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THE BEHREND BEACON

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Signs swiped from res halls Seven construction trailers burgled

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Campus Police have been on the lookout for the persons responsible for stealing signs on the doors in the dorm buildings. When the Perry, Lawrence and Niagara dorms were renovated more than two years ago, signs outside the doors were added to give the dorms a more professional look. The cost of this entire renovation was about \$8.5 million. Last semester some signs were missing from each of the dorm buildings.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Perry Hall residents upset about sign thefts.

keep it as a souvenir." "Personally," Baker said, "fifteen years from now, I'm not going to care where I lived in the dorm."

However, some of the signs are missing because they are taken off and thrown them somewhere as a prank. This semester a stack of signs was found near a fire exit in Perry Hall. Some were returned to the Resident Assistants.

The director of Housing and Food Services, Randy Geering,

doesn't appreciate when dorm buildings are mistreated.

"We want to instill in our students that this is their home and they need to take care of it." If the signs are returned to the Resident Assistant of the building, nothing happens to the student who took them. Unfortunately, if the signs are not returned then the whole floor is charged for the missing signs. The cost is divided up between each resident. All students are charged for is the cost to replace the sign.

These signs can range anywhere from \$40 to \$80. The door signs are usually cheaper than the floor and exit signs. As of now approximately 20 signs are said to be missing.

Residents are not pleased with the idea of paying for the missing signs. Ashley Migdal, who lives in Perry Hall, is unhappy with the situation. "I'm very upset because we shouldn't have to pay for other people's mistakes." Colleen White, who lives in Niagara was not happy about it either. "I think its stupid that we have to pay for it

By KJ Margraff Jr.
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Pennsylvania State Police are currently investigating the theft of tools and construction equipment Wednesday night from the University Gate Apartments complex located across from the Penn State Erie campus. Details are sketchy at this time; however, sources revealed that thieves gained entry into seven construction trailers that are used to hold equipment, hand tools, power tools and miscellaneous building materials. Some sources close to the investigation tell that a substantial number of tools, worth tens of thousands of dollars, were stolen. State Trooper Terrance Dawdy is currently investigating the incident but was unable to be reached for comment at this time.

If you have any information that would assist the investigation please contact the Pennsylvania State Police at 898-1641.

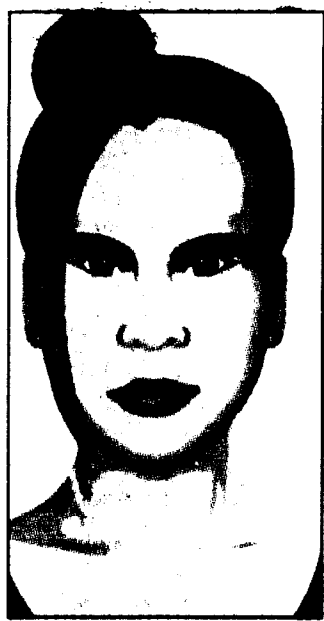


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because it's a punishment for all of us even though one person screwed up and stole the signs and now we have to pay for it."

Vandalism can happen anywhere in the school or residence dorms, and generally happens during the weekend or at night. In the past couple of years throughout all Penn State universities, Penn State and personal property losses have amounted to more than \$30,000. At Behrend, in 2004, the vandalism crime rate was 695 instances, which rose from the year before with a vandalism rate of 649. Even though students pay for the damage, the vandalism continues to occur.

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Meet Alice, Behrend's newest computer science faculty member.
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Kappa Delta Rho raises money for Baby Jacob

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At 20 months old, Jacob McAlee of Johnsonburg is struggling with the challenges of walking, like many other infants between 10 to 12 months of age. Unlike most boys his age however, McAlee has club feet, which impair this ability greatly. His feet are shaped inward, which makes it intensely painful to stand, let alone walk, however, this has not stopped Jacob from trying. His mother, Michelle Bickford, reported to the St. Mary's Press on how "Jacob is a very happy and intelligent child, and can read a picture book of animals very well."

The club feet are only the tip of the iceberg for McAlee. He was born with a rare condition called Distal Arthrogyrosis Type II A, also known as Gordon's Syndrome.

Gordon's Syndrome, as explained by Professor James Warren of the Penn State Erie Science Department, is caused by a mutation in the WNK1 gene, which in result makes McAlee's kidney unresponsive to the atrial natriuretic peptide. This is an important protein, that regu-

lates blood pressure and results in hypertension for McAlee. Hypertension is better known as high blood pressure, which will challenge his daily life.

