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Viral flu cases, severity increase among Behrend students

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Roommates learn to share a lot of things like food, clothes and books in college. However, this winter, two freshmen roommates shared something neither of them wanted. Shannon Brown and Julie Lancot, both from Beaver, Pa., were two of the many students, faculty and staff members that have come down with influenza this season.

"I got the flu first," Brown said. "Then I gave it to Julie."

However it didn't end there, just as Brown was beginning to get back to normal, Lancot gave the flu virus right back to Brown.

"It was awful," said Brown, who started getting sick at the end of January. "My first time was worse than the second time I got it...it lasted a lot longer."

When Lancot got the flu, "it started to get pretty bad," she said. "I had to go to the hospital because it started to affect my asthma."

Brown used the services provided at the campus Health and Wellness Center when she got sick.

"I had started taking Mucinex when I first got sick and they told me to keep taking it, but they also gave me some cough medicine

and some extra strength Ibuprofen."

Visits to Health and Wellness are on the rise this year according to statistics provided by Patty Pasky McMahon, Director of Health and Wellness. The Center has seen an increase of over 170 viral flu cases like those of Brown and Lancot this Feb. as opposed to Feb. 2007.

"It's a different flu," Pasky McMahon said. "There are some extremely severe cases with high fevers, sinus and ear infections, and bronchitis."

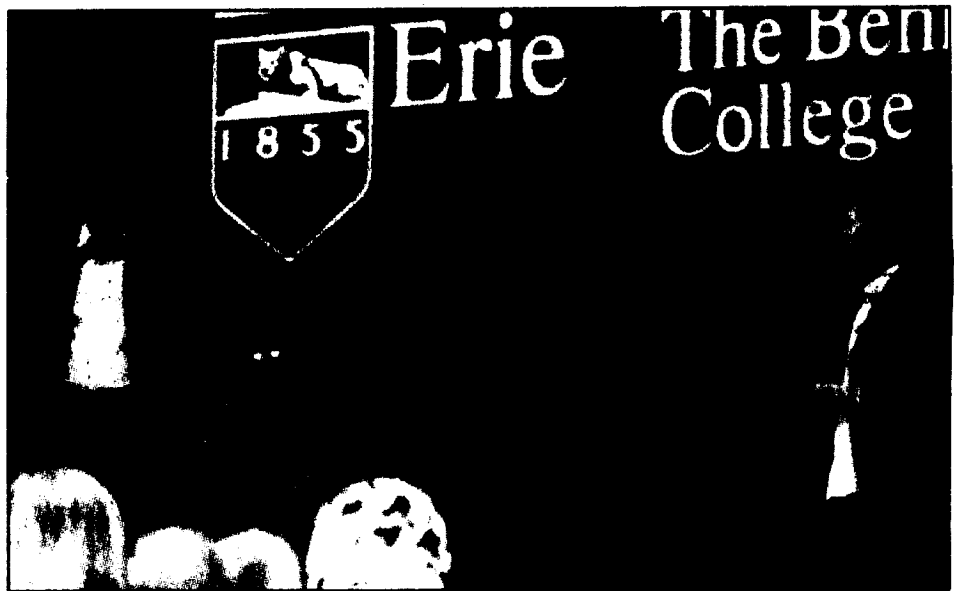
"Primary prevention is the best way to keeping yourself healthy," Pasky McMahon said. She recommends frequent hand washing and keeping your hands away from your eyes as the best start. Also, she reminds students to cover their mouth when they cough or sneeze, a tip straight from elementary school.

Brown and Lancot, who both agreed their room was "completely contaminated," took it a step further.

"We took everything out of our room and took it home to wash it," Brown said. "We wiped everything down with Clorox before we left and as soon as we got back we Lysol-ed everything."

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"Lost Boy" of Sudan speaks at Behrend



Keegan McGregor/THE BEHREND BEACON

John Bul Dau (left) and Christopher Quinn (right) speak in McGarvey Commons.

By Rachel Reeves
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After learning about the 20 year-long civil war in Africa, the idea of Sudan would not let go of Christopher Quinn. So he packed up some film equipment, raised some money and headed off to a refugee camp in Kenya. What he witnessed not only began an award-winning documentary, but changed many lives forever.

In *God Grew Tired of Us*, Quinn follows the journey of the "lost boys" of Sudan; boys who were forced to flee their homes for neighboring countries when the civil war came too close. In groups as large as 50 or 100, boys walked miles out of Sudan into Ethiopia and Kenya to seek safety in refugee camps. Mostly aged three to 13, the boys

had to eat wild plants and mud, sometimes drink their own urine and fend off wild animals and fatal diseases. Sometimes the boys did not even have clothes, since passing militant groups would steal anything from anyone.

Some of the boys that survived to make it to a refugee camp were educated, and then sent to America. Quinn and his crew followed three of the lost boys from Kenya to Syracuse, New York, and watched as these strange people in a strange land tried to make a life for themselves in just three months.

John Bul Dau was one of those lost boys, and with Quinn spoke to a gathering in McGarvey Commons Thursday, Feb. 28.

