

OPINION

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances. - The First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution

Winter driver weirdos

By KJ Margraff Jr.
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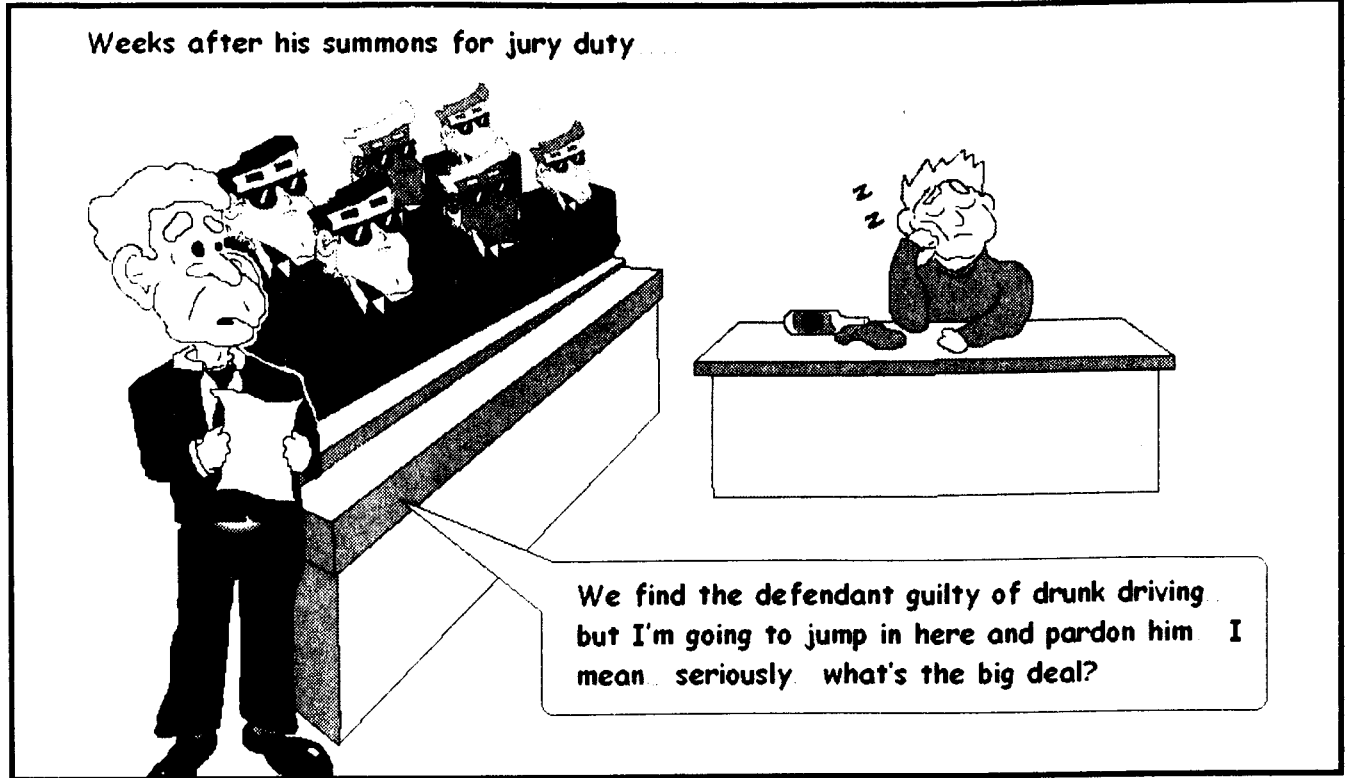
Okay people, this is Erie, Pennsylvania and we are well past the official winter point. Simply because Mother Nature seems to be a bit confused about how to act this season, we cannot play the "ignorance card" attempting to avoid responsibility. And on that note, the overwhelming majority of Behrend students are from Pennsylvania (especially Pittsburgh) so it's not like snow is some surprising new concept. If you resided in Erie, as a student or an official Erie-ite, then you need to know how to handle life with snow, more specifically, if you have a car: learn to drive it. I can't make this much clearer: it snows here, you need to know how to drive when it does happen. Over this past break I ended up staying here in Erie to work. Our weather for Thanksgiving and Black Friday, not so lovely. Personally, I was shocked to see how many people could not handle a minor snowstorm. Traffic all over downtown was nothing short of aggravating.

