

# The Behrend Beacon

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No. 14

## Burke accepts CEO and Dean position

by Erin McCarty  
news editor

The two-year search for a replacement for Provost and Dean Dr. John Lilley has come to an end. Though nearly 150 candidates from institutions across the country applied, it turned out the best man for the job was at Behrend all along.

On Wednesday, Interim Provost and Dean Dr. Jack Burke accepted an offer to serve as Lilley's permanent replacement. Reactions across campus have been very positive.

"They were looking and looking and looking, and there he was the whole time," said Merideth Hennon, 04. "I'm happy Burke stepped up and decided to take the office," said Ryan Sereri, 08.

Meggan Allen, 10, agreed. "I think it's a great idea," she said. "He has experience, know-how, and he's an all-around great guy."

Although no one was surprised Burke had been offered the position, many students were surprised to hear that he had accepted.

"This was not something I thought I wanted to do," acknowledged Burke. "I had all along been strongly

encouraged to throw my hat into the ring."

After a year-long search ended unsuccessfully and a second was drawing to a close, Burke "caved in." "In the end, I decided it was the best thing for the college, to keep that continuity."

On July 1, Burke will officially become Behrend's Dean and Campus Executive Officer, a name change meant to coincide with the other campus colleges.

One of Burke's first duties will be to find a new Associate Dean, which is the position he held prior to Lilley's departure. One concern during that process will be to work out how the responsibilities will be divided between Burke and the Associate Dean. In making that decision, he will consult with various members of the Behrend community.

"We have had the same organization for 17 or 18 years, and the college has changed a lot since then," he said. Burke has been at Behrend for over 21 years, during which time he has seen the student body more than double in size. But even more than quantity, Burke is proud of the increased quality of the Behrend population.

"My proudest achievement is putting in place a very strong faculty and staff," said Burke. "It is so much better than it used to be." He also said that the physical attractiveness of the campus and the quality of the student body have increased in the past two decades.

One of the biggest challenges he has faced and will continue to grapple with in the future is the scarcity of resources. State funding continues to decrease in an unstable economy, and Burke must work to ensure that the academic quality at Behrend does not suffer as a result. As Dean and CEO, he will spend more time outside Behrend, raising funds and getting more involved in university-wide activities for Deans.

"We have momentum at Behrend, and I am going to try to keep it," said Burke. "What's been the real strength here is the people. Everyone is pulling in the same direction."

No matter what the future holds, Burke is up for the challenge. He looks forward to working together with faculty, staff and students and watching the institution grow even stronger.

"This is what it's all about," said Burke. "We try to work hard and have fun."



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Dr. Jack Burke, who has served as interim Provost and Dean since Dr. John Lilley's departure in 2001, has accepted the permanent position.

## THON raises hopes for the kids

by Scott Soltis  
sports editor

Imagine not going to sleep for 48 hours. Now try and think of staying awake without any caffeine or much sugar. Finally imagine not being able to sit down and having to dance for most of those 48 hours.

Are your eyes heavy? Do your feet hurt?

These were the circumstances that the dancers of the 2003 IFC/Panhellenic Dance MaraTHON had to endure. Many people know THON is the world's largest student run philanthropy in the world. Others just know it's some dance at University Park every year for kids with cancer. What people don't see is just how much dedication it takes to participate in the event.

From late Saturday night at 2 a.m. to Sunday evening at 7 p.m., I witnessed first hand exactly what THON is. I went to support Behrend's dancers Brandi Hovis and Michelle Rizzo, but I had no idea what I was getting myself into.

By 10 a.m., after just eight hours of dancing, I was incredibly tired and my feet were killing me. However, I would not let any of this on because nearly 700 students dancing for THON had already been there for 41 hours.

The women from Behrend put themselves through a tremendous



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Behrend representatives Michelle Rizzo and Brandi Hovis stand with Charles Millard, the founder of the Four Diamonds Fund.

physical challenge, and for a second time. Rizzo danced through the 48-hour gauntlet in 2000 while attending Penn State Delaware County, and Hovis represented Behrend in 2001. Both were quick to admit that the second time was harder.

Behrend students did what they could to keep Hovis and Rizzo from falling asleep and from thinking about the pain in their feet, which no longer had arches from constant pressure.

Freshman SGA Senator Alexander

Henderson stopped by and gave words of encouragement. Junior Joanna Kreider made the long trip from Erie to UP to help the dancers. Behrend THON co-chair Jenn Sutter was on the floor for almost all of the final 17 hours, dancing and giving foot massages. Erin Strayer (junior SGA Senator) held up a sign from the stands supporting Behrend's dancers. Senior Will Sunday made late night runs

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## Behrend declared arboretum

by Jen Henderson  
assistant news editor

The Greener Behrend Task Force has great ideas on keeping the campus environmentally preserved. This group of people, along with many others, has helped to further develop Behrend environmentally. These changes have led the campus to be offered membership in the American Association of Botanical Gardens and Arboreta.

The campus is now known as an arboretum and will be fully inducted in a ceremony that will take place on April 23.

