

Behrend holds formal dedication for REDC

By Lenny Smith
assistant news editor
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On Monday, October 9, 2006, Penn State held a ceremony for the official dedication of its new Research and Economic Development Center (REDC) on the Penn State Erie Campus.

Penn State Behrend Chancellor Jack D. Burke said, "We envision that what happens in the REDC will be truly transformational. This building holds out great opportunity and promise for us, and in turn, for the region. It is truly a regional asset, one that will create collaborations, connections, and synergies that don't now exist. Imagine new programs linking business and engineering that will help drive innovation and entrepreneurial activity in the region."

The 160,000 square foot facility was welcomed by the President of The Pennsylvania State University, Graham Spanier. He said, "This is a great day for Penn State. We try and stay on the leading edge (and) the REDC will help achieve these goals."

Former Pennsylvania Governor Tom Ridge, who committed the \$30 million state grant for the construction of the REDC was on hand for the dedication. Ridge said, "I'm excited to see this building come to life after six years. I marvel in advance of what this building can do."

The REDC is home to the Sam and Irene Black School of Business and the School of Engineering and Engineering Technology. By housing both schools in the facility, Penn State Behrend becomes one of the first institutions of higher education in the country to house its business and engineering schools under a single roof. This will give the students of both schools a unique opportunity to work together and earn an academic minor. Diane Parente, associate professor of management said, "Penn State Erie has created two programs that offer cross-functional educational



Mike Sharkey/THE BEHREND BEACON

Former Pennsylvania Governor Tom Ridge attended the dedication of the REDC on campus Monday, October 9. "I'm excited to see this building come to life after six years," says Ridge of the building, home to business and engineering.

opportunities for our business and engineering students."

President of the Student Government Association (SGA), Meredith Straub said, "On behalf of my fellow students, I gladly accept this building." Straub, who is very energetic about most everything on the Penn State Behrend campus added, "The REDC is awesome, amazing, and I love it!"

As Straub finished her speech, those who were key contributors in the building of the REDC gathered on the stage and cut the symbolic blue ribbon to officially dedicate the REDC.

President Spanier also stated, "This Research and Economic Development Center building is a building we are very proud of at Penn State. It is one of the best examples we have anywhere at Penn State of a building that brings together the key objective we have for Penn State: to be the top university in the country in the integration of teaching, research and service. This is a building where precisely these things come together."

The REDC connects the Behrend campus with its 200-acre Knowledge Park facility, a research and technology park. Plans are already underway for an addition to the REDC, which is expected to be complete in 2007. The building will gain a state-of-the-art, 200 seat lecture hall that was planned for during the initial construction, but was postponed for budgeting reasons. Also, neighboring the addition will be a 182-space parking garage. The new parking area will help ease the congestion of parking on campus.

More advancements are in the process of being discussed and designed.

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A combination of trash, human waste and animal filth filled the rooms waist-high. "Every room was full, [there was] no path to get from room to room," said McHenry. The second and third floors were the same. The floors were buried in animal fur and feces, only to be covered by thin layers of newspaper to be saturated over and over again by feces and urine. The smell of urine saturates your clothing as your head began to feel dizzy from the inconceivable living conditions of the tenants. The heat from the sun came through the rusted-shut windows baking the piles of filth to release a stench so real it was physical, thick, and heavy, consuming you, weighing you down; you began to drown. "You can only do it for like three days. Then you got to get away from it," said McHenry as he was explaining how he was managing to clean out the building.

Young explained, "I took them to the house so they could gain first hand experience reporting. And so they could understand the world of the safe structure beyond Behrend." The cleaning team was forced to shovel the garbage out the windows of the house into the alley to be scooped up by a bulldozer and dropped into dumpster containers. McHenry has already filled six- 30 cubic yard dumpsters. A white-

laced baby shoe lay by the dumpster and a broken baby bottle atop the wall of garbage. A closer look into the wall of garbage, past the rusted cans, empty beer bottles and torn clothing, were small children's toys, pacifiers, and stuffed animals. Children were living in this house. Senior Heidi Brackbill said that, "As a future educator I don't know how a teacher couldn't realize what these kids were going through."

Three names, Kristie, Laren, and Mathew, were scribbled onto the wall of what seemed to be a small bedroom. This room, like the others, had to be shoveled out. The only things left were cartoons stuck to the wall and a short article that Mathew had written for his school newspaper. Mineweaser said that, "I think children are too innocent to realize." The walls were stained with children's handprints and coated with the same film as the other rooms.

McHenry said, "There was one clean room and warning written on the door. I assumed a girl lived there because of the stuffed animals...she would have had to step up over the trash to get out", said McHenry. This room was the only bit of normalcy in the whole house. McHenry tried to explain how a home can become so out of control, but could only say, "The only thing you can do is stop trying to figure it out."



