrend College

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"Professionalism with a Personality"

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The *Beacon* encourages letters to the editor. Letters should include the address, phone number, semester standing, and major of the writer. Writers can mail letters to behrcoll2@aol.com. Letters must be received no later than 5 p.m. Monday for inclusion in that week's issue.

Bring back The Janitor!



Attitude problem Paige Miles

Business Manager

I hated him at first. I thought he was too rude, vulgar, and inappropriate for the Erie airwaves. And now, however many months later, I still think that. But yet, I want him put back on the air.

For those of you who missed the fiasco while away on break, Mike the Janitor, morning and weekend disc jockey for The Planet 93.9, was fired. Apparently, as told by WJET-TV 24, he walked into the studio Tuesday morning to be told his "services were no longer needed." He was then featured on WJET on Thursday, showing no obvious signs of anger, but rather frustration. I would have expected him to be cursing out the station in typical Mike the Janitor fashion.

When interviewed a few weeks ago on television, Mike showed his three-

inch thick pile of emails all supporting him. Only two emails with negative emails had come in. At that point, it had seemed that Erie was a bit sketchy about Mike's "shock jock" style, but was willing to try it out. Rick Rambaldo, partial brains behind Star 104 and The Planet, had sought out Mike last year in Reno to bring a new flavor of radio show to Erie. Now, Rambaldo almost seems like a hypocrite ridding the station of Mike. Just a few weeks ago Rambaldo was interviewed, giving all positive comments about Mike and what he had done for Erie. So, I don't really get it now—what exactly happened here?

Mike was a bit much for Erie. He would often use four-letter expletives on the air, which is not only forbidden in our small town, but also forbidden by the Federal Communications Commission, which forbids it around the United States. (That's why Canadian radio kicks butt.) As a result, many angry mothers called in saying their 4-year-olds were listening to the swearing on the radio

and did not appreciate it. Mike fought back with an obvious solution—be a good mother and turn off the radio. The show isn't meant for child's ears. Of course, there was the one mother who fired me up by saying she always let her 4-year-old listen to Mike and saw no problem with it. That's just stupidity.

Mike also brought up issues regarding Erie that no happy-go-lucky/annoying disc jockey on Star 104 would ever dare mention. Every morning, Mike would have a poll. Sometimes it would be frivolous; sometimes it would be an actual issue, such as problems with the Erie Parking Authority or drunken teenagers driving into trees. Often these debates would go on for days. Those who disagreed with Mike would sometimes be called names.

Mike went as far as to start a battle against the Erie Parking Authority. He encouraged everyone to pay all of their parking fines in pennies. Eventually, after choosing not to pay his fines in protest, Mike ended up with a boot on his car and \$405 in fines, which he was planning to raise

back at a benefit concert at Sherlocks/Park Place.

As with any radio station, people would call in with stupid requests or making no sense. Instead of ignoring these calls as I'm sure other stations may do, Mike would respond to the (often stoned) callers by telling them to sober up a bit, grow up, or just get off the phone. Mike would say what everyone was thinking in this town but no one dared to voice. He was my entertainment in the morning; a break from listening to dumb and dumber talk about happy puppies or read off jokes pulled straight off the Internet.

Elly McVay, a Behrend graduate, replaced Mike on the morning show. Yeah, I have to admit she's pretty cool, but she still isn't the "shock jock" I had a love/hate listening relationship with.

Well, Rambaldo, thank you. You have now given me the final push to put a CD player in my car.

Miles' column appears every three weeks.

To the Editor,

In response to their letter to the editor in the last edition of the *Beacon*, I would like to draw Nicole Johns' and Jaimi Bonczar's attention to the very same page of the *Beacon* on which their letter was published. In the top left corner of page five, *Beacon* staff positions are listed. The second position in the right column says "Advertising Managers." Guess what they do. It is the responsibility of these individuals to sell ads to appear in the

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

newspaper. Revenue from these ads helps keep the *Beacon* in existence and allows students to read it for free. If you turn to page two of the *Erie Times-News*, guess what you will find: an advertising director. Wow, what a concept.

My point is that somebody paid a lot of money to include a pro-life flyer in our newspaper. Likewise, somebody also paid a lot of money to include a

half page ad for Calder Commons apartments at University Park on page four. You are correct in saying that not everybody on campus is pro-life, but was the supplement "preposterous," as you say? No. To answer your question as to why there was no pro-choice flyer included; nobody has come up with the \$125 it costs to include a flyer of any kind in the *Beacon*. If you want to see a pro-choice flyer, call the *Beacon* at

898-6488 and ask for Libbie Johnson, Melissa Powell, or Angela Rush, but be sure to have your checkbook handy. Next time, do not be so quick to assume that the *Beacon's* staff supports everything that is published. The *Beacon* follows the same business manners as any other form of print media.

