

NEWS

National and world news, in brief

Katrina recovery work continuing

NEW ORLEANS -- Rescue, cleanup and humanitarian efforts continue in Louisiana and Mississippi despite growing criticism of the federal government's response.

The increasing presence of the National Guard, Army and volunteers is starting to be felt in the hurricane-devastated areas of Mississippi and Louisiana. According to the Department of Defense, more than 60,000 reserve and active-duty military personnel are now in the region, coordinating rescue and recovery operations.

The water filling the streets of New Orleans has become extremely toxic and unsafe as ruptured gas lines, household chemicals and gasoline have mixed with the saltwater in the city to create a dangerous brew of disease and toxicity. Dozens of homes and businesses are burning in the downtown and outlying areas of the city that are still flooded, as leaked natural gas and chemical sludge combine to create a volatile mixture.

Firefighters are hard-pressed to put out the fires due to the difficulty of accessing them and the lack of pressurized water in the city, leaving many to burn out on their own or spread to other structures. Scientists are calling the situation one of the greatest environmental disasters of all time.

The mayor of New Orleans has authorized the

forced removal of any citizen who refuses to leave the city, citing safety as the primary factor. He has given all local and federal officials the authority to "compel the evacuation of all persons from the City of New Orleans."

Several of the city's pumps have been repaired or otherwise re-activated, giving some hope that the city will eventually be cleared. The levees that were breached by the storm surge have been temporarily repaired with sandbags and other structures. In some areas of the city, the level of the flood waters has dropped noticeably as the pumps strain to remove the vast quantities of water from the city proper. It is expected to be weeks before the low-lying city will be dry.

Meanwhile, across the country, many Americans are starting to question the competency of the government agencies responsible for disaster response, most notably Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Bush Administration.

Congressional hearings and investigation slated to begin in response to the vast public interest generated by the issue, however, have been cancelled by House Majority Leader Tom DeLay (R-TX) and no further plans to investigate the government's response have been made.

Hussein reportedly confesses to crimes

BAGHDAD, Iraq -- Current Iraqi President Jalal Talabani claims that former President Saddam Hussein has confessed to the ordered mass executions of thousands of Kurds in the 1980s in response to an assassination attempt.

Although the official trial in Iraq is not slated to begin until October 19, there is already word that much information is being revealed by Hussein to the Iraqi Court. Talabani said that he was in contact with one of the special tribunal judges, who was feeding him updated information.

The judge said that "he was able to take important confessions from Saddam Hussein and he has signed these confessions and there is video and audio for these confessions."

Hussein's lawyer, Khalil Dulaimi, disagreed. "There was no confession by the president and all the investigations in this case do not implicate him at all," he said in an official commu-

niqué to Reuters. "If it's true that a certain judge had mentioned anything about the course of the investigation to Mr. Talabani then this judge should resign immediately." Later, he included, "At any rate Mr. Talabani should not give statements on any matter that relates to a judicial process that ought to be conducted in confidence to ensure justice."

The trials are expected to be swift and decisive, despite objections from the defense that the court system is biased and not allowing the defense to work properly to defend its client. "It's futile to even have a defense," Dulaimi was quoted as saying.

The defense team also claims that the prosecution is being highly selective in its charges to avoid implicating any of the members of the current Iraqi government, as well as US support of his actions in the past.

Ukraine government disbanded

KIEV, Ukraine -- Viktor Yushchenko, President of the Ukraine, eliminated his barely seven month old government, citing corruption and a lack of "team spirit."

Nearly every member of the new Ukrainian government, from the Prime Minister down, was fired by President Yushchenko on Thursday amid allegations of widespread corruption.

Yushchenko, who won the presidency only after a second election in which he criticized his opponent's government as corrupt, is now coming under intense scrutiny himself by his own people. Reuters quoted Yushchenko as saying, "I am

setting before the new team one task -- the ability to work as one.... The moment is right when (the old team) has lost their team spirit. We need to halt the disappointment in society and make sure that ideals (of the Orange Revolution) are not cast into doubt."

National opinion polls have shown Yushchenko's popularity on a steady decline over the past several months. The poll, however, was taken before the new allegations of corruption had been made, which makes his present situation almost impossible to determine. At that time, more Ukrainians already thought that their country was headed down the wrong path rather than the right one.

Roberts nominated as next Chief Justice

WASHINGTON -- Senate hearings are to begin on Monday to confirm John Roberts, a federal judge, as the next Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.

