

## NEWS

## National and world news in brief

By Matthew Schwabenbauer  
mjs5387@psu.edu

## White House accuses Syria of nuclear proliferation

WASHINGTON-The United States government has accused the Syrians of building a nuclear reactor for non-peaceful purposes, with aid from North Korea.

In a statement, the CIA said that Syria must admit that it has been planning secret nuclear schemes. The statement was given after members of congress were briefed on the situation.

"Until 6 September, 2007, the Syrian regime was building a covert nuclear reactor in its eastern desert capable of producing plutonium," the statement said.

The site in question was bombed by Israel last year. The White House claims that a "cover-up"

Source: BBC News

operation undertaken by the Syrians after the air strike is proof that the reactor "was not intended for peaceful activities."

Despite claiming that the US has had concern about North Korea's nuclear weapons proliferation, the White House assured that it is still devoted to the diplomacy between the United States, North Korea, South Korea, Japan, China and Russia. The six-nation diplomacy saw a landmark deal in Feb 2007 with Pyongyang.

The statement was released after a two day long meeting between US and North Korean officials on nuclear activities in Pyongyang.

Included with the briefing are pictures which US officials claim are proof that North Koreans are working at the site.

## Militant group offers truce to Hamas

GAZA-Hamas, a Palestinian militant group has offered a truce in the Gaza Strip which would last for six months. At the end of the six months, Hamas says the truce could be extended to the West Bank. The militant group stated the truce could be considered a "period of quiet."

According to former Palestinian foreign minister Mahmoud Zahar, a condition of the truce is that an Israeli blockade of Gaza.

Zahar gave the proposal to Egyptian negotiators, trusting them to pass them on to Israel.

"We can't have a period of quiet that will just be the quiet before the storm," said Israeli spokesman Mark Regev.

Israeli leaders aren't optimistic about the truce, stating they were skeptical that one would even materialize. Despite doubtfulness, Israel stated

they are prepared for a truce in Gaza, but still demands a stop to Israeli rocket attacks and the smuggling of weapons into the strip.

Initially, the proposition was announced during a meeting between Zahar and Egyptian intelligence head Omar Suleiman in Cairo. Throughout negotiations, Suleiman has served as a middleman between Hamas and Israel.

Since last year, the Rafah crossing between Gaza and Egypt has been closed since Hamas seized the strip last year, with the only breach being earlier this year when the crossing was breached by Palestinian militants.

"The truce must be mutual and simultaneous and the blockade must be lifted and the crossing points opened," said Zafah. He then added that this included the Rafah crossing.

## Sample Center hosts civility speaking contest at Smith Chapel

By Rachel Reeves  
opinion editor  
rcr5057@psu.edu

The Smith Chapel was full of students, professors and seven nervous speakers shuffling a few note cards. In a few minutes, each speaker would have five minutes to speak extemporaneously on "civility and society," and would be judged closely on how skillfully they addressed the assigned topic, and how well they used the rhetorical arts.

It was the Keep a Civil Tongue Speaking Competition, held once each semester by Professor Troester. Each CAS 100 public speaking class nominates one student to participate, and that student must deliver a five minute speech to be given extemporaneously - without notes.

The theme this semester was "civility and society," and Troester said that he tries to keep the topics broad for a reason. "This way students can take a variety of perspectives," he said.

Troester set up the competition as a place for students to refine their ideas and share them with others. He said that he always enjoys seeing what students come to support their friends. But his favorite thing, he says, is to "hear what students have to say, their takes and perspective."

The seven takes on the one prompt were varied. The first speaker, Brittany Barbato, brought the idea to a collegiate level. "The more civil the students, the more successful the society," she said. She talked about how disrespect for other student's majors is a prevalent sign of disrespect among students.

Carl Cronmiller focused on the youth in the country. "Where are we losing these children, and to what?" he asked. He talked about his own days as a youth with a parole officer, and the discovered importance of being useful to society.

Lenny Smith discussed bullying and incivility as a path to hatred and violence. Using Columbine High School and the girl who committed suicide because of abuse received over MySpace.com as examples, he said that respect - and disrespect - comes full circle.