Ryan Anthony Comba, 08

The View From the Lighthouse

Pre-emptive nuclear strikes: an unthinkable action in an unstable world

News of a contingency plan by the United States to use nuclear weapons in pre-emptive strikes was recently leaked. Most people get antsy when you mention the use of nuclear weapons by any country, in any role – with good reason.

The "Nuclear Posture Report," issued by the Pentagon and leaked to the New York Times, heightens the possibility of pre-emptive strikes against rogue nations' chemical, biological, or nuclear caches. Although Colin Powell distanced the Pentagon from the report, calling it "sound conceptual policy," the fact that the United States has a policy on hand detailing pre-emptive nuclear strikes is only going to worsen our already shaky relationship with many nations. The United States would be sending the wrong message to the world by having a plan to use nuclear weapons in a non-retaliatory fashion. Simply having a contingency plan on hand will only cause other nations, particularly volatile ones, to believe that we have our finger on the button and are waiting for any excuse to nuke our enemies. With China, India, North Korea and Pakistan possessing short-range nuclear weapons, the last thing we as a nation need is to further de-stabilize a world already near its breaking point.

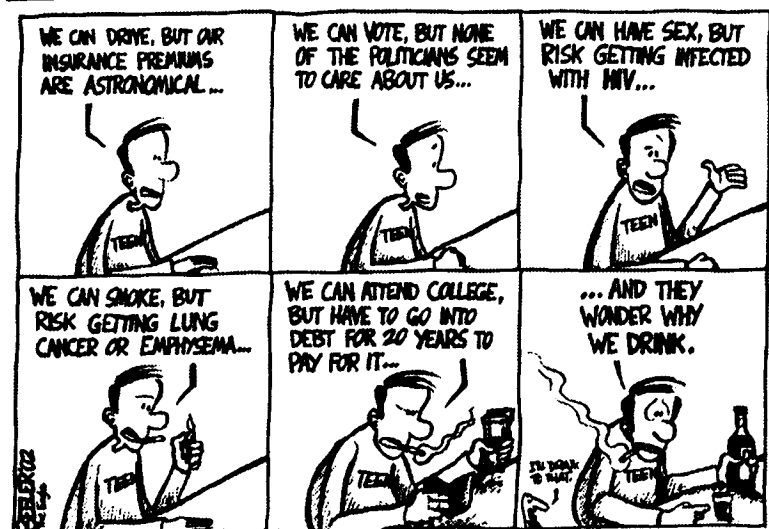
It is absolutely imperative that the United States eliminates nuclear, chemical, and biological warfare production facilities located in so-called "rogue" nations. These nations do not follow conventions concerning weapons of mass destruction and are usually under the control of an unstable, tyrannical government.

In order to destroy heavily fortified bunkers, the United States has the "bunker-buster" bomb in its arsenal. Weighing in at about the same as a soccer mom's SUV (4,414 lbs) this bomb packs 647 pounds of fragmenting explosive to take out even the most hardened bunkers. This laser-guided bomb broke through 20 feet of concrete and 100 feet of earth during testing, which means in actual combat use it can destroy the most hardened bunkers on the planet.

The bunker-buster is just one of the advanced weapons in our arsenal. These weapons, coupled with our advanced intelligence gathering network and highly trained special operations, can eliminate targets without the use of nuclear weapons. Using nuclear devices only increases "collateral" damage (aka., loss of civilian life.) The conventional arsenal we have today is powerful enough without needing to resort to nuclear weapons.

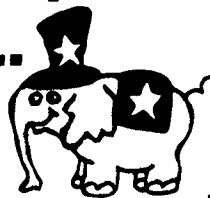
Although a pre-emptive strike by the United States could easily start World War III, it is still important that we maintain our policy of "full retaliation" in order to protect our citizens and our allies in the case of a nuclear strike. A nuclear strike on American soil by a rogue nation is not an impossibility, and in this case, a full retaliatory strike would be the only possible response.

The fallout from a pre-emptive nuclear strike would not only cause the death of innocents, and ruin the environment, but it would also give any rogue nation with a finger on the button an excuse to push it.



ENERGY: An electrifying debate

The Elephant says...



After eight years of Clinton-Gore environmental policy which did little (outside of \$31 billion in new gasoline taxes) to solve the energy crisis, the time has come for a new energy policy. Recently, President Bush unveiled his energy plan which focuses on conservation, diversifying energy supplies, and modernizing the energy supply network.

First, Bush seeks to increase conservation through development of more efficient technologies. Among these are electric meters which tell the consumer how to lower their bill, sensors which automatically shut off lights of an empty room, and new transmission wires that transport electricity more efficiently.