Let me just throw out some general advice to all drivers for proper winter driving technique. Probably the most important thing to remember is to slow down. The harder you push down the gas pedal the more your tires are going to spin. So when you are at a standstill, you can get yourself stuck in place (if the snow is that deep) or if you are already moving, giving the pedal an extra kick of speed can cause your vehicle to lose traction and your forward momentum will take over resulting in you spinning out of control or sliding in a direction that you didn't originally intend to go in. Driving at a slower, yet still steady pace, will void you of most of the problems of winter driving. And lets face it, a fender-bender will only lower your budget available for buying gifts.

Along that note, slamming on your brakes will result in your tires locking up and once again, momentum and inertia are not your friends. If your tires stop moving in snowy and icy conditions your car doesn't seem to pay any attention. When you know you are going to need to stop you should start slowing down well before where you need to in case you slide or skid. Also, if you do start to slide or skid remember to remain calm if you have anti-lock breaks then they will do their job, just continue to apply pressure to your brake pedal. If you do not have anti-lock breaks then pump the break pedal so that your tires won't lock up so you have a better chance to stop safely, avoiding an accident. And when you do stop for any reason, make sure you leave yourself some space between you and the car in front of you. That way, if someone does rear-end you, you will not hit the car in front of you, resulting in more damage.

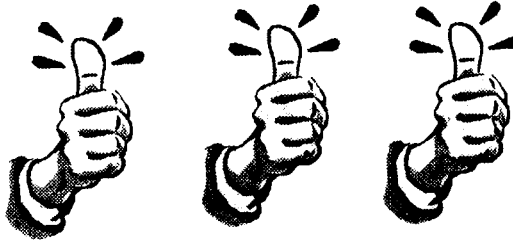
The next point of advice to consider is that while you may be driving safely, more than likely, all the other wackos on the road with you aren't. So leave extra room between you and the other cars on the road and if you see someone moving at a faster-than-reasonably-safe speed try to stay clear of them. The laws of science should allow you to guess where they could end up if they do start to slide, so just make sure you are not in that pathway. There are a lot of drivers in SUVs and cars with all-wheel-drive who seem to think they are invincible, so just stay out of their way and let them hit a tree instead of you. Also, when the light turns green, wait a few extra seconds to make sure everyone is able to stop at the intersection. If they can't stop, they could broadside, which is considered to be one of the most dangerous impacts your car can take.

So come on everyone, I know you want to get the best spot at the mall, or you want to get to wherever you think is so important that your going to, but I'm sure you can handle the ten extra minutes that driving safely costs you.



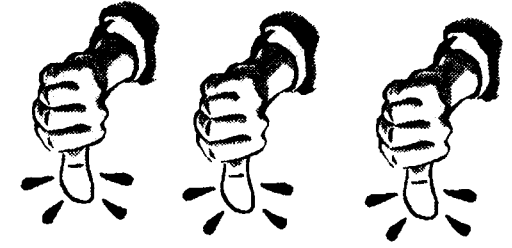
ZACK MENTZ

Beacon Thumbs Up



- Classes that do not have finals.
- Five remaining days of class.
- A second round of plays in the campus theatre.

Beacon Thumbs Down



- Regular and prolonged campus internet outages.
- Wild temperature fluctuations.
- Changing "Black Friday" to "Cash Friday."

