

EDITORIAL

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The Behrend Beacon

The Behrend Beacon

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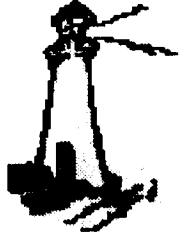
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New York Times is dead wrong

What if you were reading the New York Times and you notice that one of your professors was featured in the "obituary" section? Obviously, the person is dead. You would probably call all your friends and classmates and discuss the matter. You may be relieved, in some strange and twisted way, or you may be sympathetic for the death of the old bat. Either way, would you question the validity of the death notice? Most likely not because printing a false obituary can be a pretty disturbing thing.

As disturbing as this may be, it actually happened! And it happened in one of the most significant newspapers in the United States—the New York Times. In a conference, the New York Times "admitted that a dame of dance and theater was alive and well, a day after prematurely polishing off the 94-year-old heroine from the original production of 'Oklahoma.'" This was no ordinary lady; she was a star in her town. According to an online article, Katharine Sergava lives in Manhattan. She taught acting classes at HB Studio up until a few months ago when she moved into a nursing home.

Her former students were in a frenzy after reading the death notice. They "rushed to her home to mourn after reading the bogus story". Who would have thought it was all just a big mistake?

This obituary was written by freelance dance writer Jack Anderson. The Daily Telegraph of London published the false obituary, which is where Anderson first read of Sergava's so-called death. Ander-



AEROPOSTALE
Amy Wilczynski

son did not attribute the Telegraph as the source of the obituary or personally confirm that Sergava did, in fact, die. His only comment was that he was "embarrassed" about the episode. "Embarrassed" is an understatement.

Apparently, there is no paper that exists that is error-proof. I still find it incredibly odd that Jack Anderson, writer of the bogus obituary, would not double-check his facts. I suppose he trusted the Daily Telegraph of London; however, he most certainly should have given the British paper credit for the death notice. If he had cited the Telegraph for the news, he wouldn't have looked as bad. All good writers are supposed to double- or triple-check their facts. Obviously, Anderson did not.

After I graduate in May, I plan on pursuing a career in newspaper or magazine journalism. I suppose this story is a good lesson to me and all the other aspiring journalists out there. Double

check the facts!

If you go to google.com and type in 'newspaper bloopers' or similar phrases, hundreds of web sites pop up that have thousands of misprints from major newspapers around the globe. Some of my favorites are: "Nordic track for sale, \$300, hardly used, call Chubbie," or these headlines: "Astronaut Takes Blame for Gas in Space," and "Gas Cloud Clears Out Taco Bell."

We look at these as being funny, but in reality, WHERE WERE THE EDITORS? Did no one catch how ridiculous and unprofessionally written these headlines are? I cannot imagine the New York Times, Washington Post, Boston Globe or any other major newspaper letting "bloopers" like this slide just to get a laugh.

To all aspiring journalists: take this as a lesson. Be wise in what you publish. Double or triple-check your facts and your wording. It's better to spend an extra half hour researching facts and rereading paragraphs than make an ass out of yourself in front of the huge audience the paper is distributed to.

I have barely any newspaper experience, but at least I know the importance of double-checking. With all hopes, the new generation of newspaper journalists will also be more aware of such incidents (bogus death notice, bloopers, wording) that they will not do it themselves.

Amy Wilczynski's column appears every three weeks.

Inspiration comes in all shapes and sizes

by Adam Massaro

Feel sorry for yourself right now? Feel like complaining? Feel like whining?

Well, hold back the tears for a couple more minutes, because there may just be someone out there who got dealt a worse hand than you did.

This someone is Kyle Maynard, who unlike most of us, refused to fold.

Now you're asking yourself, have I seen him around campus? Maybe he was in one of my classes? Wrong.

See Kyle isn't even in college; he is a senior at Collins Hill High School, outside of Atlanta. He is the starting 103 lbs. for the wrestling team and this past November placed sixth at the NHSCA National Preseason Wrestling Championships.

