

## NEWS

## Classes are canceled when Behrend is buried in snow

By Ashley Bressler/Contributing Writers  
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A massive snowstorm hit the campus of Penn State Behrend Thursday, forcing the cancellation of classes. Not many employees of Behrend can specifically recall the last time classes were cancelled because of snow. Patti McClellan, staff assistant in the Registrar's Office, said as best she can remember it has been quite some time. "It's been a long time," said McClellan. Director of Admissions and Financial Aid, Mary Ellen Madigan, racked her brain trying to remember Behrend's last major storm. "Off the top of my head I can't remember, but there hasn't been many," said Madigan. She went on to say that she recalled a time when she first started working at Behrend in the late 1980s, and another time in the mid 1990s when she was taking an MBA class that the campus was closed because of snow.

According to Associate Dean, David Christiansen, Behrend has a policy which top administrators gathered to discuss on Thursday. The policy involves top administrators meeting in severe weather situations to determine whether or not classes should be cancelled. "The primary individuals involved were Bob Light, John Ream, and myself," said Christiansen.

He went on to explain that after the group met, they called Chancellor Jack Burke, who was off-campus, to approve the committee's recommendation to cancel classes. In reaching their decision, Christiansen said many factors aside from weather went into the decision. "Because of snow and road conditions and the closing of the interstate, we decided in was in the best interest of students, including commuter students, to cancel classes."

The Behrend maintenance crew was hard at work all day Thursday to keep the parking lots, roads, and sidewalks clear and safe for all students. A Behrend maintenance crewmember was frazzled in the Erie snowstorm. A plow truck driver, who was too busy to give his name as he was trying to keep up with his extensive schedule commented on how overwhelming the snowstorm was for him and his fellow crewmembers, as they were working non-stop since 5:30

Thursday morning. He briefly said that all the drivers have a specific route to follow. "I'm afraid I just don't have the time to answer any more questions," he said.

While many Behrend students took cover from the harsh winter weather, others took advantage of the cancelled classes to play in the snow. Three avid outdoorsmen hit the slopes to sledride on the hill behind the science complex. All three students were thrilled with the recent snowfall, and were excited to find out that classes after 5:00 p.m. were cancelled. "I absolutely love this weather," said Albert Tackie, a freshman mechanical engineering major. Tackie, who is from the Murrysville area, said he is used to snowfall, but not on these levels. Tackie is an avid snowboarder, who said he was ready to take advantage of this recent snowfall.

Also taking part in the fresh powder were Mandy Daniels and John Hallagan, both sophomore biology majors. When asked how Daniels would feel if classes were also cancelled tomorrow, she said, "That would be amazing! No 8 a.m. classes would be so exciting." On another note, Hallagan was indifferent to the cancellation of classes saying, "I want classes because I want to learn, but no 8 a.m.'s would be nice." The students then resumed their play by jumping on their innertubes and sleds, and headed down the hill to continue enjoying the snow.

Not all students were excited about the snowfall, and some were even concerned about the conditions of the roads more than the excitement of classes being cancelled. When asked about the sudden turn of events, Dave, a second semester student said, "I think this is great news! I'm a commuter, so I want to be able to get home safely."

As he spoke, campus maintenance workers suffered the frosty weather to keep the college grounds safe. John, a sixth semester student, expressed concern for the state of the campus since it is unclear if the cancellation will be extended into the next day. "I think everyone's doing the best they can," John said.

For any future weather emergencies, delays, or cancellations, students can visit the Penn State Behrend website, [www.pennstatebehrend.psu.edu](http://www.pennstatebehrend.psu.edu), and look for announcements in the upper right hand corner of the webpage.

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A few minutes later, a female passer by alerted Miller of an apparent escape attempt by the other driver. A group of residents from the area witnessed the driver taking off from the accident scene, only to be brought back by an older male, who caught the driver, and forcefully brought him back to the scene of the accident.

Moments elapsed as police, paramedics, and ambulances arrived to provide assistance to the injured parties. One officer informed Miller that the other driver was being taken to the Emergency Room for minor head injuries and also for a Blood Alcohol Test.

After almost a week of awaiting the results, Miller was notified that the other driver was cited for a D.U.I. Although it failed to lessen much of the damage, finding out that alcohol was related to the accident brought Miller closure as to the cause of the entire ordeal. Although the driver admitted to drinking only four 16-ounce beers before the accident occurred, the amount consumed was enough to have an immediate impact on his driving capabilities.

