

## NEWS

## National and world news in brief

By Patrick Webster  
assistant managing editor  
paw175@psu.edu

**Passenger liner catches fire**

MIAMI, Florida: A Princess cruise liner heading for Jamaica caught fire due to an unknown cause on Thursday.

One passenger died of a heart attack related to the incident, while 11 others were treated for various degrees of smoke inhalation. Information was released in a public document by Princess Cruises, which is a part of the Carnival Corporation.

The ship itself was en route to Montego Bay, Jamaica after departing from Fort Lauderdale, Florida, when a fire was reported in the passenger accommodations section of the ship. Crew fire control parties quickly got the flames under control, but the precise location of ignition and the cause are still undetermined. Smoky air still pervades much of the ship.

"Passengers were immediately notified of the fire using the public address system and requested to report to their muster stations," the official press release stated. "We are currently completing a full passenger check to account for all passengers and crew."

The United States Coast Guard is assisting in the investigation and continuing passenger safety actions.

**Texas undercover agents bust bar drunks**

SAN ANTONIO, Texas: State undercover agents are slipping into bars around Texas to show bar regulars that just because you're drunk in a bar, it doesn't protect you from state and local laws against public drunkenness.

Thirty people were arrested from 36 of the bars under police actions that not only enforce the law, but also keeps the drunks from becoming disorderly in public or getting into a vehicle, claimed Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission spokeswoman Carolyn Beck.

"We feel that the only way we're going to get at the drunk driving problem and the problem of people hurting each other while drunk is by crackdowns like this," Beck said. "There are a lot of dangerous and stupid things people do when they're intoxicated, other than get behind the wheel of a car. People walk out into traffic and get run over, people jump off of balconies trying to reach a swimming pool and miss."

Beck also confirmed that the operation would be continuing throughout the state and several other states have expressed interest in similar programs.



Source: CNN.com, Yahoo! News

**College funding dropping rapidly per student**

WASHINGTON: State and federal funding support of the nations' colleges and universities per student have fallen to a 25-year low after having reached record highs in the 2000-2001 school year.

While the overall number of students attending higher education institutions has risen by roughly 14 percent in the last five years, the funding and tuition support received from state and federal agencies has dropped nearly nine percent. The \$7,121 in support per student that colleges and universities received in 2001 has fallen to around \$5,800, a nearly 30 percent drop in aid and funding for each student nationally.

"Especially in the last four or five years, it's been very difficult for state governments to keep pace with that demand for higher education," said State Higher Education Executive Officer President Paul Lingfelter. "The implications of that have been seen in the increased reliance on students and their families to pay the costs."

Lingfelter and other education officials from several states are concerned that the continuing trend of lower federal and state support since 2001 could lead to much higher levels of student debt and financial distress in low- and middle-income families as schools are forced to increase tuition to try to make business ends meet.

**Somali civil war continues as factions clash**

MOGADISHU, Somalia: Dozens of fighters from several warring factions were killed earlier this week as combat continued in the war-ravaged country of Somalia.

Mercenaries and soldiers siding with Somali warlords launched attacks on areas held by fundamentalist Islamic clerics who are also making bids to take control of the country through a mix of military force and general ideological appeal, in a battle that the clerics said, "has nothing to do with religion."

While both sides have continuously reinforced their troops and positions, neither has made much headway against the other and the central government has been rendered nearly irrelevant.

In a war that's lasted 15 years and seen some strange alliances, it never seems to end.

The main opposition to the coalition of Islamic clerics seeking to take control is an odd alliance of warlords, businessmen and farmers who claim that the Muslim forces are little more than well-armed and organized terrorists.

The war started in 1991 when several warlords overthrew the central government and started claiming selected provinces as under their control and protection as the country descended into poverty and famine.

## Credit cards: proceed with caution

By Keith Golembiewski  
staff writer  
krg5023@psu.edu

Credit card management is more important than ever as increasing younger generations are relying on plastic. The Center for Credit and Consumer Research (CCCR) at Penn State Erie, The Behrend college has launched its online credit card game to help educate students about the dangers of creditors. The interactive quiz demonstrates skills that are necessary for students to use credit cards responsibly.