Undeniably, this is a praiseworthy accomplishment by any athlete, yet Kyle managed to do it as a congenial amputee, without arms below the biceps and legs below the thighs. Kyle was born without these features and has never walked upright. For lack of a better description, Kyle is a torso with a head and stumpy extensions—one opponent referred to him as a "103 pound block of muscle"—who walks on all fours. When he is off the mat, he uses an electric-powered wheel chair as means of transportation.

At age 11, Kyle began to play football and with each snap he silenced his critics.

"Yeah, there were a couple of doubts that I couldn't," Maynard said. "But I don't really look at those. I just look at what I can do and what I will do," said Maynard in an interview with CNN/SI.

Hopefully by this point you have stopped feeling sorry for yourself and are at least feeling sorry for Kyle. Well don't. He doesn't feel sorry for himself and neither should you.

See this story isn't about Kyle, it's about everyone else. Everyone who does feel sorry for themselves but shouldn't.

It is evident that most people have not faced enough adversity to truly appreciate how good they have it. And on top of that, people prefer not to unwrap their gifts of life, and instead leave their potential locked away in the closet.

College should be a place that opens doors to great things, and pushes students to tap into that potential, yet all I see are people slamming those doors shut and cursing the world for their shortcomings. This observation leads me to believe that the normal people are the only ones who are truly abnormal because they can't even see how easy they have it.

By this point in his life, Kyle has conquered mountains of adversity, yet most people can barely get over the foothills.

The struggle to ascend is not due to a lack of ability but the inability of people to apply the gifts given to them. We should all look to Kyle and mirror his ability to disregard the bad and embellish the good in life. His unrelenting drive should be used to show us how little drive we actually have. And his accomplishments should act as motivation to improving ourselves on all levels.

It's funny, you know, who could ever have thought?

Adam Massaro's column appears every three weeks.

Take some time to be a college student

OK, winter has everybody down. OK well, winter, and the fact that the Paris Hilton video was blurry and looked like it was shot in night vision. (So my friends told me.) So far, it seems, everybody has been whining about something going on at Behrend, i.e. lack of snow removal, the 3 inches of solid ice on the ground, classes being delayed/canceled, and so on. And if they aren't complaining about any of those things, they are complaining about politics again. Why not? It's easier to whine about the primaries than it is to, say, argue over "The Price Is Right." Imagine that conversation: "What, is that girl insane?!? \$4.29 for the Little Debbie Snack Cakes is way waaay too much. You fool!" Admit it, everyone has, in the privacy of their apartment, screamed at a contestant on "The Price Is Right." I do it almost daily, and there are times when I need to be restrained by roommates.

Anyway, rather than being negative, I decided to be positive, spice things up a bit: ride into my audition on a scooter, act like a jackass fiancée for a million bucks on TV, anything except whine.

So what to type about then? Well, Spike TV is going to debut a show called "Ten Things Every Guy Should Experience." Now, I don't know what these 10 things are, nor do I care, because, lets face it, I'll most likely never do any of them. I'm sure the list is entirely unrealistic. Number 8 is probably something like, "Seduce both Olsen twins on their 18th birthday, all while bungee jumping with Uncle Jesse." Number 6 is likely "Watch 'Speed 3: Glacier of Doom,'" followed by "Gigli," followed by "Kazaam," followed by Season One of "Star Trek" on DVD,

all without blinking or hard drugs." You know, things that no normal guy could possibly do.

Well, I figured. "Why not blatantly rip off Spike TV's idea, but twist it around to my own liking, while involving things that the average college student could actually do. Without further ado, here is:



Ryan Russell

Ryan Russell's Top Five Things Every College Student Can and Should Actually Do Before They Graduate.

1. Take one Saturday, and do nothing but sit on the couch. I've already checked this one off my list. In fact, I've checked it off several times. This one is fun and easy to do. Guys, you can watch college football or basketball for 14 consecutive hours if you play your cards right and have two televisions with VCRs. Girls can do the same, except with episodes of "Sex and the City" or "Extreme Makeover."