In the mid-nineties, former Supreme Court judge William Rehnquist revealed that there are over 25,000 annual deaths from alcohol related accidents. Miller was fortunate to not be a part of that statistic. In every state, the legal Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) is .08. Research has shown that a 180-pound male can reach this level after only four beers. Even though the driver in Miller's accident may have thought he was capable of driving after such consumption, he was indeed intoxicated.

Drivers who have a BAC of .08 or greater are 11 times more likely to get into a car accident than someone who has consumed no alcohol at all. Miller, upon realizing the citation for D.U.I., has a prominent sense of the affects of drunk driving. "I have never driven drunk before," Miller says, "After the accident, I realized the actual affects of it."

As long as Shane Miller keeps the picture in his possession and recalls the nearly fatal accident, he will forever be cognizant of the affects of drunk driving. Miller also realized that car accidents of this magnitude could happen at anytime. "Now I realize," Miller says, "accidents can happen at anytime to anyone."

## Quotes on Civility

"A traveler of taste will notice that the wise are polite all over the world, but the fool only at home."

-Oliver Goldsmith

Janet Neff Sample Center  
for Manners & Civility



## Communication students visit dilapidated houses

By Ashley Stanko  
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4/06/07

The stench of a broken home plagued by abuse, neglect and filth floods the nostrils and cramps the stomach when you walk through the shattered front door. The soles of your shoes stick to the filmy floor like the thousands of flies stick to the fly papers hanging from the ceiling like black icicles. Stains on the floors, walls and ceilings are a reminder of the waist high garbage dump this once large home has turned into. The cracks in the floor are not filled with plaster, but mold and feces. Visiting this home, located at 636 East 22 St., was one of the many investigations of the Erie area done by the COMM 260W class at Behrend.

Throughout the spring semester, the students of COMM 260W, a news writing course taught by Professor Kim Young, have had the opportunity to visit various homeless shelters in Erie, attend an Erie City Council meeting and write their own feature stories. On March 27,

the students visited a home that was once part of a thriving community but is now decaying into what the county claims an "unsuitable living space." Sophomore Courtney Mineweaser said, "I was shocked. I knew it was bad, but I didn't think it was going to be that bad."

When built to fit the community, the home was three stories high, with a basement, large front porch and a spacious backyard. The home still has all of these features, but now it has added an alley filled with garbage stacked tighter than a brick wall and high enough to bridge the second story window to its neighboring house across the alley. Grey and white sneakers hang from the telephone line in front of the house. The front door is decorated with a yellow sign that states, "This structure is declared unsafe for human occupancy or use."

Weeks ago, the tenants were evicted from the home



The students of COMM260W were shocked at the horrible conditions they witnessed in two homes on East 22nd Street last week. Several tons of clothes, broken furniture, newspaper scraps and other trash were removed from the homes over the past few months. The current owner hopes to clean the houses and donate them to a local charity.

after destroying the neighboring house just six months prior. The two buildings were recently sold to an Erie man, Jim McHenry, and his business partner. McHenry said, "I didn't know what I was getting into...my friend always has crazy ideas." McHenry said that his friend told him of two houses that he bought and was going to renovate and sell, and he wanted McHenry as his partner. McHenry agreed without seeing the property first. "I remember the first day we went inside...the front door was boarded up so we went through the basement." He said how the basement was sound and seemed like it had a good foundation; it was normal. He went up the stairs to the first floor door, opened it and he said, to say the least, "That wasn't normal."

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## Midnight Bingo causes controversy over prize selections

By Jerry Pohl  
assistant humor editor  
9/08/06

When sophomore psychology major Luis Fernandez attended Behrend's Midnight Bingo, Saturday, Sept. 2, he was hoping to win, and he did, but not really. Fernandez won the grand prize of a 20" Magnavox TV with an estimated value of \$80, but instead was awarded an Emerson Radio/CD Player with an estimated value of \$45. Fernandez is not happy with what he says was a mistake that he is now paying for.

What Fernandez calls a mistake happened early in the evening. Fernandez won a game of Bingo. In accordance with the rules of the game he picked a random number out of a basket. The numbers correspond to the prizes. In Fernandez's case the corresponding number of 46 matched the grand prize.

However, Fernandez says he was told by a volunteer working at the prize table that it was too early in the game to give away the grand prize because people would leave. Fernandez was instead offered his choice of any other prize on the table.

Fernandez says he chose the Radio/CD Player and went back to his table. It was during intermission when Fernandez says he felt he had been cheated and decided to ask for an explanation. When he returned to the prize table he verified that the TV was in fact prize number 46.

