

OPINION

THE BEHREND BEACON

FOUNDED IN 1948

Penn State Erie,
The Behrend College
Reed Union Building
4701 College Drive, Erie PA
16563
Room 10H
Telephone: (814) 898-6488
Fax: (814) 898-6019

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Letters should be limited to 350 words and commentaries should be limited to 700 words. The more concise the submission, the less we will be forced to edit it for space concerns and the more likely we are to run the submission.

The Beacon does not publish anonymous letters. Please include your major, faculty, or administration position and semester standing. Deadline for any submission is 5 p.m. Tuesday afternoon for inclusion in the Friday issue.

The Behrend Beacon reserves the right to edit any submissions prior to publication.

Please keep complaints as specific as possible.

Email submissions to rcc5057@psu.edu or drop them off at the Beacon office.

The First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution: Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

Beacon Thumbs Up



- Snowmen. And snowwomen.
- Green tea
- Extra croutons in the salad
- World peace

Beacon Thumbs Down



- A weekend without football
- Heath Ledger's early passing
- Cheap, short-lived goldfish
- Wind

Endowments don't boost financial aid

by Rachel Reeves
opinion editor
rcc5057@psu.edu

It's that time of year again. January is when every college student in America is filling out his or her FAFSA (or hounding their parents as to why it isn't completed yet.) The time of year when I try not to imagine how long it will be after graduation when the amount of money I earn comes close to the amount of money I owe. The time of year when I imagine myself, four years from now, living in a cardboard box and trying to cook Ramen Noodles over a cigarette lighter.

As far as Penn State is concerned, I am in just about the worst financial position possible. Being from a middle-class family, I do not have enough money to pay for college out-of-pocket, but then I have too much money to apply for student aid. On top of that, I am an out-of-state student from Rochester, New York. I still cannot understand why my roommate manages to pay half as much as I do while living in the exact same place, consuming the same amount of food, and attending the same classes - she even lives farther away from campus than I do. And trust me, I live in New York. I pay taxes.

So, another option would be scholarships, right? I am a white, financially stable, Protestant journalism major. I'm straight, I'm perfectly healthy, and both of my parents are alive. I don't have obscure hobbies like model sailboat-building or yo-yoing. This cuts down my potential scholarships to contests like Cosmo Girl of the Year 2008, along every other WASP female aged 17-21 in this country.

Even so, I'm applying for six or seven scholarships this year, about one per month all the way into July. I'm also applying for an RA position, which is the most effective way to cut college costs. Last summer I worked about 48 hours per week to save up for spending money and books. The real kicker is that out-of-state tuition at Penn State was by far my least expensive option for the accredited communications program I