Other disabilities McAlee was born with include life-threatening airways, irregularly small eyes and a cleft palate. All of these including the club feet and Gordon's Syndrome, are possibly caused by not having enough room in the uterus preceding his birth.

His airways have been operated on previously, although the doctors were unable to finish before his anesthetic wore off. They will be inserting a tracheotomy in order to complete this process.

On Wednesday, Jacob and his parents will travel to Pittsburgh's Children's Hospital for 10 days while McAlee recovers from surgery to repair his cleft palate as well as remove a sling in his right eye. They will also examine his feet and look for possible solutions.

McAlee will face more painful surgeries in the near future. The fraternity Kappa Delta Rho (KDR) has decided to fundraise for him. This past week they have sat outside of Bruno's selling 50/50 raffle tickets and accepting donations for Baby Jacob.

If every ticket is sold, they will raise \$500. Their goal is \$1200, which will only be reached by donation. Kevin Jensen, tenth semester senior and the former President of KDR reported, "We had a guy donate twenty bucks today (Tuesday Jan. 17), he didn't want any chances in the raffle."

He continued with recognizing that "college kids take so much for granted and act invincible, but anything could happen to one of us tomorrow...doing fundraisers like this helps put things in perspective for people."

KDR President, forth semester sophomore Sean Chenard commented, "It's important for college students to donate because many people don't realize how fortunate they are and how unfortunate others, like Jacob, can be."

Many students have entered the raffle and donated to McAlee's recovery. Nick Matt, a fourth semester sophomore finds McAlee to be a "good cause to donate toward." In addition, Eric Diluzio, also a fourth semester sophomore and KDR member said, "I make money and usually blow it on non important things, and this makes me feel tingly inside, helping the less fortunate."

While the Christmas season may be



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Jacob McAlee suffers from a rare disease.

over, it seems that the students of Penn State Erie are still giving in the same spirit to Baby Jacob for the possibility to help him with the difficult challenges he has already faced and the future obstacles he will need to overcome.

Behrend receives grant to build energy research center

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New research possibilities are expected to flow through the Behrend community to improve the efficiency of energy due to the \$231,000 grant which Penn State Erie received in order to launch the construction of a new energy research center. This addition to the campus will help the engineering students become better prepared for tasks they will encounter once in a "real job" setting. The energy research center will also provide approximately 200 advanced-manufacturing job opportunities for members of the Erie community and surrounding areas.

The exciting approval of the \$231,000 grant was recently announced by Dennis Yablonsky, the Pennsylvania Secretary of Community and Economic Development. The money will be provided in the form of a Keystone Innovation Zone Starter Kit, which will help get the project running.

Inspiration for this project was made possible through the 2004 "Knowledge Neighborhoods" an Organization started by Governor Rendell to increase the research possibilities and resources within college settings to ensure that the education gained is as effective, up-to-date and hands-on as it can be. The engineering students will now be able to see real research being done by professionals and professors, with the added bonus of hav-

ing the opportunity to try it out their own ideas.

Through the research center, faculty research will increase, appropriate laboratories will be added, interns will be hired, and the research of life science and information technology will soar.

Research innovations are a great advantage to the establishment of the new energy research center. The most beneficial outcome will be the increase in available jobs for engineering students expected to graduate in the next five years. This gives Pennsylvania-educated students the opportunity to remain in the state to work in their professional fields.

The project will focus on computational modeling and the processing of ceramic and composite materials. There is a possibility that the research of nano-fabrication of components will be improved at the energy research center as well.

The engineering community of the Erie area will also be incorporated into the new energy research center project as many local companies have agreed to help with the development to create harmonious unity of education

and professionalism. Keystone Energy, Spinworks LLC, Storm Development LLC, Beaumont Runner Technologies, Inc. and National Fuel Gas are some of the companies already interested in the project.

There will be at least two courses, computational modeling and materials processing, expected to be offered by Penn State Erie in relation to the research center. The research center will be located in the Research and Economic Development Center (REDC), which is currently under construction.

In the engineering and engineering technology fields, it is vital for students to experience an educational environment which provides the opportunity to explore new ideas and personally test new materials in order to gain the expertise to survive in the high-demanding research industry.

It will be these engineering students that will help the Erie community, along with the rest of the country enjoy new improvements in technology. Encouraging students to stay and work along with the men and women who gave them their education should prove to be an amazing and productive partnership.

The intent of the project will focus on computational modeling and the processing of ceramic and composite materials.