

EDITORIAL

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The Behrend Beacon

The Behrend Beacon

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

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THE BEHREND
Beacon

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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.



The real world starts... RIGHT NOW

It is from my own experiences that I know how much the members of your average college community (let's say, for instance, Behrend) love to define things. They love to classify problems, pick out key words to define, answer questions and constantly pick at their surroundings for new information to help them better understand what they may or may not already know.

Now let's think for a minute about the kind of world that surrounds the average member of a college community. Reality-based TV shows, fellow students preparing themselves for the "real world," and real lessons being taught in the classroom are just a few things that come to mind. One word sticks out of that list more than any other - the word "real."

If you were to ask 100 people to define that word, you would probably get 100 different responses. In using the above list to define the word "real," I can only tell you this. Reality-based TV is anything but reality, the real lessons taught in the classroom are for the real world, but the real world isn't some far off and distant place that we hope to enter, someday. The real world is now. Reality is all around you - it's all real.

Reality began the day that you were born and lasts for as long as you want it to. It won't start when you graduate from college or when you get your first "out of college" job, or when you finish paying off school loans - it's right now.

With this in mind, let's look at college life through "real world" eyes. You have a large 9am meeting tomorrow, where your boss

will assign you a problem-solving project, so you better get a good night's sleep. Once in your meeting tomorrow, you will divide into departments under the larger organization to complete the project effectively, creatively, and in the allotted amount of time.

The best project that solves the problem in the most complete way will earn its creators a pay raise and a chance to move up in the company within the next few weeks. The worst problem solving ideas will earn their creators nothing the first time, but future and more frequent bad ideas will only lead to an all-expense paid trip to the unemployment office.

I just described the average college class, but in "real world lingo." Imagine if you treated every project and assignment that you received in your cases as though it would be rewarded with a pay raise and future advancement, instead of just a letter grade and the freedom to take the next level class and move up to the next semester standing.

But when you think about it, in reality, exhibitors of quality work always receive a raise and a chance for advancement, whether its pay-related, education-related, grade-related, or corporate-based. The "real world" always appreciates a real effort and a real job, well done.

So the next time you are faced with a project and you think to yourself, "I don't need this," "this isn't going to prepare me for the real world," or "this isn't going to make me any real money" - it's all real, and a really good job leads to really great rewards. The real world is now.

Kleck's column
appears every three weeks.



Just a little side note
Christine Kleck

George Bush is my 'American Idol'

With war looming on the horizon like a black storm cloud, there is one thought on the country's minds: Who will be the next American Idol?

This is not to say that Americans are stupid. Well, yes it is. Let's face it. War is depressing and politics are downright confusing. Why would anyone want to worry about that when we can laugh at people screeching like dying cats on "American Idol?"

This war is interesting because the American public has the luxury of not taking interest. Look at World War II. The country made huge sacrifices both at home and abroad. During the Vietnam years, thousands marched in protest. But this current war, many can just change the channel to "Joe Millionaire."

And for those of us who care about the conflict, we don't know whom to believe. Personally, I don't know what President Bush is thinking, and I sure as hell don't trust Saddam Hussein.

The rhetoric coming from the Bush

administration has been vague up to this point. In his State of the Union address, Bush addressed the possible war, but did not provide concrete evidence.

Call me a cynic, but I expect my leaders to provide sound reasoning before launching an unprovoked assault.

Most of the international community agrees. Does anyone else find it odd that countries that usually support us do not have our backs on this one?

If Bush thinks war is the best solution to the Iraq crisis, he needs to do a better job to convince the public. After all, he does have Simon from "American Idol" to compete with.

Perhaps Bush should take a lesson from Simon. He should get on TV and diss Saddam, "American Idol" style. It

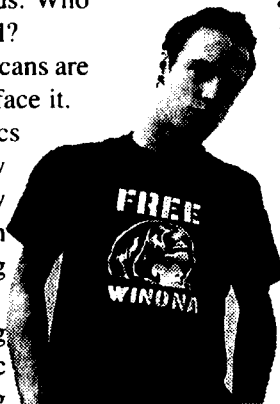
might not be the smoking gun, but people would listen when Bush says, "What's the story with the mustache? You are horrendous."

