

# NEWS - YEAR IN REVIEW

## Dorm damages on the rise, students paying Henderson, Soni take SGA election

By Dan Snedden  
from the Dec. 10 issue

Damages in the residence halls are a problem every semester at every college and Behrend certainly has its share. However, this semester damages are on the rise, resulting in extra hassle for Housing and extra charges for students. "This year is certainly not one of the best years," said James Bowen, assistant manager of Housing and Food Services. "One of our biggest charges is students who leave their trash on the floors, leave their trash in the bathrooms and leave their trash outside the back doors of the buildings." "We hire housekeepers. And our housekeepers' jobs are to go in and clean those buildings, take the trash out of the bathrooms, the hallways, the lob-

bies and so forth. But they don't take personal trash out," said Bowen. The deterrent fees for a bag of garbage are \$25 throughout the university system and they vary for other damages. Extra cleaning includes both the deterrent charge and compensation for the housekeepers. According to Bowen, there have been recurring problems in the lobbies of the various residence halls, students putting trash in the recycling bins being a significant one. He explained that if garbage, even cardboard pizza boxes, is thrown in a recycling bin, waste management cannot use the bag for recycling. Cameras in the residence halls, while they add an extra measure of vigilance, are not meant primarily to be a deterrent to damages.

"The intent of the cameras is not to catch students doing bad things. The intent of the cameras is for safety purposes," said Bowen. "If we do find something on camera where someone's done something wrong, certainly that's a benefit to us, but first and foremost the cameras are installed for safety. If someone is assaulted then we can refer to the cameras and see who entered the building at what time and use that." "If a student sees a student damaging, they should not feel like they're ratting on someone by reporting it. Students need to take care of their home away from home," said Bowen. "If we get a report, we can investigate it and charge the individual responsible for the damage." "Res Life and Housing are always brainstorming to find ways to help stu-

dents reduce damages," said Amanda Knerr, associate director of student affairs, "but students taking responsibility for their own actions and the actions of their fellow residents is the key to keeping charges down." "Our floor meetings have been successful in explaining how the process of charging damages works," said Knerr. "The damage free program has also drastically reduced damages." The damage free program encourages students to keep their floors clean by rewarding students with a party after a month without damages. "We try to maintain a nice, safe, clean area," said Bowen. "All in all I think that we have a bunch of good kids on campus, there's just a few that think they're here for something other than education."

By Sarah Weber  
from the April 1 issue

Mike Taylor, SGA elections chair, announced yesterday that Alex Henderson and Deepti Soni won the SGA presidential and vice presidential election after polls closed at 5 p.m. A record 813 students voted in the election. Henderson and Soni received 483 votes. The other candidates, Justin Curry and Cayla Javor received 330 votes. The third ticket of Zack Mentz and Seth Laird withdrew from the election late last week and were removed from the ballot. About 500 more students voted in this year's election than in the 2004 election.

Henderson and Soni agreed that this year's impressive turnout can be attributed to the amount of campaigning by the original three parties.

"Both other candidates did an extraordinary job of advertising and getting people to vote," said Henderson.

Soni added the fact that there were three candidates who had very different platforms improved student interest and campaign support.

Henderson said that there were several items that would receive his immediate attention when he takes office at the end of the semester.

"We will continue the push to keep tuition down. We are also going to work hard to get book titles and ISBN numbers to keep book prices reasonable," said Henderson. He also said that, within, SGA he and Soni will work on restructuring the committees and reinstating the diversity committee.

"I really want to thank all of the students for getting active, my friends, the clubs and the administration," said Soni. "I'd also like to thank the other candidates."

## PSU reorganization creates controversy

By Tiffany Mak  
from the April 14 issue

In an effort to improve administrative efficiencies within Penn State's network of campuses, University Park released a comprehensive plan of structural reorganization of the university. Although it has not yet been confirmed, the entire plan aroused anxiety in Behrend faculty.

The emphasis of the plan is the new alignment of campuses, title changes for the campus executives and deans and policy and structural changes to enhance the cooperation between campuses and campuses to reduce administrative redundancy.

The biggest change for all 19 campuses, except University Park, is that they will be part of a new Commonwealth Campuses organization, reporting to John Romano and Janis Jacobs, the new vice presidents for Commonwealth Campuses, according to Dr. Jack Burke, CEO and Dean at Penn State Erie. Romano serves as the vice provost and dean for enrollment management and administration while Jacobs serves as the vice provost for Undergraduate Education and International Programs.

Its aim is to eliminate much administrative overlap, reduce cost and improve operational efficiency in the areas of outreach, university libraries, student affairs, Development and University Relations since the resources can be moved from one campus to another to help balance the budget model of Penn State.

"How this model will work in practice is not yet clear, but it does represent a threat, at least on the surface," said Burke. "So does our new status as just one of 19 non-University Park locations. But many of which are of much lesser stature."

Burke also claimed there will be millions of details to work out for the centralization. One of the challenges includes the independence of Behrend. Since the

library faculty and staff and their budgets will be transferred to the University Libraries, Behrend will have a dotted line relationship to the college.

