

The Behrend Beacon

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**THE BEHREND
Beacon**

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personality"

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Letter to the Editor

Who has more pride?

I am writing in response to the article written about Homecoming Requirements. I agree with many of the points in the article. I agree all the members of court should be involved on campus and I think that a GPA requirement is a fine idea. The one thing that I completely disagree with, though, is the opinion that everyone on court should be of fifth semester standing or higher.

Why can't first through fourth semester students handle the "responsibility of representing our school?" Many sophomores are very involved on campus and most freshmen are more enthusiastic about Behrend (and college, in general) than many juniors and seniors. For instance, almost the entire Homecoming Committee is made up of sophomores, who are involved on campus. These committee members are so passionate about Behrend they

took on the "responsibility" of planning an event meant to unite the student population. Name any junior or senior who is involved on campus and an equally involved freshman or sophomore can be named. Not to be stereotypical, but I believe most seniors are excited about finally leaving Behrend and most freshmen are excited just to be here.

I am offended that, in the opinion of Lauren Packer, over half this campus is not able to represent this school! Not allowing first through fourth semester students to participate in court would definitely be a "repeat of high school homecoming." What good would it serve to eliminate freshmen and sophomores, except to exclude them from participating in the celebration?

Kristen Comstock
COMBA 04

Tattered flag flies over tattered nation

I'm sure everyone gets teary-eyed hearing the National Anthem at sporting events and gets a little misty as a group of aged veterans march down the street during the Fourth of July. I do, too. However patriotic these sights are, in my eyes, America has become a hypocrisy rather than a democracy. Americans called for military response after Sept. 11th, but when I asked my friends if they had registered for Selective Service (the draft) a majority had not. Americans are proud to have a democratic system in place that supports and protects our rights but on average, only 30 percent of registered voters actually voted in the last Presidential election.

Let's talk about the Super Bowl. Ah yes, the grand match up between NFL powerhouses that reinvigorate American sport. Before the kick-off, American servicemen and women carried out the American flag while Beyonce sang the National Anthem. But, unfortunately during the half-time show, the same capacity stadium and millions of television sets that bore witness to the beautiful display of pre-game patriotism had the misfortune to view Kid Rock trample on that blissful spirit by donning a poncho. The poncho was the American flag with a slit cut into it. Seem a bit ironic? What better way to proudly support our servicemen and women than to purposely destroy the flag? I'm sure that the

grieving families of some 500 personnel killed in Iraq thank you, Kid Rock (note the sarcasm).

On my way out of campus, I pass by the lower level parking lot of Erie Hall. When I recently looked up at the flagpole in the parking lot I saw yet another travesty of American "patriotism." The flag was in deplorable condition. The edges are so tattered that the bottom red stripe has totally detached from the rest of the flag and hangs separate. It resembles one of those flags that is seen in a history book that has been through battle and has been riddled by bullet holes. There is a difference between those flags and the flag that flies over Behrend - ours has not been in battle. Instead, it has been dilapidated by weather and age.

I think it's time we put up a fight for our beliefs. The Rally for Student Aid in Harrisburg is a great place to start. I hear people complaining about the downward trend in Student Aid, but how many people have registered to take the trip? Let's get our opinion heard and show the policy makers that we actually do care. Let's go out and vote in elections. The only way democracy works is for people to go get their opinion heard through one of the only rights we have over our government-voting. Let's take pride in our country. If we don't, who will? The time for complaining is over. The time for action has come.

Sean Hannan
LA 02

What really becomes of the broken-hearted?

Can we really die of a broken heart? During the month of February, many lovers are dazzled with the spirit of Valentine's Day. But what about those who have lost a lover due to death? Experts say people can, in fact, die of a broken heart, or grief. A change in a person's immune system can cause the body to go into severe stress and shock, according to experts (www.msn.com). Some grieverers are in such a state of depression that they tend to shy away from their own personal needs such as health and hygiene.

There have been many famous people who are said to have died of a broken heart. It's a sad reality, but death happens every second, every minute, every hour, every day. Even more are affected by death, some to the point of creating their own broken-hearted death.

The famous country legend, Johnny Cash, who died on Sept. 12, 2003, is said to have died of a broken heart. The "Man in Black" lost his beloved wife, June Carter Cash, in May due to heart surgery complications. Official reports say Johnny Cash died from his fight with diabetes. Others say he was broken hearted.

A heavy weight boxer from Ohio, Bradley Rone, collapsed and died of apparent cardiac arrest in the boxing ring in July 2003. This was the same day his mother, Thelma Rone, died



Amy Wilczynski

of heart failure. Family and friends say the 34 year-old, 259-pound boxer from Cincinnati died of nothing more than a broken heart, and nothing related to boxing.

President James M. Buchanan is said to have died of a broken heart after a broken engagement with Anne Coleman, the daughter of one of Lancaster's wealthiest families. Coleman called off the engagement and her family forbade Buchanan to have any contact with her. Shortly after, Coleman died and Buchanan was not allowed to attend his beloved's funeral. Legends say that Buchanan never married and stayed a bachelor for the rest of his life, until he died in 1868 of a broken heart.

