

# NEWS

## The medical minute: mono

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**Q:** My college roommate (and best friend) just got diagnosed with mono. I asked him to go home until he got better because I don't want to catch it, but he refused because he didn't want to miss too much school. He thinks I'm being stupid and says I can't get it because it's spread by "kissing." What is mono and how is it spread? Can I get it by sharing an apartment with a person who has it? How is it treated, how long is it contagious, and when will my roommate be better?

**A:** Mononucleosis, commonly referred to as the "kissing disease," is most often observed in adolescents and young adults. Typical symptoms include fever, sore throat, muscle pain, and severe fatigue with patients often sleeping for up to twelve hours per day. Additional symptoms may include an enlarged spleen, depression, weight loss, and weakness.

This infection is usually spread to unaffected individuals via saliva during such activities as kissing, sharing drinks, or using the same eating utensils. In fact, more than 90 percent of infections occur as a result of sharing saliva, although the disease can also be spread through blood. It should be noted, however, that mononucleosis can not be spread through the air, and thus an unaffected individual will not contract the infection by simply

sharing an apartment with an infected patient. Mononucleosis is caused by the Epstein-Barr virus, a member of the herpes virus family, which infects a type of lymphocyte called B-cells. Lymphocytes are cells in your blood that work as part of the immune system and try to prevent infection by invading organisms like bacteria and viruses. Thus, after a person is infected with the Epstein-Barr virus the number of one type of lymphocyte in their blood increases, hence the name "mononucleosis". Mononucleosis is mostly contagious during its incubation period, which lasts 10-60 days in an affected individual, but may also be spread several months after the affected individual displays the full symptoms of the disease. Although the virus will forever be present within the body of an individual with the disease, the most severe symptoms of the infection will last 2-4 weeks, and more mild effects of the virus can continue for several months. Once these initial symptoms occur, the individual will never show the signs of the disease again.

This disease is self-limiting, meaning it will go away on its own. Thus, the most common treatments only alleviate the symptoms of the disease and don't attack the virus itself. Plenty of rest is in order during the height of the infection, and some anti-inflammatory drugs can be used to reduce the fever and sore throat. The best way to prevent the spread of this ailment is to frequently wash hands, avoid sharing drinks or eating utensils, and refrain from kissing an affected individual.

## New SGA officers ready to take over

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to University Park about once a month. The UFS will make decisions about the University and where it will go as a whole. They return and report to the Behrend SGA on what the UFS is doing. She says that communication will be her strength. "I learned a lot from Dan Frankel, last year's representative," says Wagner. "I look forward to making communication between us and University Park even better."

Elected to Senator positions were freshmen Nate Boring, Matthew Foulk and Merve Senguler, sophomore Sara Green, juniors Lacey Shaffer and Lauren Brake, and senior James Wolfe. The Senator position entails attending every SGA meeting, sitting on at least two councils or committees, and holding at least two office hours per week.

Wolfe, who will be in his fifth year at Behrend this fall, says that he is excited to be an active senator on the SGA next year. An aerospace engineering major, Wolfe says that he spent time walking around campus, especially Bruno's Café and the Reed Union Building, to educate people about what SGA does. "Being able to help with issues as they come along is what I love to do," Wolfe says. "Being able to give back to the campus, that's my inspiration."

Foulk, who also attained a senator position, looks forward most to continue what has already begun. "I'm really excited about being able to help the SAFF get set up," he says. "Once it gets approved, that will be an awesome way to improve our campus," he says.

## Students spend time cleaning up Erie

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and with donations." Carney was impressed with the turnout of college students at the cleanup and expressed his hope that they would continue to take an interest in the community.

"It's pretty special that these kids woke up so early on a Saturday morning to come out here and clean up with us," Carney said. "Hopefully, they'll feel good about what they're doing and continue to show up for more volunteer work."

Behrend student Ryan Smosna said that he was proud of what he was doing and would consider doing more in the future to enhance Erie's image.

"I'm not originally from here, but I've really come to like the city throughout my college career," Smosna said. "I might end up getting a job here and living here for a long time, so I could see myself doing something like this again."

"It definitely helps a lot that it's a nice day today, probably the warmest it's been so far this year, and everyone seems to be in a good mood and they look like they actually enjoy what they're doing, and that's odd because people usually aren't smiling when they're using a paint roller."

Forty-eight year-old construction worker Kirk Douglas walked past Smosna and a number of other Behrend students while they were painting over a tag and encouraged them by saying, "Looking good, guys."

Douglas was impressed when the students revealed that they weren't doing forced community service and were in fact volunteers.

"That's just great, because I drive or walk past here pretty much every day and see these paintings that make everything look bad," Douglas said. "It's nice to see these young kids out here helping out."

Hovis Auto Truck and Supply owner Phil Barnes was impressed with the turnout and acknowledged that graffiti was becoming a growing problem in Erie.

"I think it's always been a problem," Barnes said. "It's not so expensive for us because we have our own paint and can cover it up ourselves, but I can see how

it could be costly for homeowners."

Erie City Councilwoman and graffiti task force member Jessica Horan-Kunco was happy with the cleanup's turnout.

"I've been fighting graffiti for a long time," Horan-Kunco said. "So [it's nice now to have the task force and to have all of these people come out to clean up Erie]. It's something we need to do, and I've been saying for a long time that we need to get more people involved."

She stressed that even though she appreciated everyone's participation in the initial cleanup, she hoped that they would not have to continue.

"Once we clean up this existing graffiti, we need to find out who was responsible for them and they must be held accountable," Horan-Kunco said. "It's great to have people helping, and this is the first step, but we need to eliminate the problem altogether."

With so many taking an interest, it seems not just plausible, but very likely that the problem will be eliminated, or at the very least significantly downsized.

**"It's pretty special that these kids woke up so early on a Saturday morning to come out here and clean up with us."**  
- Tom Carney  
Erie County District Judge

## Rally helps breaks down stereotypes

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stereotypes, even "good" stereotypes are, in fact, hurtful.

After speaking for 45 minutes, she played songs off her album that dealt with her spin on diversity and hope. "All we have to do is surf the Internet, watch the news or look down the road to see diversity and that we need to get along with people different than us," she said.

Kevin Locke, world famous hoop dancer, was the last person to perform outside of Bruno's. Locke

has been a part of many performing arts programs and festivals such as this one. During his speeches, Locke spoke about the importance of understanding humanity. His concept was "to celebrate oneness of humanity and have a greater awareness of the nobility of the human spirit," he said.

Locke has done many local recent shows, including areas such as Jamestown, Olean and Rochester, NY and has also played north in Boston and New Hampshire.

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