Throughout the campus's 725 acres there are a variety of diverse trees in remote locations and in various buildings. The Behrend campus has at least one of each of the 50 states' trees. Pennsylvania's tree, the eastern hemlock, are located all over, including the other side of the Studio Theatre. The state tree of Hawaii is located inside the Kochel Building, in an attempt to keep it alive and healthy.

While most trees are located throughout our campus, some are inside, and others grow in the green house which is located behind the Otto Behrend building.

Dr. Thomas Wortman, special projects assistant to the provost and dean, along with Dr. Robert Light, as-

sociate provost and dean, lead the task force at Behrend. Wortman is very proud of what has been done with the surroundings thus far and believes the original owners would be too.

He is especially proud of "how we maintain the beauty and integrity of this setting and how we've acted responsibly towards the Behrends' gift to us. Frankly I think the Behrend family would be pretty proud of what we have done here, they would be happy that we are conserving the sort of things that they gave us fifty five years ago."

Sam Marvit is a freshmen student who is also actively involved with the task force.

"It gives students a chance to be involved simply with conservation because it is a crisis today in America, mainly because we use most of the world's resources," said Marvit. "Hopefully we can take one step at making it less of a crisis and working with nature as opposed towards working against nature, which is most often happening."

Marvit has done this work before and believes that this is a wonderful chance for students to get involved. "It's great for students because it also prepares them for what the world may

**WORTMAN**  
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## Champagne rewarded for excellence

by Lauren Packer  
assistant sports editor

Dr. John Champagne was selected as the 2003 Penn State Alumni Teaching Fellow.

Established in 1985, the award was started to recognize great teaching and to encourage other teachers to be more effective in their classrooms. Nominees for the Alumni Teaching Fellow are university-wide, allowing any professor at any campus to be selected. However, those selected must have at least five years of teaching experience at Penn State and be tenured.

Champagne will be honored on March 24 at the Faculty/Staff Awards Recognition ceremony at University Park.

Champagne has been an integral part of the Behrend community since 1993. He is currently an associate professor of English and teaches courses such as Globality and Literature, Contemporary Literary and Cultural Theory, English 15 and English 202B.

"Dr. Champagne is an outstanding teacher who has completed significant research. He knows how

to communicate difficult, theoretical material to his students, and he's able to get them deeply involved in their work," said Dr. Archie Loss, interim director of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences.

Reading difficult texts can be very challenging to students, but Champagne breaks down the material and fosters students' interpretations by using class time, asking questions, and exhibiting great listening skills.

"When we are analyzing particularly difficult material, I begin by reminding students that the kinds of texts we are studying require repeated readings," said Champagne.

"I try to make sure we have class time to discuss in detail passages students find difficult. Whenever possible, I try to ask questions that will help students find a way into the text we are reading, and to identify specifically what they find difficult in it. I try to create a classroom environment where it is okay to be wrong."

As in any class, most students feel that there is only one correct answer—the one the teacher provides. Champagne does not agree with this view.

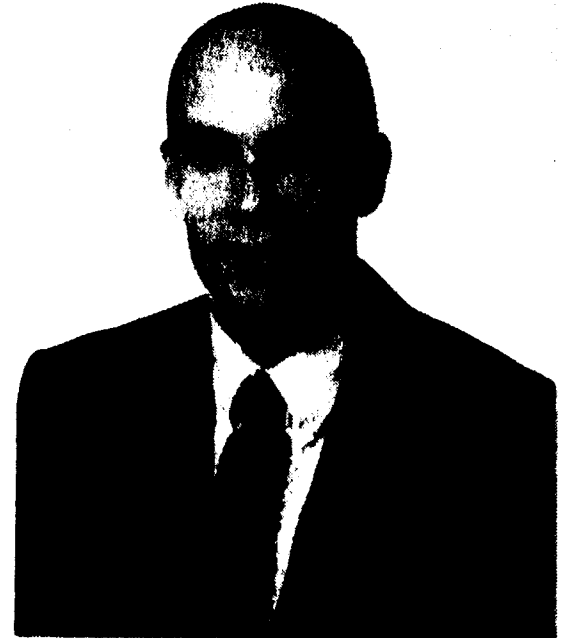
"As a teacher of reading, my job is to help students find ways to forge their own interpretations

of difficult texts. Some students are very resistant to this. They want the teacher to provide the answers. I try to explain to these students that, once class is over, I will not be around to tell them what the text means. If I simply teach them my interpretation, I am doing them a disservice," said Champagne.

Grounded in the foundations of teaching, Champagne realizes that he is there primarily for the students. Hardships occur when Champagne plays the reader role in a novel that he is teaching.

"As a reader, there are passages I want to discuss. I mean, that is why I became a teacher—because I like to talk about ideas. I have to remind myself sometimes not to act as if I am the smartest student in my own class. In other words, I have to keep my ego in check and think about what students need, rather than what I think they need," said Champagne.

As part of winning the award, Champagne is asked to share his talents and knowledge with other professors and students through workshops, lectures, discussions, and by possibly teaching honors courses.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

English professor Dr. John Champagne has been named this year's Penn State wide Alumni Teaching Fellow.

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