Mary Beth Pinto, director of the CCCR explains that it is a fact program with questions and answers that teaches facts and specific issues. Similar to a popular bar game, there's 4 questions with a timer. The goal of the game is to be fun but informational. Through education students can avoid being stuck in financial debt that will hurt them in the future when they are looking for a loan, a car or anything else involving credit. According to the CCCR nearly 75% of college students

already have at least one credit card, and, on average most college students have three credit cards. Even more shocking the average monthly payment on a credit card for a college student is about \$2,000. Most students carry high balances plus student loans and by graduation will have accumulated a debt close to \$20,000. To help fight this surge in spending State Senator Jane Earl proposed and helped pass legislation that requires all universities in Pennsylvania to provide students with information on credit cards.

The bill requires have to:

- Require registration of on-campus card marketers;
- Limit credit card marketers to specific predesigned areas of campus;
- Prohibit credit card marketers from offering gifts to a student in exchange for completing a credit card application, unless the student has been provided with credit card debt education literature such as written brochures or electronic information;
- Provide, at least quarterly credit card debt education literature with campus bookstore purchases;

-Incorporate a credit card debt education presentation into orientation programming.

More than ever credit card companies target young people who for the most part have had no prior experience with credit. By the time a person realizes how deep they are in debt they are more than often to late to bail themselves out. The game aims to help students become more responsible and accountable for their usage of credit. Pinto suggests cards are not bad if used properly for emergency things that you can pay off at the end of the month. Always pay more than minimum, and not to be late that always impacts a persons credit. Always look at interest rates before getting a card because rates may vary severely with many hidden stipulations.

If your going to get a card be careful and watch interest rates, the average is 18.5 percent. Also always look for a grace period to pay off a charge. Lastly never use your card as a installment loan that loan may be stuck with you longer than you imagined or had hoped. Adherence to these guidelines should keep your debt manageable.

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## Escape to Greece is as close as Wesleyville

By Christopher LaFuria  
sports editor  
csl5005@psu.edu

Somewhere between the Country Fair on Buffalo Road in Wesleyville and Athens, Greece lies a small diner where a hungry patron can sit, relax, and enjoy a fresh cup of coffee and choose from a wide assortment of Greek favorites. Run for over 50 years by the Geanous family, Coney Island Lunch has been offering customers everything from Greek burgers and fries to Cajun eggs and a variety of other Greek classics. With a name derived from a small 60s Greek diner in New York City, Coney Island Lunch captures the essence of a small city with the flavor of the times of its origin.

Among some of the many choices on Coney's menu, one can find grilled cheese sandwiches, breakfast items, and many other daily meals. To cater to the many customers that frequent Coney, the owners have kept their prices low. Out of the six Greek restaurants that serve Erie, Coney Island in Wesleyville has the lowest prices. Keeping their loyal customers in mind, the Geanous family keeps their doors open for the majority

of the day. With the exception of a few morning hours used for maintenance and Sunday nights, Coney Island is open to customers most of the time.

Although the times have changed for the Geanous family and the many who work at Coney, the establishment still owns its fair share of success. According to Helen, an employee for the past six years, people used to line up out the door and around the block, just

Since then, we have four generations of my family who come to eat here," said Ja-net Moske. "The people here get to be like your family."

To add to their positive reception of their customers, Coney does many things to please their patrons. Every August, Coney has their "Customer Appreciation" sale in which you can purchase their famous burgers and fries for 50 cents. Furthermore, Coney invites Froggy 94, the local oldies station, to play for the customers. During the holiday seasons, Coney adds items to their menu to celebrate, cooking up special Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Easter dinners each year.

Whether you're a college student looking for a cheap but delicious meal to satisfy a late night craving or a weary traveler looking for a place to relax and talk about world events or politics, Coney Island does its best to cater to whatever your needs may be. As the sign hanging on one of their walls says, "Somewhere over the rainbow, bluebirds sing. And somewhere under the rainbow, Greekburgers are the thing."

"The people here get to be like your family."

~Ja-net Moske

## Classifieds

"The weak can never forgive.  
Forgiveness is the attribute of the strong."

Mohandas Gandhi, civil rights leader  
(1869-1948)

Janct Neff Sample Center  
for Manners & Civility

