

# NEWS

## National and world news in brief

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### Tornadoes tear trough south, kill at least 57

NASHVILLE, Tenn. - The U.S. south has now suffered 57 deaths since Tuesday after more than two dozen devastating tornadoes tore through the country from Texas to Ohio.

The tornado outbreak is the deadliest since the mid-1980s. Damage is estimated to be in the hundreds of millions of dollars, with Tennessee's Madison county alone reporting \$47 million in damages.

On Thursday, two additional deaths were reported in Tennessee and Alabama, bringing the death toll to 57. Tennessee has reported 32 deaths, Arkansas 13, seven in Kentucky and five in Alabama.

The U.S. Storm Prediction Center in Norman, Oklahoma released a statement that said at least two of the tornadoes had wind speeds between 165 to 200 miles per hour, which qualify as hurricane-force winds. Greg Carbin, a meteorologist at the Prediction Center said that unlike twisters which usually jump from spot to spot on the ground, these were long-track tornadoes which stayed on the ground for long periods of time.

The last time a deadly storm came through Tennessee was in 1974, when storms killed 47 people. In Arkansas, officials claim that all missing peoples have been accounted for. In Kentucky, the storms were so fierce that each of the state's 120 counties reported damages due to the tornadoes.

Federal and state emergency teams have been dispatched to each of the damaged states. The Storm Prediction Center has received over 70 reports of tornadoes, and has counted 25 tornadoes total.



Sources: CNN

### Space shuttle Atlantis lifts off

ORLANDO, Florida - The space shuttle Atlantis successfully launched from Kennedy Space Center in Florida on Thursday, after two months of delays.

The launch, which has been coded STS-122, began with concerns that clouds, showers and winds would hinder the launch, but the weather eventually cleared allowing lift-off at 2:45p.m. A lot of attention is surrounding the launch, as the Atlantis is transporting Europe's \$1.8 billion Columbus science laboratory to the International Space Station. The Columbus laboratory will be Europe's biggest contribution to the scientific research being conducted on the space station. The experiments in Columbus will have influence across many fields, from agriculture to metal development. The data collected from these experiments is expected to help scientists better understand the demands of long-duration space flight, information that will benefit humans if they are to ever colonize the moon or travel to Mars.

Commanding the flight is Stephen N. Frick, a veteran space flier. Among the crew are pilot Alan G. Poindexter, and mission specialists Rex J. Walheim, Stanley G. Love, and Leland D. Melvin. Also on board the flight are European Space Agency (ESA) astronauts Hans Schlegel and Leopold Eyharts. This marks the first space flight of Poindexter, Melvin and Love.

On day four of the mission, a robotic arm will dock the laboratory to the station. Schlegel, a German ESA astronaut will be instrumental in installing the station, having to undergo two spacewalks to complete the process.

Eyharts is overseeing the commission of Columbus, and will be on board the station for at least two weeks. With the addition of Eyharts, US astronaut Dan Tani will be given a temporary leave of the space station, but will be returning Monday, Feb 18.

## Professor earns Book of the Year honors Kiosks not up to student standards

By Lenny Smith  
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CONTRIBUTED PHOTO  
 Dr. Eric Corty.

A Penn State Behrend professor earned the 2007 Book of the Year award from the American Journal of Nursing (AJN) last month.

Eric Corty, associate professor of clinical psychology, published *Using and Interpreting Statistics: A Practical Text for the Health, Behavioral, and Social Sciences*, which one AJN panelist called, "one of the most valuable texts of 2007."

Corty decided to write his own text when, what he considered to be the best textbook on the subject, was discontinued.

"After they stopped printing Diekoff, I tried a couple other texts," Corty explains. "But there was no longer a good textbook [to use]."

Corty wrote the text over the course of three years, most of which occurred during a sabbatical. Published by Mosby, the country's premier medical publishing house, the book uses an interesting and capturing writing technique, bright illustrations, and mnemonic devices all in an effort to help students feel more comfortable learning introductory statistics.

"My book focuses on the human side of statistics, the part that involves decision-making by people, not calculations by computers," Corty said. "I think that they AJN judges appreciated that the book is intended for a broad audience of not only students

in nursing and health sciences, but also in the social and behavioral sciences.

According to AJN's website, "AJN is the oldest and largest circulating nursing journal in the world. The Journal's mission is to promote excellence in nursing and health care through the dissemination of evidence-based, peer-reviewed clinical information and original research, discussion of relevant and controversial professional issues, adherence to the standards of journalistic integrity and excellence, and promotion of nursing perspectives to the health care community and the public."

Although Corty said he is still waiting for Oprah to call and congratulate him, he is very excited about the recognition.

"It was a big surprise, very out of the blue," Corty said. "It's always nice to be recognized. I thought I did a good job and it's nice to know others think the same."

After graduating from Vassar College in Poughkeepsie, NY, Corty went on to earn his doctorate in clinical psychology from Indiana University. He held clinical and research positions at the University of Maryland School of Medicine in Baltimore and at Bradley University in Peoria, Ill. before accepting a position in the Behrend School of Humanities and Social Sciences in 1993. At Behrend he teaches classes based in statistics, abnormal psychology, human sexuality, and personality.

Corty's Book of the Year recognition joins a list of many other awards he has received his joining the faculty at Behrend. In 2001, Corty received the Alumni Association and Student Award for Teaching Excellence and Behrend's Council of Fellows' 1997 award for Excellence in Teaching.

Recently, Corty has been researching personality factors related to rapid ejaculation and a survey of therapists to determine what they consider normal ejaculation latencies.