Catherine of Aragon, daughter of King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella, was the first wife of Henry VIII. Af-

ter many attempts of producing a male heir to Henry's throne, Catherine only gave birth to one child, a daughter, Mary. Henry arranged an annulment and later married his second wife, Anne Boleyn. Catherine was separated from her only daughter and died four years later of a broken heart.

These are just a few stories of people who have died of a broken heart. According to experts, the bereaved do have some control of their grief-stricken lives. Often people who have lost a loved one fall into a black hole and refuse to get on with their everyday life. It is difficult for grieverers to believe life exists outside of their pain and anguish. This mentality eventually puts them over the edge and they die of what many people call a broken heart. The natural defense system shuts down due to lack of activity. Loss of reality of everyday life acts as a barrier for any health problems and symptoms. The griever often forgets about his or her own pain and sorrow and sinks deeper into depression.

This Valentine's Day, think about those who do not have someone special to share this lover's holiday. Send a card, make a phone call, send an e-mail. Who knows, you may be helping to heal a broken heart.

Amy Wilczynski column appears every three weeks.

And the stupid award goes to...

by Tim Denial
staff writer

Well, we're all in full swing now here at Penn State Erie the Behrend College. The first tests have begun and I think we all could use a little something to lessen the tension. No, I'm not talking about a trip to the new oxygen bar in Erie, but rather a simple click of the mouse on darwinawards.com. We've all done some outrageously dumb things that I'm sure we're not proud of, but as long as you're still alive to hope no one saw us do it, we are safe from receiving any of these awards.

Before I move on I should explain what exactly a Darwin Award is. Charles Darwin was a British naturalist who lived during the 1800s. It was Darwin who coined the phrase "survival of the fittest." Thus the Darwin Awards are bestowed to those who were not fit and did not survive.

If you haven't already checked this out, it's always good for a laugh, with Darwin Awards dating back to 1995

not to mention the vintage Darwin Award winners.

Here's a short example: In February of 2003, in Australia, a homeowner was welding on the roof of his house. He had a problem with the oxygen tanks sliding on the house so he had the ingenious idea of "tacking" the tank to the roofing iron on the house. Needless to say that was the last thing he ever did.

This site gives us all a chance to marvel in the stupidity of some of the world's biggest boneheads and rejoice at the fact that they are no longer a threat to the gene pool of the not-so-dumb.

Once you reach the site you'll notice that the designers of this site are not worried about running out of nominees. There have been 258 Darwins awarded since their creation, but it doesn't stop there. There have also been 107 mentions awarded over the years. These are given to those who avoided the ultimate sacrifice but by some strange coincidence managed to avoid death.

Larry Walters of Los Angeles knows how these awards work firsthand. Since Walters had always wanted to fly, he got the great idea to tie helium balloons to a lawn chair and sail away. Once he wanted to come down he figured a pellet gun would work. He'd just shoot a few balloons and slowly descend. But then again he never expected to get higher than 30 feet off the ground, not 1,600 feet where he eventually leveled off. Larry did eventually return to the ground, amazingly unhurt, but it wasn't until he'd been in the air for 14 hours and his beer and sandwiches were all gone.

So anyway I hope you check this Website out if you're in need of a little confidence boost. No matter what it is you've done, you're still part of the fittest that survived.

Tim Denial's column appears every three weeks.

Support PSB basketball

I started working at Behrend in October, 1977 and have always followed and supported the basketball program. I watched Behrend play Mercyhurst and nearly beat Gannon on their home court. All said and done, this is by far the best men's basketball team that's ever hit the hardwood at Behrend. I've been amazed to look at empty seats in the Junker Center. We have a world class University facility, team and coaches, yet few care to show support. Our athletes receive no athletic scholarship and handle the demanding academic workload that Penn State Behrend requires of all its students. In addition, they aspire to be

the best they can be as a team. They've invested a lot of time, work and energy. It's paid off in their performance. One would think you would see the student body and community support our team. Often admission is free. Its amazing to think a bleacher full of Bradford fans in the 2003 AMCC championship final out cheered the entire Junker Center home fans. The Junker Center has never reached seating capacity at a P.S.B. varsity basketball game. Feb. 21 at 8 p.m. is your last chance to see the team in action before we host the AMCC tournament. The only thing our 20 game winning team might need to

win it all is the third man. I think that means you if you're not on the team and reading this. Our cheerleaders and dance team provide exciting half-time entertainment. Bring your friends and family. Join the Behrend community while we rock the house. Let's see some spirit. There's plenty of it to go around our campus. Don't forget our women. This relatively young team doesn't hold a back seat to anyone. 17-5 overall and tied for 1st in the AMCC. Definitely worth a second look. The action starts at 6.

Gordon H. Walk
Janitorial Foreman/
Recycling Coordinator

disagree? disagree? disagree? disagree? disagree? disagree?

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