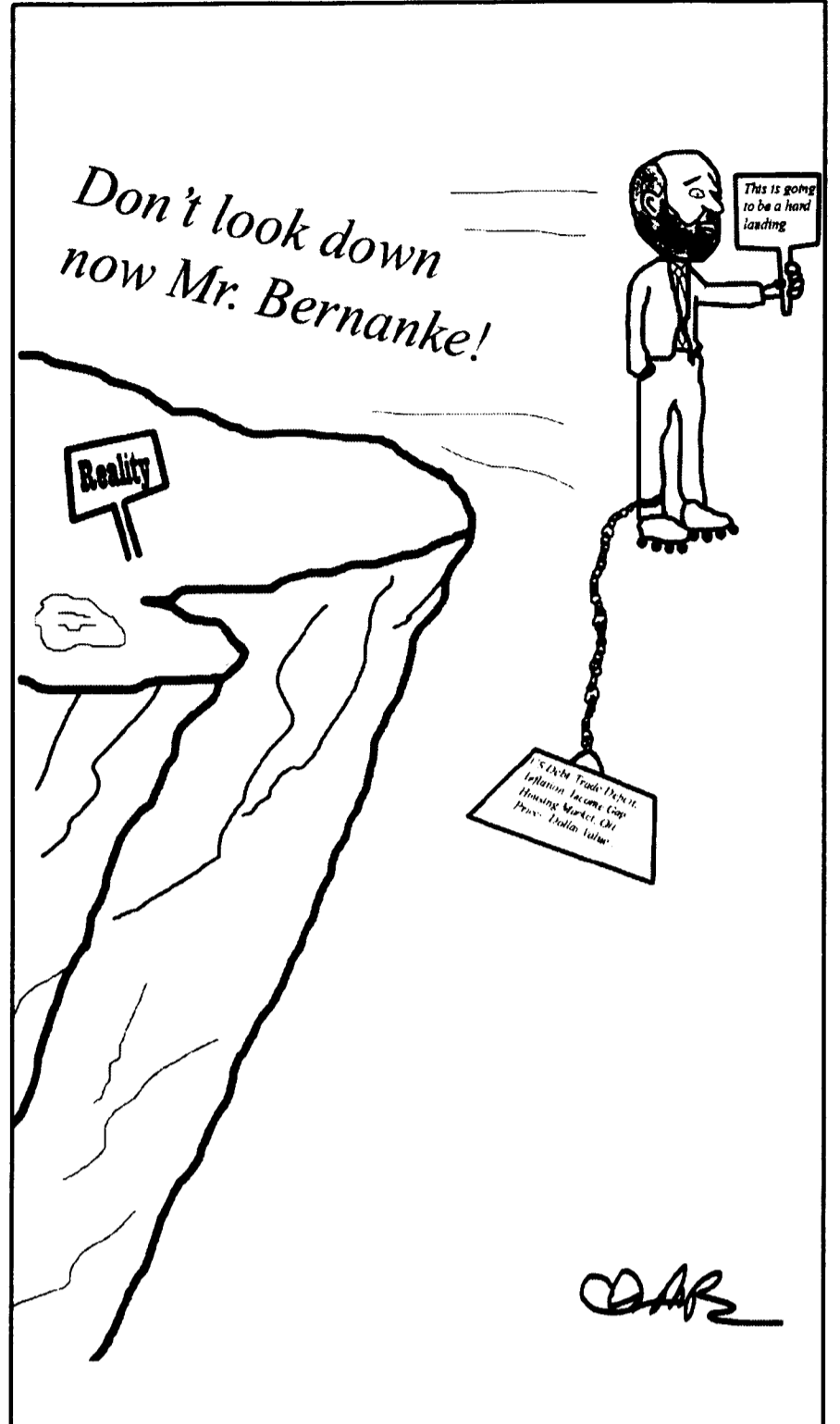
wanted.

You can imagine my frustration when I picked up USA Today on my way to my lifeguarding class (which I'm taking to earn my 3 gym credits and simultaneously become qualified for an above-minimum wage job this summer) and saw the headline "College wealth soaring." The article was about very prestigious schools like Harvard, Yale, and MIT, but it made me curious about Penn State. So I Googled my way to "The President's Report on Philanthropy 2006-2007."

This reported that Penn State received a record \$1.7 billion from private endowment this year, a net increase of \$279 million from last year. It also reported that \$1.54 billion (90 percent of the endowments) went into something called the Long-Term Investment Pool. I'm still not sure what this fund does, but the President's Report says that it provides "long-term growth and sustainable spending," and I've seen charts of the amount in the fund steadily increasing over the years.

Schools like Harvard and Yale are using their extra endowment money to cut their middle-class students a break. Penn State's tuition however, has increased 4.3-5.5 percent this year, even after being recognized as the most expensive school in the Big Ten. If Penn State wants to increase its widespread alumni population, if it really wants to increase diversity and out-of-state students, if it truly wants to invest in the future, it needs to cut its students a break.

Sooner or later the networking potential, the solid academic programs and the legendary football will not be enough to bring students in anymore. The opportunities that Penn State provides won't be able to balance out just how far in debt students will have to go, and how hard they will have to work to pay it off. I know that personally, the decision between the cost and the benefits was really close, and that was before the tuition increases. Penn State needs to balance out its Long-Term Investment Pool and its long-term actions if it really wants a sustainable future.



Everyone has an opinion - Not everyone is published.
Send cartoons and letters to rcc5057@psu.edu

Childhood heroes can't carry over into adulthood

by Rachel Reeves
opinion editor
rcc5057@psu.edu

When I was a child, heroes were forever. They came long before you and would continue on, always a step ahead, always providing something to aspire to. They were sure and infallible and permanent, someone who had found a way to rise above human limitations to become something really great.

Well, there are certain things that no one tells you about growing up. Like the fact that the road to adulthood is paved with an unbelievable amount of paperwork, and that the dogs you and your friends all got ten years ago will begin to die off in quick succession during your senior year of high school. One of the things that no one tells you is that your heroes get old and eventually fade. No, people leave you to figure that one out on your own.