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 those times.

And so the computer kiosks in places like the Reed building and the Kochel building were put in place. There are kiosks such as these all over campus. "They were put in as a casual computer resource that would allow students to have access to a computer outside of a lab environment," says Hammermill staff member Todd Say. "They were never meant as a substitute for the computer labs."

The kiosk in the Reed building has a printer; the Reed building is not close to a computer lab, so a printer was put in for student convenience. Now that students have access to wireless internet, laptops, and other new forms of technology, kiosk use is dropping.

For the 2003-2004 academic year, 129,533 log-ins were recorded on the computer kiosks. By the 2005-2006 academic year, numbers had dropped. Only 92,868 log-ins were recorded, down 36,665 from the two previous years. And the numbers continue to decrease. In just fall of 2007, only 41,989 log-ins were recorded. Even if that doubles, the number is still lower than that of previous years.

Demands for kiosk use decreases because of the high number of alternatives available to students. Kiosk computers were never meant to run word programs; they were only added so students could open

and view e-mail attachments. The computers all run Windows XP. The Kochel building kiosk does not have any printers. "They're right near the library computer lab, so if students needed to print they could just go to the lab," said Say.

But students have not been happy with the Reed building kiosk recently—complaints are muttered about the dysfunctional computers, but never reported to the staff. "To report computer problems, students should use the lab trouble ticket," explains Say. This is an icon on the desktop that leads students to a webpage where students report their computer problems. These reports go straight to the Hammermill staff, who respond as quickly as possible.

"The computers in Reed are really slow," said Gillian Santos. "They need more than one printer in there, and they need to be brought up-to-date." But people like Say who work at Hammermill have not heard about these problems.

"It's a surprise that students have been upset about dysfunctional computers because the problem wasn't brought to our attention," Say tells us. The staff at Hammermill plan on looking into this problem as soon as they can.

**"They were never meant as a substitute for the computer labs."**

**-Todd Say  
 Hammermill  
 staff member**

### Rendell talks budget during visit to Erie

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"Out of all the Republicans and Democrats, I think Hillary is the best qualified," said Rendell. Governor Rendell told the Behrend Beacon that after working in politics for nearly 30 years, he has spoken to every candidate who runs for office during that time. Even though Rendell is supporting Senator Clinton, he said he would work for Senator Barack Obama if he were to win the nomination. The Pennsylvania primary is April 22.

Rendell is Pennsylvania's 45th Governor and is currently in his second term. Since the late 1970's

and early 1980's, Rendell has been actively involved in reinventing Pennsylvania. During the 2000 presidential election, the Governor served as general chair of the Democratic National Committee. From 1992 to 1999, Rendell served as the 121st City of Philadelphia's mayor. In 1978, prior to serving as mayor, he was elected district attorney for the City of Philadelphia. Erie was the first stop on Rendell's seven-city, four-day tour across Pennsylvania. The tour is part of Rendell's push for his economic stimulus package he proposed to the Legislature on Feb. 5th.

**Want to write news for The Behrend Beacon?**

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### Lectures on alternative energy sources available to the public

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Lectures from Penn State scientists at University Park that detail various alternative energy sources are available to the public online thanks to the Penn State Eberly College of Science.

The series of six presentations, called *Running on Empty: Strategies for Our Energy Future*, detail the technologies and environmental consequences of energies such as coal, solar power and fuel cells. Saturdays at 11 a.m. to roughly 12:30 p.m. the lectures can be viewed live or as recordings at the Penn State University Libraries website. Two of the six presentations are currently available.

The first presentation, titled *Fueling the Future: A Place for Coal*, was given on January 26th by Harold H. Schobert, professor of fuel science at Penn State. The lecture will discuss how coal will continue to be used for decades and goes into detail on the factors that will challenge coal's viability for the future.

To be given on Feb. 2nd is *Global Warming and Our Future* by Richard Alley and Evan Pugh, a professor of geosciences. It will discuss why the scientific community is confident that the burning of fossil fuels is having an adverse effect on the earth and its creatures.

The four upcoming lectures cover the topics of solar energy, biofuel, nuclear power and fuel cells. On Feb. 9, John H. Golbeck's presentation, *The*

*Promise of Solar Energy*, will look into how realistic solar power technologies are for solving the energy problems of the modern era. A professor of biochemistry and biophysics, Golbeck also will talk about the newest developing technologies in the field.

A week later on the 12th, *Biofuels: Tapping Nature's Abundance* will be given by Tom L. Richard, associate professor of agricultural and biological engineering and director of the Penn State Institutes for Energy and the Environment. The presentation is set to tell of the potential resources that plants hold from collecting solar power and of the research being employed to harness it.

*The Renaissance of Nuclear Power: An Energy Source of the Future* will be held on the 23rd by Jack S. Brenizer, Jr., a professor of mechanical and nuclear engineering and chair of the nuclear program at Penn State. After thirty years of unease in the development of the power source, nuclear power is in a resurgence and the presentation will cover the reasons and concerns for the issue.

Lastly, on the first of March, Matthew M. Mench, an associate professor of mechanical engineering, will present *Fuel Cells: Are We There Yet?*, which discusses the limitations and challenges of fuel cells for the automotive industry.

Past lectures are kept online and can be viewed at <http://live.libraries.psu.edu/mediasite/catalog>.

## Quotes on Civility

**"We are all angels with only one wing. We can only fly while embracing each other."**

**— Luciano de Crescenzo, Italian writer (b. 1928)**

Janet Neff Sample Center  
 for Manners & Civility