Ashley Bressler/THE BEHREND BEACON

This bathroom of 636 East 22nd Street is just one of the uninhabitable scenes, which Jim McHenry must continue to clean and bring up to the Erie health codes. Two fly traps hang from the ceiling, both of which are completely black from the dead flies clinging to it. It is nearly impossible to imagine a family with six children once lived in these conditions.

Travel delays leave some Behrend students stranded

By Lenny Smith
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As temperatures in Erie finally began to show signs of spring, Penn State Behrend students made their way back to campus this week after spring break. However, for some students, "made their way back" does not begin to describe the frustrating ends to many spring break vacations. No matter where Behrend students traveled to over break, whether it was home, Mexico, or the Caribbean, it seems as if everyone has a story about their trip back to school.

Last weekend, winter struck the Northeast with another powerful storm. The storm consisted of sleet, freezing rain, and snow which ultimately froze all Northeastern travel. Airlines, such as US Airways, had as many as 100,000 stranded passengers system wide.

According to US Airways, computer problems, airline staffing rules, and other problems slowed US Airways' attempts to clear the backlog. In addition, the airline's flights on Sunday were already nearly sold out with 275,000 passengers booked.

Spokeswoman for the Allegheny County Airport Authority JoAnn Jenny said, "It's just a busy time of year with spring break, and then with that storm, that really put a wrench in the works for a lot of folks"

Numerous Behrend students were among the thousands of people that were stuck on planes for up to nine-and-a-half hours or slept in terminals with disposable pillows and blankets.

Junior Danielle Brown traveled to Jamaica for an all-inclusive trip through expedia.com. Brown was scheduled to return to the states on Friday, but Mother Nature had other plans. "The planes were freezing in Philadelphia, so the US Airways employees kept pushing back our departure time, telling us the plane will eventually take off," Brown said, "We waited from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. before they finally told us that the flight was canceled."

Along with thousands of other travelers, Brown and her travel companions found out that airlines will not pay for hotel rooms when a

flight is canceled due to weather conditions. "We paid a couple hundred more dollars for a few hours; it wasn't even worth it," she said.

When Brown returned to the airport on Saturday, they found that leaving Jamaica was going to be no easier than the day before. "We weren't able to get any flights out because the flight crews were stuck in Pittsburgh. US Airways put us up in a hotel this time because it was their fault."

Brown eventually got to Charlotte, North Carolina on Monday and was supposed to fly to Cleveland at 7:30 that evening, but the plane was delayed again until 9:00 p.m. Once in Cleveland, Brown rented a car and drove back to Erie. She got to Erie at 2:30 a.m. Tuesday morning, four days after she was supposed to return.

Senior Kara Struski remarked, "It was just chaotic in the airport."

Struski, who was traveling back to Erie from Florida, flew Delta Air Lines. "They gave us some ridiculous excuses as to why the flights were delayed," she said, "the best had to be that they were late because of paperwork issues."

"I got in line at the Delta counter when the line was still relatively short and I still had to wait over two hours. The line stretched through the whole terminal. Some of those people had to have been waiting for at least five hours," Struski said.

In total from Friday to Saturday morning, more than 3,600 flights were canceled nationwide because of the effects of the storm in the Northeast. JetBlue, US Airways, Delta Air Lines and American Airlines all reported cancellations.

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He had actually not been informed of what went on the night before, so we told him what happened. He was very upset that Chris was served, and was surprised that we weren't carded at the front door. After checking the schedule from the night before, he said, "I should have had two security people at the door, they were on the schedule."

The manager also went on to say that they normally crack down very hard on underage drinking. When I asked him what was going to be done about the bartender who served Chris, the manager assured me that he was going to do something about the situation.

I also called Irish Cousins. The owner, Selena Dufala, was more than willing to discuss our visit to her bar. She had already been told about what happened on Tuesday, and was very proud of her bartender. When

asked about how strict the policies regarding carding are at Irish Cousins, Dufala explained that all of her employees are RAMP certified. RAMP (Responsible Alcohol Management Program) is a training and certificate program that promotes responsibility when it comes to serving minors, as well as detecting if someone is too intoxicated to be served. Dufala makes sure that each employee recertifies for RAMP every two years. Dufala was very frank when it came to her policies, and said, "I follow RAMP policies and I have my own as well; you either follow the rules or you're out."

Since no report was made to the police regarding the Docksider incident, it's unclear as to what will come from this report. There will be a follow-up, however, to see what the Docksider Tavern plans on doing to correct the mistake that was made.

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