As the nation mourns the unexpected death of Chief Justice William Rehnquist, President Bush has nominated one of his former law clerks to fill his post. Roberts, who also acted as a pallbearer at Rehnquist's funeral, had worked with the late Chief Justice in the past as a Supreme Court clerk.

Although originally chosen to succeed the retiring associate justice Sandra Day O'Connor, Roberts has quickly accepted the new role the president has laid out for him. Conservatives and Republicans throughout Washington are

quickly rallying for a quick confirmation process. "The fact that he's now been elevated to Chief Justice shouldn't slow us down at all," held Sen. John Cornyn (R-TX). The decision to begin the confirmation process on Monday garnered bipartisan support.

While Roberts has gained broad approval from the American people in general, there are still some who question his politics before the nomination, if not his qualifications. Central to these concerns are some of his past attitudes regarding civil rights issues, specifically legal writings where his distaste of the subject bordered on contempt and ridicule.

However, Congressional Republicans remain confident that Roberts will be confirmed and approved quickly.

Compiled by Patrick Webster
Source: CNN

Behrend bids fond farewell

By KJ Margraff Jr.
student life editor

Colorado State University's Pueblo branch (CSU-Pueblo) has found a new Dean of Student Life, Dr. Chris Rizzo. Before accepting the position at CSU-Pueblo, Rizzo was employed here at Behrend as the Director of Student Activities in the Reed Union Building. Rizzo began his career at Behrend 13 years ago as a Residence Life Coordinator; he then spent the next 11 years with the Student Activities department. Rizzo recently received his doctorate from University of Pittsburgh which enabled him to explore new options like this new position at CSU-Pueblo. Rizzo said that CSU-Pueblo is "a good fit for [him] in terms of the people and the institutional values." He went on to say, "I always loved the mountains," and the fact that he has family living in Denver, Colorado makes CSU-Pueblo "a place he plans to be for a while."

With Rizzo gone, the Student Life Department will be looking for a permanent replacement, but until one is found, Kris Motta Torok, Associate Director of

Student Activities, is in charge of the extra responsibilities. Her temporary title is now Interim Director of Student Activities. She is now in charge of setting up the "Speaker Series," corresponding with student organizations and, in general, just being a problem solver. Torok explained, however, that she is not all alone. "The [Student Activities] staff have been really helpful...by taking on additional responsibilities too," she stated.

Although a very well orchestrated plan of action has been arranged, the void of Chris Rizzo will still be present and he will be missed by his fellow staff and students alike. "Chris hired me; he has truly been a mentor and a friend," expressed Torok. "I'm very happy for him."

Deepthi Soni, Student Government Association (SGA) vice president, said, "He was so involved around campus. No one can fill his place." Rizzo expressed heartfelt gratitude by saying, "I'd like to thank the students, faculty and staff of PSU Behrend for an unbelievable experience and opportunity to grow personally and professionally." He continued, "Behrend will always have a special place in my heart...they've made me what I am

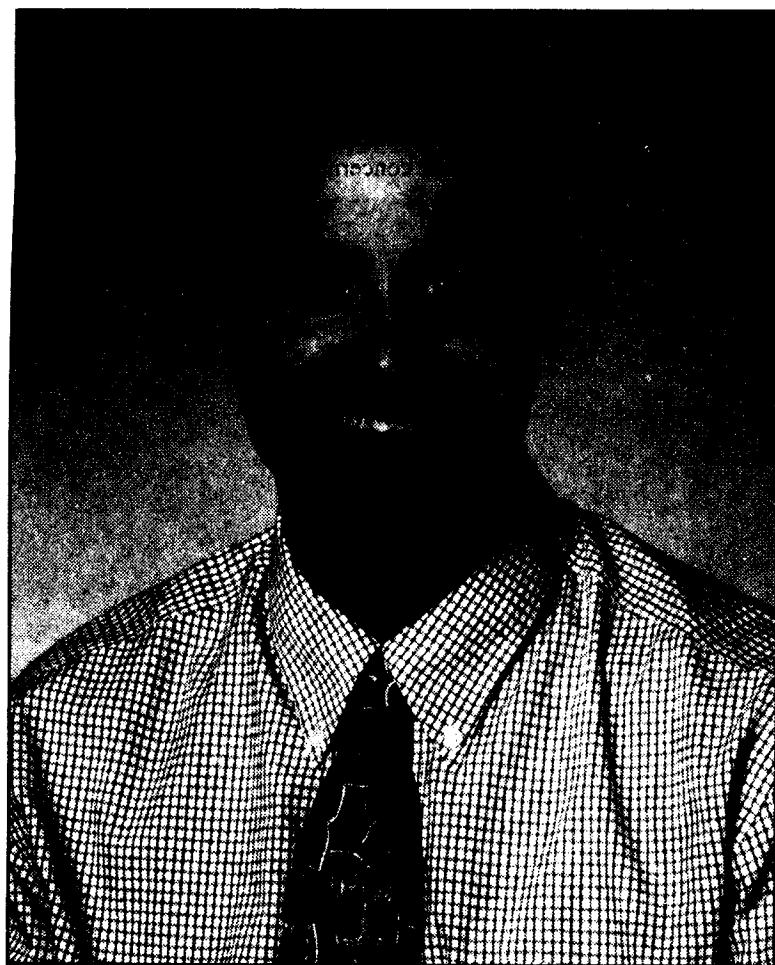
today."