The President's plan also seeks to decrease dependence on foreign oil by increasing domestic production (mainly in Alaska). According to a study by President Clinton's Energy Department, new technologies in recent years have dramatically reduced industry's impact on the environment, while at the same time, minimizing waste and protecting wildlife. This supports the claim that it is possible to safely and efficiently drill for oil. It is uncertain how much oil could be extracted, but any amount would clearly help reduce dependence on foreign sources until the need for oil is gone.

Lastly, the President's plan seeks to expand development of renewable resources and nuclear power. President Bush supports tax credits for those who invest in solar homes and the development of wind turbines as an alternative power source. The Republican plan is simple. Do not force Americans to choose between the environment and their economic well-being, because due to new technology, it is possible to protect both.

- Ryan Bard

Every two weeks, a member of the College Republicans and/or College Democrats will debate a partisan topic. Send suggestions to: Behrroll2@aol.com

The Donkey says...



In 1978, a young Republican, born into an influential family and from Midland, Texas, was running for Congress against the strong Democratic incumbent Lloyd Bentsen. This young Republican basically ran on an outsider platform and an important aspect of his platform was to criticize and denounce President Carter's National Energy Policy. This platform was somewhat popular in the heart of Texas oil country, however, the young Republican still lost the election. Some 22 years later that young Republican, George W. Bush, was elected President of the United States and is looking to Vice-President Dick Cheney and energy companies, like Enron, to develop a National Energy Policy.

As America marches proudly into the next millennium, Americans need to deal with some important issues. One important issue is: "How are we going to power the next millennium?" America needs to develop clean and renewable energy sources. Because America and many of our allies are becoming more dependent on foreign oil and especially Middle East oil, we should look to other forms of energy. This does not mean drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Reserve (ANWR); I am suggesting we develop solar, wind, hydrogen-cell, and other technologies that have the potential to yield substantial amounts of clean energy.

I do not think drilling in ANWR is a solution to our energy and primarily oil problems. Drilling for oil in ANWR is bound to make billions for huge oil companies, but there is not enough oil to sustain America's thirst for any extended period of time. Also drilling in ANWR could be disastrous for the fragile ecosystem, a fact that supporters of drilling quickly try to dismiss. Removing a substance that has been in the ground for millennia, using thousands of workers and trucks, building pipelines and storage areas, and transporting the oil hundreds of miles will not affect or harm the ecosystem? The risk for disaster is too high.

America needs to decrease its dependency on oil and a sure way to do that is to further develop and begin to use renewable resources like the sun and wind. Searching for and trying to exploit every source of oil, coal, or natural gas will not solve our energy problems.

- Stephen Webb

My 20th spring break



Chit chat for change Christine Kleck

Editorial Columnist

On June 14, 1981, I was born into this world. That would make me 20, as in two decades old, or two years into adulthood, or the very young college junior that I am, or an illegal drinker that I am not. I can vote, I can fight in a war, I can go to jail, but alcohol can not be found in me, on me or with me. This whole issue boils down to numbers. Numbers that equal ages and birth dates and calendar years.

With that in mind, let me present some more numbers to you. 03/02/02 – the date that spring break officially began. 03/10/02 – the date the spring break officially ended. 0 – the amount of extra money I had laying

around to spend on a vacation over spring break. 20 – my age.

You can see where the trend is going. All these numbers add up to a nice quiet, relaxing and somewhat uneventful week in Erie, Pa. Just for the record my spring break began with a blizzard and a stranding and ended with lake-effect snow and freezing temperatures, but relaxing it was.

I took in some movies, cleaned out everything I own, read a little (non-textbook reading), saw some friends and family members, ate too much as I sampled some Erie cuisine, and just hung out. Expenses were kept to a minimum while I made the most of every situation and just laughed a lot. To the traveler or the party animal this may seem like a total drag, but to the tired, stressed out and

overworked student it was heaven on earth.

Who said money buys you happiness, or that you can't do anything for less than \$5 these days? They haven't spent an entertaining spring break with me yet, I guess. The definition of "entertainment" as stated by dictionary.com is the act of entertaining, or something that amuses, pleases, or diverts. I couldn't have said it better myself.

A small diversion from school was certainly a first way to describe my break. While I didn't have to physically drive there and sit in class day in and day out that week, the pile of books, list of assignments and constantly opened daily planner kept reminding me that I still had to go back after the week was up. While not every assigned page was read and not every paper was completely finished, I would have to say that I got

ahead in a large portion of my classes (as I breathe a long sigh of relief)

As far as amusements go – what can I say...Erie dining and today's selection at local movie theatres made for some pretty amusing times. It is so nice to be able to just sit back and really enjoy a film without constantly thinking, "oh that test is tomorrow." And it is quite wonderful to be able to enjoy a meal without having to mentally write in your head that your next term paper is due...uhhh...tomorrow. Even if the movie wasn't all that great, and the food was cold, just those feelings of "a week without school" were enough to make them quite amusing.

Kleck's column appears every three weeks.