"I should have won the TV," Fernandez told a volunteer at the table, "I had number 46. That's not fair."

It was at this point when Fernandez says a Bingo player near the prize table stood up and said, "the TV was number 46."

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sibility of our community to look for these warning signs, and it is our duty to help the individual(s) seek counseling or professional help when it is necessary.

While Behrend has established a post-crisis plan to help students deal with traumatic stress, some students have spoken out in concern about what they can personally do if a life or death situation were to happen while on campus. Sophomore Communication student and Senat Hall Resident Assistant Samantha Yong said she is troubled by Behrend's response policy, and the personal duties Resident Assistants have to their residents. "If something were to happen, we are not allowed to physically step in to help. It bothers me that we have been trained in everything from suicide counseling to roommate conflicts, but we are not told what to do when there is a fire drill. We just have to work on impulse, but if we aren't given instructions for fire drills, what are we supposed to do if someone has a gun?" said Yong. Resident Assistants at Behrend are required to take part in hours of training for all kinds of situations each year. They also role-play with mock situations, where they are given a crisis and are expected to respond to it. Yong said she has been trained to deal with suicide attempts, but nothing as far as a massive school shooting that would require her to protect all of the students on her floor.

Daley said, "It is not a matter of if it will happen. It is a matter of when it will happen." In light of this statement, which many may not want to even consider, Daley explained that preparing for the worst may be in the long run the best. Taking the small step to having a critical-response training session for resident assistants, professors, faculty members and any willing students could potentially be the key in preparing all for a perilous situation in the college setting and in the world outside of Behrend. Consulting Psychiatrist at Behrend Dr. Fuat Ulus also said that simple training techniques could make a world of

The player then reportedly ripped the number off of the TV, and said to Fernandez, "you shouldn't bitch about it. You still got free stuff."

After the confrontation, the game resumed and at the end of the night the TV, which Fernandez says was rightfully his, was won by another student, Freshman Mechanical Engineering major Mike Grebner.

As president of the Lion Ambassadors, the organization which runs Midnight Bingo, Kate Kelecseny calls the entire incident a "big misunderstanding."

"I had two weeks to set up the bingo through emails and via telephone with Student Activities. Things were hectic and busy. Inevitably, there is the chance that certain things can go wrong," Kelecseny said. "Something was overlooked...it was an honest mistake."

Kelecseny admits that the intention of the event is to keep students entertained for the duration of the program. She explained that it's common practice in Midnight Bingo to set the number for the grand prize aside for the first 30 minutes to keep students interested in the game and to accommodate late arrivals. "I simply forgot to take out the number for the first 30 minutes," Kelecseny said.

There are no written policies explaining that the grand prize cannot be won until later in the evening.

Luis Fernandez says he does not believe he should pay the price for the mistakes of the Lion Ambassadors. He wants the TV that he won, not the Radio/CD Player he ended up with. Kelecseny said the Lion Ambassadors will address the matter at their next meeting on Sept. 12.

difference in a school shooting situation. Ulus has published the article, "Help Managers, Employees Prepare for Workplace Violence," in *Eastern Pennsylvania Business Journal*, (April 16-22, 2001, Vol.12, No. 15), and said the techniques he discusses in the article can also be applied to the college setting. "There have been many people frozen with fear, allowing the gunman's shooting at them one-by-one precisely enough to kill each target," said Ulus. "Would dead and wounded counts be far lower if everybody knew what they needed to during the tragedy?"

Behrend, along with most colleges and universities in the United States, have open campus grounds, allowing anyone to walk in. Daley said this makes security at college campuses very difficult to enforce, but that doesn't mean the students shouldn't know how to react just like the trained professionals. Some of the steps Ulus suggested students take in critical situations were first and foremost do not panic, and remain calm. He also said, "Flight is the attempt to reach the closest safe area by the fastest means. Panic, on the other hand, is just rushing around aimlessly. The last, but not least, is begging him/her not to harm you while you try to hide under your table. At this point, attempting a dialogue would be pointless. Therefore, RUN! A moving target is more difficult to hit."

According to Daley, hours of training and acts of precaution can be made to try to assure the safety of students at a college campus, but nothing is ever certain and anything is possible. Ulus' research begs the question, how many school shootings need to happen, how many people have to die before Behrend students, professors, and faculty members are trained to physically and emotionally deal with a similar situation? "It is sad. We don't learn. We talk the talk but don't walk the walk," said Ulus.