



THE BEHREND BEACON

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Fly the friendly Erie skies Leadership program provides housing

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Flip-flops, fun and fabulous friends are what this year's spring break is all about. College students in Erie are finalizing spring break plans by double checking hotel rooms and airplane tickets. Haven't booked your tickets yet? No need to panic. Transportation to a spring break getaway is only minutes away.

More and more students are opting to travel by plane as gas prices continue to soar. Traveling by plane is one of the easiest and most convenient decisions an Erie student can make when planning his or her spring break trip.

Erie is home to an International Airport which is located 17 miles west of Penn State Erie, the Behrend



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Erie International Airport expects to see an increase in business over Spring Break

College. The benefit of having an international "airport only minutes away makes it a lot easier to travel," said ninth semester student Kenny Johnston. Johnston said the convenience of Tom Ridge Field is appealing. The closest airports to Erie are in major cities such as Cleveland, OH, Buffalo, NY and Pittsburgh, PA. Travelers that choose those airports are forced to deal with heavy traffic, outrageous parking fees and other hassles that come with larger cities. The easy, twenty-some minute drive to the airport from Penn State Erie is a bonus to flying from the airport.

Size is no issue when it comes to the Erie International Airport. The modest airport can accommodate all spring break, business or leisure travel needs. Listed on the airport's website is the "Top 25 Destinations from Erie." Cities such as Los Angeles, Tampa, Boston, Houston and Chicago are only a few destinations currently listed on the website, which is updated weekly. Locating prices to these destinations is only a click away. On their website, select any desired location and an airfare box will appear displaying the price for one round trip ticket. The airport uses four major airline carriers: North West, Delta, US Airways and Continental, which display an individual ticket price when a location is chosen.

Since its opening in 1952, Erie International Airport is constantly taking steps to become this region's airport of choice. The airport was a topic of conversation at Wednesday's Erie City Council meeting.

Councilwoman Jessica Horan-Kunco said that the airport is a growing business; she stated, "there were more passengers in 2005 than in 2004." Last year, 187,848 passengers boarded planes in Erie, which is a 6.1% increase since the previous year. The Erie Municipal Airport Authority has other goals in mind besides increasing passenger numbers. Horan-Kunco said the airport "hopes to expand a runway as well."

Check out the Erie International Airport. Your spring break destination could be a click away.



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The Service Learning and Leadership House will be open to all students with 24 completed credits at the beginning of the year 2006-2007 academic year. The program was a collaboration between Jill Forsman, Coordinator of Residence Life, Kelly Shrout, Coordinator of Community Service and Smith Chapel, and Chris Fox, Coordinator of Student Involvement and Leadership Development. The Leadership program is brand new and includes perks such as the opportunity to gain new skills and a guaranteed spot in the suites. Also service hours and leadership look great on a resume.

Forsman wanted to create a program that would appeal to students. She said, "We wanted to do some intentional programs that would be appealing to sophomores and juniors living on campus, who wanted more leadership experience and community service options."

Though it is undecided which hall the Leadership service will be located in, Tiffany, Tigress or Porcupine. To be included, you must participate in four hours of service learning, attend a two hour leadership workshop once a month, and plan a campus-wide team service project. For service learning, the student has three different options. The volunteer could participate in tutoring at Diehl Elementary, volunteer at the Child Day Care Center here at Behrend or become a book buddy with a child in second grade at

Irving Elementary School. The team service project could be something as simple as organizing a food drive. This involvement with the community also looks great on a resume.

Jessica Christmann, who is content with her current living situation in Perry Hall, wouldn't mind living in a suite. She said, "It seems like such a great opportunity and it will guarantee me a nice place to live." Erin Gasiewski, a sophomore would love to live in the suites and wouldn't mind learning new skills as a leader. "Rooms in the suites is limited and it's always good to help out the community any way you can," she said.

However, these spots are filling fast and the offer ends March 3. It's first come, first serve and 32 spots have already been filled. However, if more students apply, the Leadership service will expand to the whole hall rather than one floor. To apply you can follow three easy steps. Go to <http://hfs.psu.edu/contract/> and request on line suite housing. Print, sign and turn in the Service Learning and Leadership Contract to the Office of Student Affairs, Reed 115.

"When students are involved within the campus they tend to have more of an ownership and to make their community even a better place to live in their college experience," said Forsman.

For more information you can contact Forsman with questions at 814-898-6111 or email at jlf227@psu.edu. You can also visit the website at <http://pennstatebehrend.psu.edu/student/service-leader/index.htm>



Health and Wellness gives Meningitis prevention tips

By Ben Raymond
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An Edinboro student was admitted to an Erie hospital in serious condition with bacterial meningitis over the weekend, and questions about safety at Behrend are being raised.

