

The Behrend Beacon

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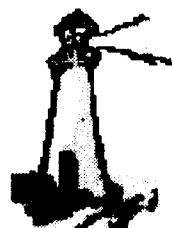
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Beacon

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personality"

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OUR VIEW

Student philanthropies embody school spirit

Sometimes in today's world, college students are stereotyped as chain-smoking, class-evading alcoholics. Too much is not expected of us from the rest of the world besides being able to rid our bodies of the hangover we have from the prior evening's festivities. Students on campus, however, have begun to shatter that image with a recent influx of philanthropic activities. Today's issue, for example, notes three student groups that have been working hard for the past few months on raising funds for organizations other than their own. They, of course, are not the only three that do so on an annual basis. A few weeks ago, the sisters of Alpha Sigma Alpha held their eighth annual date auction, whose proceeds benefitted two charities.

Throughout the year, numerous campus organizations hold benefits for other organizations, with a plethora of charities benefitting from their hard work. We, as students, need to encourage our peers involved in these

organizations and let them know what a good thing they are doing. Regardless if it's raising money for children with cancer, raising money for the homeless or for those less fortunate than us, all causes are worthy. When we, as college students, take on the massive tasks of organizing benefits for them, we let the rest of the world see that there is more to college life than booze and booty. And that's not that bad of an image to portray.

Right now, at University Park, there is a committee devoted to defining what exactly "We Are Penn State" actually means. We feel that whenever Penn State students are out, taking time out of their already busy lives, and giving it to raise money for someone they might never get to meet, they are embodying our school's so famous mantra. The spirit of giving is Penn State.

The Beacon's View is determined by a majority of the board of opinions.



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

write your opinion to The Beacon

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Penn State may lose professor and my respect

Altoona professor Nona Gerard has been tenured since 1994 and has given 15 years of service to Penn State. So what is President Graham Spanier giving her in return? How about a slap in the face, followed by possibly revoking her tenure and terminating her employment.

The Penn State Standing Joint Committee on Tenure has recommended in a 3-2 vote that Gerard "be terminated for adequate cause based on grave misconduct." Spanier has 30 days to decide if Gerard will remain tenured and employed by the university.

Why? Because she voiced her opinions on a degree option that was deficient. Gerard openly admits to criticizing aspects of the Integrative Arts program because she had reservations about lack of space and properly trained faculty.

Finally, students have a professor who realizes that we are being robbed and does something about it.

Excuse me, President Spanier, but the last time I checked I was paying well over \$10,000 to receive an entire education, not to graduate with a degree that was only half-complete. The only grave misconduct here is that of the university parading around the Integrative Arts degree option as complete.



Lauren Packer
editor in chief

Do the students who graduate at Altoona get only half a diploma? Do they get half tuition? I think that's the least we could do for the poor students who will graduate with this degree. Or maybe Penn State could make an announcement to potential employers on behalf of the graduates: "Please forgive how utterly useless this graduate seems. It's not really his/her fault. We only provided him/her with half a degree."

As students, we need to make sure that an end is put to this administrative garbage. What really is their motive? Is it to make Penn State and its degree programs better? Or is it to fix the problem by firing the whistle-blower? Professor Gerard should be made an

example of, but not the way Penn State is doing it. Students, in addition to and especially faculty, need to speak up about matters such as these.

Apply this situation to plastics engineering at our campus. What would happen if we told our students we were giving them one-half the education they needed to succeed, one-half the necessary equipment and faculty half qualified to teach? I don't think too many students would be happy or stay at Behrend for very long.

Plastics engineering and theater are two extremes, but the underlying principle remains the same. Students pay to receive a degree in which they are taught by the best with the best. I don't know anyone who says, "Gee, I hope my professors are really underqualified," or "Wouldn't it be great if there was no technology for us to use?" Strike that, I do know someone like that, and her name is Penn State.

It saddens me to think that throughout the system, degree programs may be suffering and all our administration can do is turn up the volume on a new problem to take the heat off the real problem. Classic "Wag the Dog" move.

Lauren Packer's column appears every three weeks.