THON is extremely important 'For the Kids'

By Robert Frank
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I've been a part of Penn State since as far back as I can remember. My father hated Pitt with a passion, mainly because that's where he went to school, and taught us all the glory of Old State. Before my college years my older sister became involved in something she called THON. I had no idea what it meant, nor did I understand why "For The Kids" was plastered all over her AIM info. After becoming a student at Behrend, I came to realize what THON is and how absolutely important it has become over the years.

THON actually is short for Penn State IFC/Panhellenic Dance Marathon, and it's the largest student-run philanthropy in the world. Thanks to the efforts of THON these students have raised over \$30 million to help fight pediatric cancer. I remember thinking "how can I help out? I'm at Behrend and THON is at University Park." What many students don't realize is that there is a very active THON committee right here at Behrend. This year they're hosting a mini-THON to help raise more money for the kids. This mini-THON will be a scaled down version of the event thrown at University Park annually. It will include 24 hours of non-stop dancing and music provided by the Lion Entertainment Board. Another great way to get involved in THON is to go "canning." Canning involves students wearing signs describing THON and its purpose and soliciting drivers of

vehicles while they're stopped. Canning is one of the most effective fundraising campaigns within THON. If you're interested in helping with canning, contact Meredith Straub to get more details.

Let's say you don't want to be directly involved with THON, but do you still want to help out? The answer to that question is yes. Meredith Straub and Ken Middlemiss directors of the THON committee at Behrend wrote, "We are actively trying to make this year the best THON year ever. There are many activities that you as a student can participate in to help raise money."

Some of these activities are the norm for many students. For example, next Tuesday is THON bowling night at Eastland Bowl. If you go from 9:30 p.m. to midnight its \$7 for unlimited bowling, shoes are included. Just by paying the \$7 you will have donated to a cause that is not only worthwhile but one of the most successful causes in college history. There is also a Lift-A-THON scheduled for January, as well as bar nights for those that are of the appropriate age. These are activities that you participate in regularly anyway, so why not be a part of something as big as THON? No other university system can say they have the largest student-run philanthropy. Not many universities can say they've raised \$30 million for kids and families with pediatric cancer. I'm happy to donate my time and energy to a worthy cause such as THON, and I'm sure that many more of you would like to do the same.

The Behrend Beacon

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Submission Guidelines

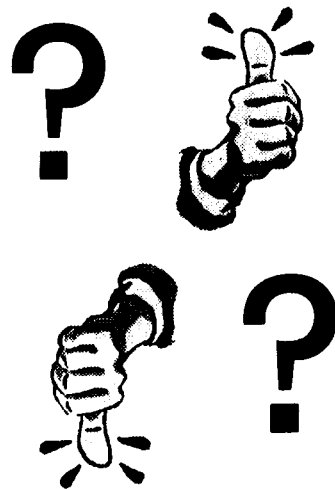
The Beacon welcomes readers to share their views on this page. Letters and commentary pieces can be submitted by email to opinion@psu.edu or directly to the Beacon office, located in the Reed Building.

Letters should be limited to 350 words and commentaries should be limited to 700 words. The more concise the submission, the less we will be forced to edit it for space concerns and the more likely we are to run the submission.

All submissions must include the writer's year in school, major and name as The Beacon does not publish anonymous letters. Deadline for any submission is 5 p.m. Tuesday afternoon for inclusion in the Friday issue. All submissions are considered, but because of space limitations, some may not be published.

All submissions must include consent to be edited before they can be edited for publication.

Have a "Thumbs Up" or "Thumbs Down"?



Send Suggestions to
opinion@psu.edu

Quote of the Week

"If by a 'Liberal' they mean someone who looks ahead and not behind, someone who welcomes new ideas without rigid reactions, someone who cares about the welfare of the people — their health, their housing, their schools, their jobs, their civil rights, and their civil liberties — someone who believes we can break through the stalemate and suspicions that grip us in our policies abroad, if that is what they mean by a "Liberal," then I'm proud to say I'm a "Liberal."

~John F. Kennedy