Meningitis, while cases are rare, is a serious and potentially deadly illness. It is a swelling around the spine and brain. While there are only about 3,000 cases reported in the U.S. each year, if contracted, symptoms can develop over the course of a few hours. With college students living and interacting in such close quarters, the risk of contracting any kind of illness is increased. How can students defend themselves against infections like meningitis?

The best way to defend against meningitis is to be knowledgeable about it. Meningitis is listed as a bacterial infection. It is an airborne disease and can be passed through coughing, sneezing, sharing a drink and yes even kissing. The infection is hard to identify, but there are signs that can help with detection.

Many of the symptoms are similar to the flu, but if you experience a sore neck and or back and a fever of 101 degrees or higher, you should notify someone immediately. Other symptoms include headache, nausea, vomiting, confusion, sleepiness or sensitivity to bright light.

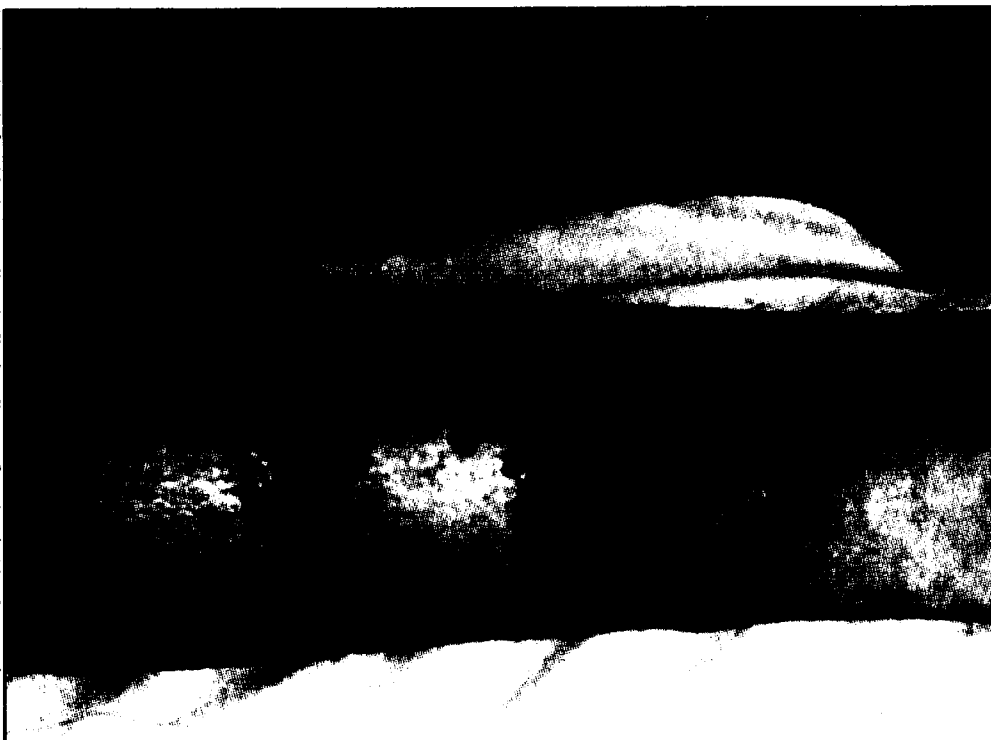
The student at Edinboro lives in one of the university's major residence halls. She did have a vaccination, however, she developed Type B meningitis, which there is no vaccine for. There have not been any other reported cases of the disease on the campus or the surrounding area due to swift actions taken by Edinboro. Is Behrend prepared in the event something similar would happen here?

Director of Health and Wellness for Behrend Patty

Pasky McMahon had encouraging words about the safety of not only On-campus residents, but the entire student and faculty population. McMahon said that in accordance with state law and university policy, "All residence hall students must have documented proof of receiving the vaccine or sign a waiver, stating that they know about meningitis and take responsibility for it. If a student was found to have the disease we would contact anyone that they regularly came in contact with and get them antibiotic medication and we are prepared to handle this kind of situation if it would happen here."

If a student thinks he or she may have the disease or anything similar to it, they should visit the Health and Wellness Center on campus. After review, if a student is thought that they may have meningitis, he or she will be sent to the hospital for testing. The one true way to identify the illness is to have a spinal tap. A person can develop meningitis from having a weak immune system, but there are also things that Behrend students can do to arm themselves against the bacterial infection.

Since meningitis can be spread a number of ways and residents and commuters are in contact every day, there are some simple precautions that will help fend it off. The first is something many people learn as children: just cover your mouth when you cough and sneeze. Getting enough sleep is also vital to staying healthy. If you are having trouble sleeping, regular exercise is a great way to build up your immune system and help you sleep better. Even with a busy schedule, students are encouraged to try and eat a balanced diet including fruits and vegetables.



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Meningitis is an illness that causes swelling around the spine and brain and can lead to death.