The responsibility of finding a suitable replacement belongs to Ken Miller, Director of Student Affairs, and the selection committee that he will be appointing in the near future.

This committee will consist of faculty members from the Student Affairs department and the Student Activities department, along with select students who are highly involved in various campus activities.

Miller explained that the interview process is not scheduled to start for at least another month to ensure an optimal selection of candidates. He also commented that the final stage of interviews will take each candidate no less than a full day.

The students participating in this process will be from all walks of life on campus, but it is expected that the SGA will be contributing at least one member. Miller expressed that his "hope is that the students will want to participate...[because] it is a very important decision."



Dr. Chris Rizzo, known for his helpfulness, gets new job in Colorado.

Balls and Ropes added to Fall Leadership Retreat

By Michelle Vera Surovic
copy editor

Students have the opportunity to spend Friday and Saturday October 14-15 at Peek 'n' Peak Ski Resort as part of the 2005 Fall Leadership Retreat. This time will not interfere with any classes because Friday, October 14 is a study day, a holiday from classes.

In the spirit of networking, it provides "a good way for a lot of students to come together," says Jenna Dominick (08, Communications). The retreat is split up into four sessions covering many aspects of leadership, including diversity awareness, motivation techniques, balancing academics and club activities, recruitment and retaining members strategies, long-term planning,

communication skills, relationship building and more. In addition to the core information being shown, presentations have also been tailored to students depending on how much leadership experience they have had. Emerging leaders will attend sessions on motivation and civic engagement while, advanced leaders will discuss more in-depth topics. Students will be able to choose one of the several topics they want to attend so that they will be able to get more value out of the experience.

The relaxed atmosphere is enhanced by the events planned in addition to the seminars. "Last year we did the ropes course and this year, we're adding Midnight Bingo," says Christa Morris, staff assistant, Office of Student Activities. The ropes course is a leadership-building exercise.

Registration has begun and the deadline is Wednesday, September 14 by 5 p.m. Space is limited and application packets are available at the Office of Student Activities located in the Reed Union Building. The fee is \$20 per student and includes food, lodging at Peek 'n' Peak Ski Resort and transportation to and from campus. Students will also have access to the on-site facilities like the pool and Jacuzzi. The ropes course and Midnight Bingo should also provide an interesting time. "There's so much to do for little cost and it's all for the students," says Jenna Dominick.

For more information about the 2005 Fall Leadership Retreat, students can direct their questions to the Office of Student Activities at 898-6171.

Classifieds

"You have not lived a perfect day, even though you have earned your money, unless you have done something for someone who cannot repay you."

— Ruth Smeltzer

Janet Neff Sample Center
for Manners & Civility



Behrend alumnus to kickoff SEET Speaker Series

By Michelle Vera Surovic
copy editor

Brian Swahn graduated from Behrend in 2001 with majors in electrical and computer engineering. He left the area and finally settled in Norwood, Massachusetts. He is currently employed as a computer aided design (CAD) engineer with Analog Devices.

After graduation, Swahn earned a Master's degree in electrical engineering from Tufts University in 2002. He is currently working on his doctorate in electrical engineering from Tufts University.

On Thursday, September 15, Swahn will return to Behrend to kick off the School of Engineering and Engineering Technology's (SEET) Speaker Series at noon

on September 15 in the Reed Union Building, Room 114.

A common trend in technology is that things are getting faster and smaller at the same time. Swahn's presentation, entitled "Technology Trends and Design Challenges for 45nm and Beyond" addresses the future challenges that engineers interested in integrated circuit development will face.

The SEET Speaker Series intends to provide an outlet for the School of Engineering and Engineering Technology faculty to present their research to interested students, peers and the Erie community. In addition to tenured professors, the speakers include Behrend alumni, and other leaders in their respected fields.