"It appears that all of our curricular proposals will need to go through another level of approval. There will be a big push to increase online offerings, and the World Campus will become known eventually as Penn State Online," said Burke.

Although there seems to be more questions than answers, Burke thought there might be some positives for Behrend.

Burke believed that we can still maintain our qualitative academic status under the "central bureaucracy" system because we have a voice at President's Council as well.

"Among the potential opportunities I see is a chance to modify the service-area concept in admissions as well as an opportunity to create win-win partnerships with the other campuses," said Burke.

Other additional opportunities, like delivering our graduate programs to other sister campuses rather than to University Park, will help retain "loss of status associated with being aligned with units of lesser academic maturity."

Rodney Erickson, executive vice president and provost at Penn State, summarized the plan as "cost savings" which will result in redirection of budget and "greater support for the commonwealth campuses."

Graham Spanier, Penn State president felt that the streamlining will ensure "greater attention and visibility" to undergraduate education and to the campuses.

"The restructuring also will permit the executive vice president and provost to assume a greater sense of operational responsibilities and, in turn, will release time for me to engage in additional activities including fundraising and external relations," said Spanier.

More informational meetings are scheduled and the board of trustees will present a formal reorganization plan.

**Register for classes now!**

**Summer 2005**

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May 11-June 1**  
**8-week session  
June 15-August 3**  
**Late summer  
3-week session  
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## Gays face 'uncomfortable' climate

By Daniel J. Stasiewski  
from the Feb. 18 issue

A satirical flyer titled "12 Reasons Same-Sex Marriage Will Ruin Society" was found burned on the Women Today office door about two weeks ago. Brittany Hess, president of Women Today, discovered the sign, which she said was put up to show support for fellow Multi-Cultural Council organization and campus GLBT group, Trigon.

The incident was not reported to college officials, but Chris Strayer, secretary of Trigon, said most vandalism of Trigon signs goes unreported. According to Strayer, the signs get pulled down on a regular basis.

"I was pleasantly surprised to find a sign still hanging in the engineering building," he said.

Bulletin board signs for Trigon were ripped down as recently as Monday. In most cases, it doesn't get much worse than a few missing informational flyers. On occasion, the vandalism gets more vicious.

Trigon has a folder full of signs that have been defaced. Some signs simply have the word "fags" written on them. Others are more elaborate, with a "Being Gay Is Not A Crime" sign receiving the addendum "It should be."

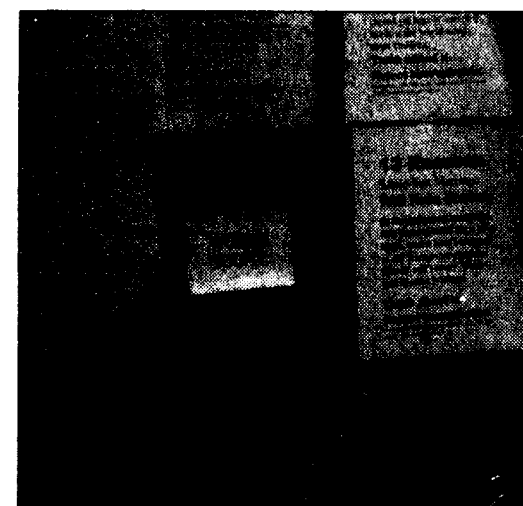
Chris Rizzo, director of student activities, is in charge of the Reed Union Building and occasionally receives reports from Strayer on the vandalism. While he did say that all clubs are victims of missing signs, he saw Trigon's case differently.

"For me it's an act of intolerance," said Rizzo.

According to the student guide to general university policies and rules, intolerance is defined as contempt for a group based on "race, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation or political or religious belief."

The guide warns students that a violation of the intolerance policy will be treated more severely than other behavior and may result in "separation from the University."

Personal Counseling's Sue Daley is a mem-



ber of Penn State University's GLBT Network and was, at one time, adviser of Trigon.

A staff member since 1993, Daley has talked to gay and lesbian students who have found the climate at Penn State Behrend "uncomfortable." Most, she said, transfer to other schools.

"Erie is family oriented and that's not gay family oriented," said Daley. "I think the campus reflects the community."

Parents of gay high school students have called Daley asking for help finding a GLBT youth organization in the Erie area. Her search came up with nothing.

Some groups, not specifically youth oriented, are forming in Erie. In the recent issue of Erie Gay News, one writer was organizing a Gay Bowling League at Greengarden Lanes. A GLBT Business Association is also in the works.

Other groups do exist in Erie, but for Strayer, an organization like Trigon has the role of support and activism.

"Our purpose is to help GLBT people in society," he said, adding gays and lesbians just want to be accepted as people.

Strayer expressed a need to stick together and forming niches like Trigon help students feel less uneasy. The organization, for Strayer, is active only because GLBT students need it to be.

"In a perfect world Trigon wouldn't have to exist."