Alex Reszkowski examined respect in the work place. "Civility in the workplace is hard to find in the fast-paced world of business," she said. She outlined three points: the importance of civility, what is required of a person to achieve civility, and how to provoke civility where you work.

Alex Zurn looked at civility's place in the global community. She said that although civility begins on a personal level, but because of today's commerce extends into one large, global community. Her points included the provisions of society, the public duty, respect, and sharing.

Samantha Yong, in regards to Earth Day on which the event was held, used pets to break down the idea. "Teaching a pet good manners is a form of respect and civility towards others." Her speech included training tips for different kinds of animals, and what a well-trained pet can add to society.

Finally, Shawn Schultz explained that the modern convenience factor makes Americans ruder than they ever have been. His prime example was the negativity in current politics, as opposed to each candidate just sticking to their own platforms.

After the students gave their speeches, the judging panel took a brief break to make their decisions. Lenny Smith took first place, and was awarded with 75 dollars to the Behrend Bookstore. Brittany Barbato took second, and Carl Cronmiller took third.

## Students wonder if housing shortage will continue

By Connor Sattely  
entertainment editor  
cis5060@psu.edu

The fall of 2007 will be remembered for long waitlists, packed residence halls and the largest freshman class Behrend has ever seen. However, as the school year draws to an end, students and administrators alike are raising questions about next year. If the trend for increased housing continues, or even stays the same, Behrend could be faced with a housing crisis that could put several students in difficult situations.

Mary-Ellen Madigan, the director of Admissions at Behrend, estimates a slightly smaller freshman class than last fall. "We did raise the admission criteria slightly," she says. "We're aiming at having around 50 students less than last year."

That estimate would still put the 2008 freshman class size at over 1000 students. Randy Geering, the director of Housing and Food Services, says that rather than being able to "add housing" immediately, it would take time for Behrend to react to spikes in housing numbers.

"It's part of an ebb and flow," Geering explains. "Even a few years ago, we were having spaces open until the end of the year; once, until move-in day."

If the campus were going to add hous-

ing on campus, they would likely resort to plans for Tripp Residence Hall. The building was drawn up to be built next to Ohio, but the plans for the building lost funding and was never completed. The problem with building the Residence Hall, explains Student Affairs director Ken Miller, is that it will involve a long process to attain funding.

"If we got funding tomorrow, it could be done as soon as three years," Miller says.

Both Geering and Miller put an estimate for Tripp, if it were to be approved, funded, and built, at a minimum of three years. In the meantime, new students will have to turn to a combination of the current on-campus housing and off-campus options.

University Gates Apartments will be offering 144 new beds for this fall's Behrend students. However, as manager, David Hart explains, this is only phase two of a three-part plan to expand. Hart guesses that the third phase of the expansion project could be completed by fall 2009.

"We'd have anywhere between two to three buildings," he says. "Each building having about 47 beds." The living quarters in University Gates, each a four-bedroom two-bathroom apartment, are also feeling the squeeze from Behrend's housing situation. "Even now, we have

waiting lists too, of about 20 full groups of people looking for space to live."

But Behrend and University Gates, Hart insists, co-exist. With the increased demand for housing, the apartment complex's long-term plan is to continue expanding based on housing needs of the campus.

Scott Enterprises, the company which owns the Days Inn, says that they will continue to offer space for students in the local hotel, around a ten minute drive from the campus. While it will be treated as off-campus housing, rather than an extension of the campus, organizers are optimistic that the offer will continue if demand stays this high.

Madigan says that it will be hard to predict whether students will continue to apply to Behrend at their current rate. She cited declining high school graduation but increasing interest in the school. "We had a greater percentage of our incoming class choose Behrend as their first choice over University Park," she said.

Having too many students is a problem that the directors at Behrend don't seem to mind having to deal with. As interest in Penn State Behrend grows, the school will be able to raise the overall quality of students admitted to the campus. Where those students will live, unfortunately, is still up in the air.