2. Play one video game for 18 straight hours, resulting in at least 3 missed classes. This one is checked off for me as well. Actually, twice: "Madden 2004" and "Dance Dance Revolution Ultramix" for the Xbox.

I won three Super Bowls and made it to the

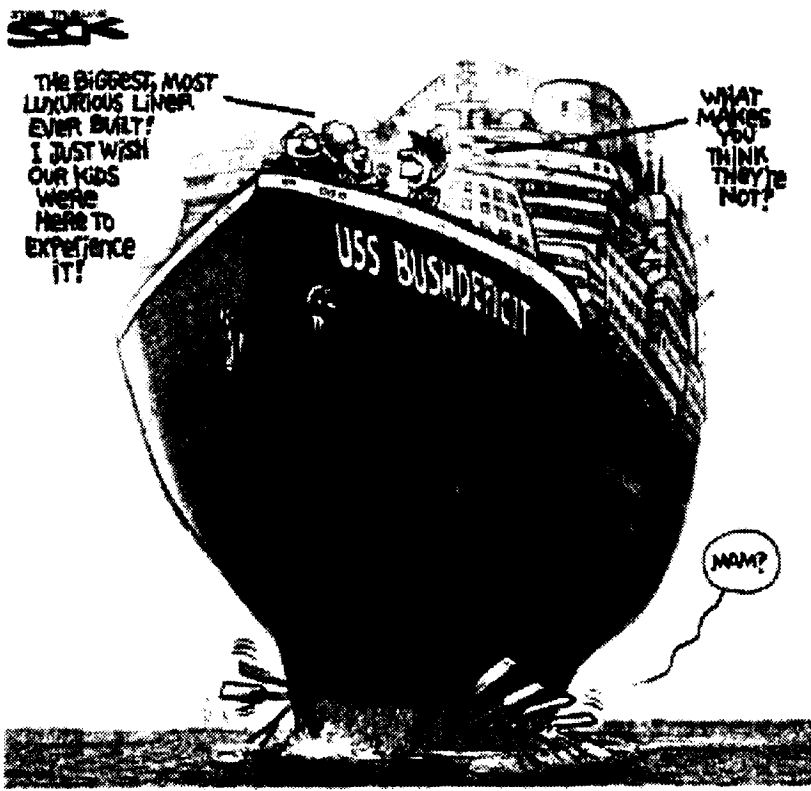
"megasuperhyperjesusslowthishingdown" remix of John Mayer's "Your Body Is a WonderLand."

3. Watch every episode of the "Family Guy" ever made (Must watch each episode at least four times to check this one.) This show is the best show ever made. I will not listen to any arguments on this one. Guys, I'm sorry, "G-String Divas" lost any chance it had in the third season when Candy added a boyfriend to the mix and Jenni added that insipid "i" to the end of her name. It's a "y" and everybody knows it! Girls, don't even get me started on "The Real World," or "The Bachelorette," or "Friends."

4. Take at least one random week-end-long road trip that your parents have no business knowing about. Check (for me, anyway). My trip involved Canada, the casino, casino security and two very, very angry Maple Leaf fans; then it involved the casino door and my face. Then it involved dancers. No, not like in "Dance Dance Revolution." You figure it out.

5. Have at least one good "random" party. What I mean is this. Say it's Saturday night, you aren't attempting to complete No. 1 on this list, and it's 9:30 p.m. You aren't doing anything too exciting, maybe even you are catching up on homework. By 9:45, you have the bottle of Captain Morgan opened, and you and your friends are playing "Strip Jenga." By 11:30 p.m., you have begun the second set of team co-ed challenges in "Beer-Olympics." By 3 a.m., you are in the middle of the quad watching a picnic table burn to the ground. That's a good random party.

Ryan Russell's column appears every three weeks.



disagree? disagree? disagree? disagree? disagree?

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