This Sunday night it was five below at Lambeau field, and Green Bay was playing for the championship. The cheers of the Green Bay fans were muffled by their many layers, the talking heads were wearing ridiculous winter hats, and players were sipping hot

chicken broth on the sidelines instead of the usual Gatorade. When the offensive line was crouched, waiting for the snap, the steam from their breath made them look like bulls lowering their heads for the charge. The coaches were bundled beyond recognition, Vaseline smeared on their faces to prevent frostbite.

This was not glamorous, pretty-boy football. This

Well, there are certain things no one tells you about growing up.

was real, hard-hitting, can't get out of bed on Monday morning football. This was winner-take-all, earn your millions or go home football. This was the kind of thing that my own childhood hero, Brett Favre, lives on.

And even though I have filled out enough paperwork to bring down a small forest, and my dog is half-deaf and can't see a thing in the dark, I faithfully believed that this was a sure thing. All of the ingredients were there - the historic home field in the frigid cold, the championship game following a season that everyone

said the Packers would lose - it had never failed before. For three quarters everything went exactly like I expected it to. Then, in the fourth quarter, something shifted, and my hero became a human. A really cold, kind of old, mere human being.

I can't put my finger on what happened or how I knew, but it was clear that Favre was not having fun anymore. The passes looked the same, but instead of being born of recklessness, they were thrown out of desperation. When the cameras got a close shot, his expression contained no youthful determination to win and prove the world wrong; it was instead the face of a long-distance runner who just wants to make it to the finish line. And long before overtime, long before the interception, long before the Giants' 47-yard field goal, I knew.

Favre has overcome many, many things: broken bones, addictions, car crashes, cancer, grief, years of doubt. And he always came back as young as ever, as optimistic, as reckless as he had ever been. He proved that no matter what happened, it was still worth showing up, giving it your best, and loving the game. But Sunday night I caught a glimpse of a world that was too fast, too cold, too harsh for my childhood hero. Sunday night I grew up a little bit more.

Small, but nonetheless poignant observations:

by Christopher LaFuria
editor-in-chief
cs15005@psu.edu

- You can always tell when someone has a container of Tic Tacs in their pocket.
- Pennies are filthy.
- My vote doesn't count; frankly, neither does my voice.
- The United States was founded upon lies. So was Coca-Cola.
- The most expressive piece of clothing someone can wear is their shoes.
- If an entity is full of awe, it is bad. If it has some awe, it is good.
- Food always tastes better with chopsticks... Except soup.
- Something smells like burnt apples.
- On the range of hygiene, if you're up, you're American. If you're down, Europe.
- Not all floppy disks were floppy.
- Green Tea is yellow. While on the topic of drinks, if real mountain dew was yellow, then there are too many

- dogs taking a piss.
- "Bass" should be spelled "base." It is not a fish.
- One time, there was a squirrel that jumped into a garbage can and couldn't get out.
- Canada is proof that God is mad at us.
- Hummus is delicious.
- Binder clips can double as clothespins, curtain rods, and those clips you put on the open bag of chips to keep them from spilling out.
- No one really knows how to work the fax machine.
- Neil Young is cooler than Tom Petty.
- Rooms in the house are insufficiently named. Of course there is a bath in the bathroom, but there is also a toilet and sink. There is a bed in the bedroom. But there is also a dresser and a closet. And where did "kitchen" come from?
- According to the paintings in some historic museums, Picasso and Jackson Pollock were approximately five years old.
- Proctologists should be called astronauts.
- March 5 is really Feb. 33. Except during leap years. Then it is the Feb. 32.
- You will have a higher Vitamin C count if you give

- peas a chance.
- If it's called an "automobile," then why do I need to drive it? It should drive me.
- If someone offers me Sour Patch Kids, I like them to pour it in my hands. If I choose to select them with my own hands, I feel guilty taking more than two. If the owner of the aforementioned Sour Patch Kids pours them into my hands, I am ensured at least 12.
- Rugby should have been played on carpet squares.
- The word "malarkey" sounds like a bird from New England.
- I like toast.
- Kites fly highest if they have the longest string.
- The job title "secretary" implies that the person works with feces.
- If green were a number, and it was divided by 13, it would have a remainder.
- It is easy to take things like milk and Christmas for granted.
- I am a lot better looking than the guy I saw in the mirror this morning.
- There are only two types of delicious pie: hot pie and cold pie.