Hussein would say, "Thank you." Then Bush would say, "That is not supposed to be a compliment. You are the worst leader in the world."

Then Hussein would say something like, "You ain't my momma and you don't pay my bills."

Colin Powell is set to speak to the United Nations Security Council next week to make his case for war. He is the Paula Abdul and that other guy to Bush's Simon. Bush talks all the noise, but Powell has to be the rational one and explain why Hussein can't go on to the next round...I mean should be attacked.

Actually, some of those American Idol contestants are the ones the U.S. should attack. Maybe we should drop a bomb on that kid who sang "Like A Virgin."



Kevin Fallon
editor-in-chief

Keep Barrett at Behrend

I do not know how many of you are interested in the arts, but I wanted to bring something to everyone's attention. Last year, Paula Barrett was hired to replace the former theater instructor. Her contract was only for one year, because as is the practice here at Penn State, a nation wide search for a new teacher was to take place. Right now, the staff at Behrend is observing different instructors from all over the country.

Barrett teaches theater majors at Gannon, as well as teaching Theater 100, Honors Theater 100, and Theater 102 at Behrend. However, she is not simply a teacher. Barrett is the director

of our on campus theater productions. This means spending several hours a day at rehearsal with the cast and countless hours at home developing the play. She is an amazing woman. She is an instructor, a teacher, and last but definitely not least, a friend to her students.

Even though there is no doubt in my mind that the administration will discover that she is the best person for the job, I do not want to leave any room for something tragic to happen. It would be a tragedy for this University to lose Barrett. She is an insightful, energetic, and brilliant woman. Barrett was a professional actress in New York City for several years before retiring to instruct a new generation of actors. I know several people who are seriously considering acting as a career largely due to her contagious enthusiasm, myself included. As cliché as it may sound, she makes learning fun. She is an invaluable asset to this school.

Because Behrend is a small school, theater is not offered as a major here, which is unfortunate. Barrett is our theater department. She has hands-on experience in the theater; her techniques are unique and exciting, while she integrates skill with imagination. I have learned more from her than I have from all of my other classes here combined.

All right, now for the reason I am bringing this national search for a new teacher to your attention. I am going to be passing around a petition to keep Barrett here at Behrend. It will be presented to the

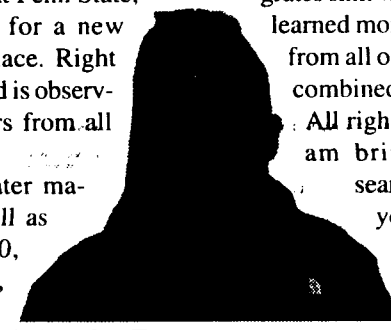
administration to show them how important our beloved teacher is to us, even though she has only been here for one year. I hope that you will all sign it and show your support.

Even if you do not know Barrett, come and see the on-campus production of "R.U.R" at the end of February and you will see how brilliant she is. She has transformed not only the Studio Theater, but also the outlook of her students and the atmosphere of this university.

As the student body we should have some say in who our instructors are. Please realize this power and sign the petition to keep Barrett here at Behrend.

If our voice is loud enough, it will be impossible for the administration to ignore our loyalty to Barrett, and more importantly, our loyalty to the arts.

Barron's column
appears every three weeks.



Maria Barron

Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor,

I am writing to express my admiration, as well as my pride, of the Behrend students—all women I believe—who braved not only Saturday's frigid weather but worse yet Peach Street traffic and snowmounds to collect donations for Thon.

There may be Penn State Pride, but I was certainly Behrend Proud when I saw their efforts. They deserve our thanks and our respect.

Yours,

Michael D. Chiteman, Head
Division of Undergraduate Studies
20 Erie Hall

**Send all Letters to the Editor to
Behrcoll2@aol.com
Include your name, major, and semester standing**