

The Behrend Beacon

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

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**THE BEHREND
Beacon**

"A newspaper by the students for the students"

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The Beacon is looking for editorial columnists for next semester! Please send a 500-1000 word editorial column sample to Behrcoll2@aol.com for review.

Five ways to improve Behrend

At the Beacon we hear a lot of complaints by students who are upset with something at Behrend. The Beacon is an outlet for this school's bitchin'. And that is fine, that is what we are here for. The Beacon should be a voice of the students and a place where many opinions are heard. However, far too often, people end their quest for a better campus at their complaints. Your voice should be the starting point for changes not the end.



Kevin Fallon

Here are things you can do to improve this campus:

1. Support other Behrend students. Unlike University Park, at Behrend students are not just a number. We are a community. It is possible for someone who spends four years at campus to get to know a lot of people. If you put forth the effort you could probably get to know hundreds of people, just from your classes alone. When you know that many people on a campus this size, it is a good percentage. If we all take the time to get to know each other Behrend will become a stronger community. We should support our fellow students. Go to the school play. Take time to see the choir concert. Attend one of Multi-Cultural

Council's events. Go root for the basketball or swimming teams. I go to a lot of on campus events and there are usually not a great number of people there, or at least not as many that could be there. Just getting to know others and supporting them goes a long way in building strong communities.

2. Get involved with Student Government. Sure, SGA does its fair share of complaining. But it usually doesn't stop there. Brandi Hoyis, SGA president, works hard to make sure complaints turn into positive action. SGA makes a lot of important decisions that affect student clubs. It also lobbies the Penn State higher ups when it comes to student concerns. If something bothers you, don't just run your mouth. Do something constructive. SGA is a good place to start.
3. Join a campus club or organization. There are more than 80 clubs on this campus. You can join a fraternity, sports team, band, religious group, or political group. It doesn't stop there. There is a club for just about any interest. I know a lot of people that just go to classes and go home. They are missing the point of the college experience. Classes are just a small part of college. College is more that what you learn in books, it is where you learn about

yourself and life. It is where you should experience different things. People who just go to class are missing out.

4. Start a club. Ok so you don't like any of the 80 plus clubs? Well, start your own. It does require some work, but it's not very hard. Although being an "official" campus organization has its benefits, namely funding, you don't even have to be an "official" campus club. You can just get a bunch of people together who have the same interest. By starting a club you provide a place for people to gather and things to do that would otherwise not exist.
5. Give back to the community. This campus can show the rest of the Erie area it cares by going out and doing good in the community. Show the rest of Erie that Penn State students care about things besides partying. Volunteer for a charity. Go canning for THON. There are countless things you can do. Basically, if you want to improve this school there are more ways to do it than complain. Of course, complaining is the easiest thing to do. That is why we hear so much of it.

Fallon's column appears every three weeks.

How things should be

Honesty. Honesty is the skeleton of a successful relationship, and I am convinced that without it, there is no way for people to be happy. Sadly, my girlfriend broke up with me on Saturday, and needless to say, I've spent a lot of time at home thinking way too much. I decided that I think I finally know what a good relationship is all about, how you know you found someone who deserves your heart. A good girlfriend is someone who will always tell you how she feels. She won't hide in fear of hurting you when something is wrong. This is crucial, you have to be completely up front and honest any time something doesn't feel right. To balance this, of course, she should always tell you when you do something that makes her happy. A good girlfriend is someone who is completely different than you in so many ways, but you still agree with her on how someone should live their life. More than anything, a good significant other doesn't just make you happy, isn't just someone that you think is amazing. You know what a really perfect person is, when you know she's someone special? It's when she suddenly makes you think more of yourself—someone who makes you realize how special you are to the world, and to them. Someone who makes you feel better about yourself, and gives you motivation to become an even better person for the rest of the world. That is what a real relationship is all about. Of course, there has to be room for fun—to do some crazy things now and then, and to do things together you wouldn't tell anyone else about. To know things about