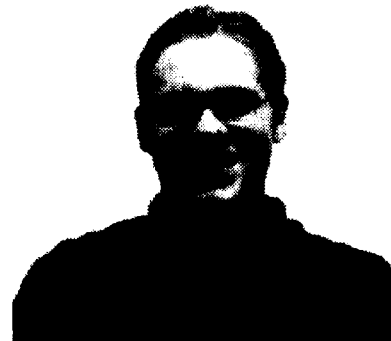
Eisner criticized for lack of quality

The Walt Disney Co. has been looking for a cold steak to put on its black eye after the recent fall-out with both Pixar Animation Studios and Disney heir Roy Disney, while CEO Michael Eisner also faces criticism for the decline in the quality of the Disney properties.

Unfortunately for the kiddie kingdom and its embattled emperor, the acquisition of certain Jim Henson properties only adds fuel to the uncontrollable fire that burns closer to the gates of the Magic Kingdom.

Last Wednesday, the Jim Henson Co., which is again in the hands of the Henson family, decided to sell the Muppet characters and the Disney Channel staple "Bear in the Big Blue House" to the mouse house for a reported \$90 million, adding Kermit and Miss Piggy to the Disney stable.

This isn't the first time Disney has tried to acquire the Muppet characters, but the initial offer in the early 1990s happened during a time when Eisner oversaw Jeffrey Katzenberg's revival of Walt Disney Studios with films like "The Little Mermaid" and "Beauty and the Beast." Katzenberg bailed after being accused of not raking in profit from the live-action Disney films. (Animated films like "The Lion King" generally outperformed nearly every live-action film from any studio.) The Henson deal fell apart before Katzenberg's depar-



Daniel J. Stasiewski
A&E editor

ture in 1995, but the Disney and Henson companies had a friendly relationship until the German media company EM.TV purchased the Henson Co. in 2000.

From 1995 to 2002, most Disney-produced films, animated or live, failed to make any impact with audiences. "Freaky Friday" and "Pirates of the Caribbean" provided the Company with a financial boost last year that won't be repeated this year or even next. That could be why the Michael Eisner of 2003 is trying to turn the Muppets into a profit steamroller for Walt Disney.

The Eisner who tried to buy the Muppets 14 years ago isn't the same Eisner who today allows the creation of a straight-to-video sequel

to every Disney Classic (an idea that Walt Disney once said was only reserved for "Fantasia"). The Eisner we have today has seen his empire fall apart because the quality of the product has been overshadowed by the company's desire for profit at all costs.

Now, the Eisner who lost Disney's only creative partner (Pixar) is looking to save some face. Instead of pursuing more creative endeavors or returning to the Disney tradition that helped save the company in the late-80s, the Walt Disney Co. is going to use the Swedish Chef's built-in popularity to temporarily boost its stock.

The purchase could even drive-up the asking price for the entertainment company. Despite turning down cable giant Comcast's offer to purchase all Disney properties, the Walt Disney Co. won't take down the "for sale" sign until Eisner gets the boot. With all hopes, the board of directors follows the path of the California Public Employees' Retirement System, which yesterday said it would withhold its votes for re-electing Eisner to the Disney chief executive position. The Muppets may not be saved, but other cherished childhood characters may avoid being prostituted for profit.

Daniel Stasiewski's column appears every three weeks.

Letter to the Editor

I'd like to disagree with the opinion of Mr. Massaro, as published in the Friday, 20 February issue of 2004.

His opinion—as I understand it—is that the city of San Francisco, in the person of Mayor Newsome, is endorsing and promoting an anarchic breach of the laws of the State of California by directing the city/county [San Francisco is large enough to be, and is, its own county] to grant marriage licenses, similar in all respects to those granted a pairing of differently-gendered individuals.

This action is further seen as inconsequential and ultimately

more damaging to those who are obtaining licenses, who will suffer emotional difficulties when their licenses are rendered invalid, as the law will win.

As stated above, I don't agree with this position. Whilst the actions of Mr. Newsome may well be in violation of Proposition 22, Proposition 22 violates Article 1, Section 7b of the California state constitution, which disallows the granting of privileges to one or a class of [for our purposes, heterosexual] citizens without granting them to all citizens. I imagine that those deemed gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgendered can still be citi-

zens of California; therefore, the privilege of using the term "marriage" to describe their state-recognized relationships cannot be legally withheld, as constitutions overrule laws.

Furthermore, the law doesn't always resist change; the petition by a group of students to attend a school, the board of which refused them entry, ended up "defeating" certain laws—Brown et al. v. Board of Education et al.

Separate was not, is not, and is unlikely to ever be equal.

Chris Strayer
POLSC 04

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