Quinn spoke of the financial challenges

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Behrend THON dancers help to smash old fundraising total

By Mark Nardo
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This year's THON turned out to be a great success and the attempt to beat last year's fundraising total was met and crushed. Over the past five months, Penn State students were able to raise \$6.6 million for the Four Diamond Fund, beating last year's amount of \$5.2 million. Behrend also beat its total from last year, over \$12,500, by raising over \$17,500 this year. There were many events and fundraisers held here at Behrend that helped raise that money. Jimmy Z's tavern was a huge source of contributions made. Jimmy Z's offered water pong tournaments and *Guitar Hero* tournaments. Eastland Lanes also contributed by having a bowling tournament called Bowl for the Kids. Among these, other fundraising tactics took place, such as: The 24 for a Cure dance-a-thon held in Nov., Canning on Peach St, door to door donations, poker tournaments, competitions between Greek life and sports teams and also the selling of hot cocoa to students waiting outside for the Jim Gaffigan event. The amount earned this year was a joint effort that every Penn Stater can take pride in.

As for the first time dancers this year from Behrend, the experience for them was like no other. "It was amazing. I love the school spirit. It makes me so proud to be a Penn Stater," said dancer Elton Armady. As he claimed before, "it was the most difficult mental and physical battle of my life". Armady claimed that the first 24 hours were fairly easy to get through, but after that he experienced a few lows where he had trouble staying awake. "The moral up keepers went above and beyond and I wouldn't have made it without them", said Armady as he explained how he kept awake and vitalized for the whole 46 hours. Even though the 46 hours were draining, it was an amazing experience to be part of and Armady is already thinking about dancing for THON 2009. Molly Thomas, on the other hand, thinks that the dancing was "a once in a lifetime experience" for her, but she was so glad to be a part of it. "It was the best weekend of my life, from standing up until sitting down," said Thomas while explaining her THON experience. She, too, also had some lows where she thought she was going to collapse.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

THON dancers Elton Armady and Molly Thomas pose with the Nittany Lion at THON.

"Honestly, I kept dancing," she said as she explained how she kept awake. She also had the support from her friends and family to keep her in spirit. Her favorite part of THON was Family Hour. Family Hour is where all of the Four Diamond Fund families get on stage to thank everyone and to tell their stories of how the Fund has been such a big help to them and to remember former children of the fund that are no longer with us. It was a wonderful experience for Thomas and even though she won't be back to dance, she'll always be involved with THON and will make the trip down to University Park every time.

Behrend students register to vote, get more involved in politics

By Marcus Yeagley
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Students around campus are getting more involved with the political process due to a number of factors surrounding the 2008 presidential race.

Spurred by either the resonating speeches of "Change" by Democratic presidential candidate Senator Barack Obama, the off-center but significant calls for a smaller government by the Republican Representative Ron Paul, or the inherent excitement surrounding this primary season, a greater number of college students are getting involved earlier in the political process.

Considering that the primary season has been extended farther out than years past due to closer-than-average contests for the political party nominations, the sheer amount of exposure that Obama, Senator Hillary Clinton, Senator John McCain, and

until very recently, Governor Mike Huckabee, has given students who would normally only glance it over with glazed eyes something of depth to grapple and take hold of.

Voter registration drives around campus are not surprising and are expected, but the numbers of people registering at the College Democrats table is up from previous years.

"For the first time since the 1984 presidential race, the Pennsylvania Democratic primary may matter depending on what happens March fourth," said Cathryn Buonocore, Vice President of the College Democrats. "People might feel more inclined to register because they feel that Pennsylvania may actually make a difference."

The College Democrats are a partisan group in full support of Obama. They decided on their allegiance when it became apparent that all of its members supported the Illinois Congressman. The group

intends to maintain the voter registration desk until March 24, the cutoff date for voters wishing to take part in the closed Pennsylvania primaries on April 22.

Closed primaries are ones in which only members of the Democratic and Republican parties can vote for their respective candidates. Open primaries, which so far have favored Mr. Obama and Mr. McCain, are ones that permit independent voters and even members of the opposing party to participate.

Students are not forced into signing up for the College Democrats, or even to sign up for their mailing list in order to register. That is only required if students wish to take an Obama sticker, which are of limited quantity.

The Student Government Association also held its own voter registration drive over the course of a few days last week. Hoping to pull in still apathetic

students, SGA held a raffle for a DVD player in order to encourage registration.

Looking forward to the upcoming presidential election in November, Student Affairs plans on attempted to get incoming freshmen involved in the process. They plan on making voter registration forms a part of the package students receive upon arriving at Behrend.

Small-scale posters have also been placed on bulletin boards around campus in support of Republican Ron Paul. Pamphlets about the Texas Representative and posters advertising a speaker from the John Birch Society who "will be addressing political issues rarely spoken by the 'Main Stream Media'" in his support make up the lesser known political articles around campus. It is not apparent who has put them up, whether student, faculty, or otherwise, but it shows that there is sentiment for the third place Republican.

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