Derek Bledsoe

the other no one else knows. Trust. Ahh, that mighty tool of destruction. Trust is something that needs to be there. Trust and honesty, without those two, all else is hopeless. If you are not completely honest with someone, then one day, you just might hurt them by coming up out of the blue to tell them how you really feel. Don't ever break that trust, or else you're just dooming yourself, and your other. What about love? Love is just a word, and nothing more. A real relationship is so much more, so much more than just a word. It's about that look in their eye, that feeling that you just know, but you can't describe because no matter how hard you try, no work can do it any real justice. I had never thought of this until just a short while ago, and now I know. This is what it's all about. I know that she may never read this, but to the girl out there who broke my heart, I want to say thank you. Thank you for being the one I've always wanted, thank you for being the one to make me into a better person, and thank you for being honest in the end. I'm glad I had the opportunity to know what the ultimate relationship was like, and I hope that the rest of you reading this will one day find something that awesome. For the first time ever, even though my heart is broken, I can finally say that I am more happy it happened than I am sad it ended. I will never be the same.

Bledsoe's column appears every three weeks.

Letter to the Editor

Common courtesy is still important

8 a.m., Bruno's fishbowl, studying and watching CNN. Been there since 7 a.m. Not a fun morning. Suddenly, two guys also walk up to the fishbowl and sit down behind me. One of them, after a while, stands up and changes the television channel to ESPN without even looking at me. "You could've asked if I was watching that," I said. He replied, "But you weren't." "You could've at least asked, you know, that was really pretty rude." He responded, "I'm alright." Now, maybe I'm not cool enough to know what he meant by replying "I'm alright" to my accusation of rudeness, but at this point I just rolled my eyes and moved. I also began thinking about a serious problem here at Behrend. People don't say "thank you" anymore when you wait and hold the door for them. They breeze by you and do not say "excuse me." They sit in the computer labs and continue to IM their friends, occasionally looking up to see the look of despair on your face because you urgently have to print something and ALL of the computers are occupied. This is an issue.

After Sept. 11th, I felt that people had really upped their levels of courtesy. It seemed like people were taking more time to stop and talk to one another and were, in general, much more aware of the fact that they did not own the world. Unfortunately, I think that this mentality has gone back to its pre 9-11 state. People just really don't seem to give a sh** about anyone else, and I for one think that is really sad (I know that there are some of you out there who actually DO practice common courtesy. Obviously, this article is not addressing you). People tend to become so absorbed in their own needs and problems that they forget that EVERYONE has needs and problems. Sure, even the most conscientious of us become self-absorbed from time to time. But some people ALWAYS act this way, and I believe that they are in for a harsh reality. I don't know what they're teaching people around here, but from my own work experience I know that it usually doesn't matter how good you are at what you do— if you are an overall nasty person that no one feels practices any manners or courtesy, people are not going to

want to employ you. And even if they do employ you because of your skill, your colleagues will not enjoy being around you. Why? Because common courtesy still matters. No one is asking you to cut off your right arm or donate all your belongings to the Salvation Army. But, for the love of God, hold the door for the people right behind you! And when someone holds the door for you, thank them! And if you know that you aren't doing anything important on the computer and someone else needs to, offer your seat to them! (You may be thinking, "I pay for the computers, too!" Again, keep in mind that EVERYONE pays for the computers. Not just you.) And please, please, don't just change the television channel on someone in the fishbowl without asking. As you can see, it really gets a rise out of people.

*Amanda Grolemond, 05,
Marketing/Political Science*

What's the rush?

Knight Ridder/Tribune News Service (KRT)

Full credit to Yale and Stanford for cracking the seal on pressure-cooker early admissions: No longer will students be locked into going to those schools if accepted early. Prospective Yale and Stanford students will be able to weigh their choice through the regular winter-to-spring acceptance period. If they determine that another school is a better fit, or land a more attractive financial-aid package, they can decline Yale's or Stanford's offer. Loosening the timetable makes sense, even though some selective schools—among them, the University of Pennsylvania—still back traditional early decision. Penn says students who commit early prove to be happier. But for too many students and their families, early admission has become a desperate tactic to improve their odds of acceptance to selective schools. Lost in the competitive fervor is the ability to choose a college based on what is best for students. The Yale-Stanford approach allows for more informed decision-making by students on the important—and expensive—choice of a school.

Too much on your mind? Write a Letter to the Editor

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Include your name, major, and semester standing.