## Group advocates student weapons on campus

Continued from page 1.

Currently, nine states are considering enacting laws which would allow students to carry firearms on campus. Many states have blocked such legislation.

At Behrend, many oppose the idea of allowing students to be armed.

"It is a very bad idea," said Dr. Allison Perlman, a visual studies professor. "The second amendment was created at a different political moment than the current one. People misuse the second amendment; arming students would only create more Virginia Techs."

"Are you serious?" said Mike Foerstner, a freshman engineering major. "Look at Virginia Tech, that kid had a

gun and he went hog wild!"

"College kids get drunk a lot, and I've seen some do some pretty stupid things," said Stefan Switzer, a freshman business major. "If you mix guns with drunk kids, bad things will happen."

Students for Concealed Carry on Campus have established a website with information about their organization at [www.concealedcampus.com](http://www.concealedcampus.com). They also have a group on Facebook, a social networking website. The organization stresses the fact that they don't condone all college students to be armed, just those which already are licensed to carry firearms and are 21 or older. Later this month, the group plans to have a protest

where students who condone the right to carry firearms on campus will wear empty holsters. "They are begging for trouble," said Matt Kirkpatrick, a freshman Plastics Engineering major. "Shootings on college campuses aren't a joke, they are basically slapping the families of school shooting victims right in the face."

There have been a dozen shootings at college campuses, starting with the Texas Tower shootings at the University of Texas in 1966 which left 17 dead. The deadliest campus shooting was the Virginia Tech massacre in 2007 when gunman Seung-Hui Cho killed 32 students and then himself.

## Republican students upset over lack of representation

By Angelica Stoltzfus  
staff writer  
ans5154@psu.edu

Only seven more months remain before the elections for the next president begin. Recently, Behrend was launched into the political spotlight with visits from Bill Clinton and Sen. Barack Obama (D-IL).

However, many students, namely Republicans on campus, have been feeling quite left out of these exciting new political developments. Freshman Jess Rizzili said, "There should be an equal representation of Republicans and Democrats so students can feel secure in their decisions come election time." Many student Republicans like Rizzili felt excluded from the publicity going on these past couple weeks.

Although no representative of the Republican party came to Behrend, certain students still believe John McCain will be the next president. Chantell

Davis said, "The Democrats may have a hard time winning the election because the race is so intense between Obama and Clinton; it seems that there will be a deep division in the Democratic votes." Davis was also quite disappointed that there was no representative for McCain but acknowledged the fact that Pennsylvania typically leans more democratic and it would probably be "a waste of time for a Republican to speak at such a small campus."

Yet another registered Republican, Brittney Sexton, said that she planned on "researching more in depth about the topics each candidate had laid on the table." Sexton although quite bothered by the lack of representation of the Republicans did not feel threatened by the Obama and Clinton's appearances. "I did not even hear about their arrival," Sexton admitted, "before it was too late to even consider attending their campaigns."

The issues Obama addressed to the

Behrend students were according to one student, Joshua Epps, extraneous and inconsequential to college students. Epps did say that Obama proposed interesting solutions to financing college tuition. "Obama," Epps said, "desires to give 4,000 dollars to students who devote a certain amount of time into community service projects." Epps did say that he was unsure of his decision for president.

"I would rather select the most appropriate candidate who would focus all their time and energy on rebuilding our country's economic stability and strategizing to end the war in Iraq in an appropriate manner."

On Friday, April 25 in Reed 114, these students dissatisfaction of representation will be put at ease with the arrival of Phil English, U.S. Congress and Republican representative. "Hopefully the advertisement and excitement will be just as prominent as it was for Obama and Clinton," Davis declared.

Want to write for *The Behrend Beacon* next semester?

E-mail Rachel Reeves at:  
[rcr5057@psu.edu](mailto:rcr5057@psu.edu)

## Quotes on Civility

"Man's capacity for justice makes democracy possible, but man's inclination to injustice makes democracy necessary."

— Reinhold Niebuhr,  
American theologian (1892-1971)

Janet Neff Sample Center  
for Manners & Civility

