

NEWS

Behrend blacked out...again

By Lenny Smith
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A power outage left Penn State Behrend in the dark for the second time in three weeks after high winds took down two electricity poles on Dec. 3.

At approximately 1:40 p.m. students were surprised when dorm rooms, classrooms and cafeterias went black. This most recent power outage again forced campus administrators to cancel classes. The PSUTXT system alerted students at 2:25 p.m., informing them that classes would be canceled until 6 p.m.

As with the power outage on Nov. 13, Penelec's estimate as to when the power would be restored was incorrect and a new message was sent to students. This message said that campus was closed for the rest of the day, but would reopen again on Dec. 4.

Although most students enjoyed their day off on Nov. 13, this time it was different. As dusk quickly came over the campus, students realized that they were forced to sit in their black rooms.

"When the power went out I decided it would be a good time to take a nap," sophomore Michael Buesink said. "But then when I woke up it was terrible because my whole apartment was dark and I couldn't see anything."

Buesink, who lives at University Gates, decided to leave U Gates and go to a friend's house that had electricity.

Students found it particularly annoying that they could not even make use of their time to study.

"It was ridiculous," sophomore Kim Maier said. "I had to go to Starbucks so I had the Internet so I could study for my exam that was scheduled for 8 a.m. on Tuesday."

More than academics were affected during the black out. The Behrend men's basketball team was forced to practice in the dark.

Senior Dan Zeigler said, "We had to practice in the Junker [Center] which was only lit by the emergency lights." The Lions generally only have two days between games, so a day off was out of the question. "Coach wanted us to run a little bit and we went over some plays for our game against Hilbert," Zeigler said.

The power was restored to campus at about 8:40 p.m., seven hours later. Maier thinks it took way too long. "There is no reason why it should have taken seven hours to get the power back," she said.

"Penelec officials were immediately called," Director of Operations John Ream said. "They really responded. They needed to install two new poles and move the wires from the old to the new poles."

"It takes time and the weather conditions made it longer," Ream said. "They could only keep someone in the bucket for so long."

Two extended power outages in less than a month worry both students and administrators. Behrend is powered by a single electrical feed, so when that feed is interrupted, the campus is left without power.

"We've had discussions with Penelec to see if it is possible for them to provide another feed that we could switch over to while the primary feed is being repaired," Ream said. "[However] it would require the installation of new lines."

Ream said that this is revisited every time there is a power outage. "Penelec has no good solution," he said.

President Clinton speaks in Erie Hall

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He said that she believes to create more jobs in this country, we need to focus more on going green. He said her plan includes the increasing the amount of solar and wind energy, and make buildings greener because these are jobs you cannot outsource.

"The second reason you should vote for her is because she is the only candidate that will give you a plan that will provide affordable health that will cover every single, solitary American," President Clinton said.

As he asked the crowd to raise their hands if they knew someone without health insurance the majority of the crowd did so. "This is no wealthy nation on Earth where you would get that response," he said. "This is no other wealthy country where this question would be asked because everybody else has a system to cover everyone and that enables them to save money."

Under Sen. Clinton's plan, the former President said, Americans would have the opportunity to buy into the same plan that ensures employees of the federal government and members of Congress.

"If it's good enough for our family, you should have access to it," he said.

President Clinton's third pitch for his wife was on college affordability. "She is the only candidate that has ever done anything to make college more affordable and her plan will enable every young American who finishes high school to get at least two years of education," he said. "And everyone that wants a four year degree to get it and that is in America's economic self interest. We have to do that."

President Clinton explained that his wife's plan would be to raise the Pell Grants every year to keep up with inflation and more than double the tuition tax credit from \$1,600 to \$3,200 per student a year. He also said, "[She will] crack down on the abuses of the private loan companies that are charging 14, 16, 18 percent. It's wrong."

"She's the only person that actually has a plan to end this home mortgage crisis," President Clinton said. Her plan, he said, is if the homeowner has been making all their payments, the homeowner can stay in the house at the same mortgage rate for the next five years.

President Clinton also touched on Sen. Clinton's plans to reform trade agreements and her plan to produce a way to pull out of the Iraq War safely.

"I would still be here, even if we had never been married," President Clinton said. "Obama is a good speaker, but Hillary has empowerment."

Behrend student travels to Africa to work at orphanages



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Amy Sahlmann poses with a group from an orphanage she volunteered at in Kenya.

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Amy Sahlmann, a junior biology major at Penn State Behrend, left on Dec. 30 for a two week journey that took her from Erie, Detroit, and Amsterdam before she finally arrived in the African country of Kenya 18 hours later.

Obsessed with living her life to the fullest, Sahlmann knew that needed to include charity work. "For a long time, I wanted to do some type of international volunteer work and then finally one day I said, 'You know what, I'm gonna do it,'" she said.

Over the last several years, Sahlmann has been diligently saving money from her paychecks, Christmas presents, and birthdays to fund the trip that cost approximately \$4,000.

To prevent spending the money, she hid all her savings in a dresser drawer.

"I was able to do it because I could physically see that the pile was growing higher and higher," she said. "I went to Wal-Mart to do a money order to send it all off and it was like sending away my baby."

After a trip to the Congo over the summer was canceled due to civil war, Sahlmann's mother, Jann Bowman said that Sahlmann would need to organize

her trip through an organization. After researching a list of volunteer organizations, she found the Global Volunteer Network. "They seemed to be the least expensive, which was definitely a factor," she said.

"I felt better than in the summer when she wanted to go to the Congo," Bowman said. "I kept getting teary eyed."

That was before Bowman finally heard about the rioting in Kenya. "We were so busy getting her ready that we didn't even know about the presidential election or anything," Bowman said. "At that point you just hope that everything you've said to them and taught them in their lives has sunk in. And that it was enough."

Upon arrival in Nairobi, Sahlmann's plans immediately changed. Originally planned to volunteer at an all-girl's orphanage near Nairobi, Political unrest after last month's presidential election forced Sahlmann and her group to move.

"When I got to Nairobi we had to wait for three hours for someone to pick us up," she said. "When I go to the airport (in Nairobi), I was freaking out because it's complete chaos over there."

Sahlmann and the rest of the volunteers were moved to the safer city of Nyeri. "At that point, five of the 10 volunteers decided they were going to go back to the States because they thought it was too unsafe."

In Nyeri, Sahlmann stayed with a host family and quickly learned their views on women are a lot different from the United States. "Women are below your animals, it was hard for me to see that. Women [in Kenya] are expected to get married, have children, and are homemakers."

When the father of the host family asked Sahlmann what she was going to school for, he could not comprehend that she wanted to go to medical school. "He kept looking at me like I was crazy," she said. The house itself was also very different. "They have a squat toilet. It's pretty much just a hole in the ground,"

she said.

To make the most out of her time with the children, Sahlmann brought a variety of items like bubbles, finger paints, coloring books, Play-Doh, and more with her.

"We played Red Rover with them, they really liked that game," she recalls. Sahlmann started every day of her two-week trip by walking to the Saint Mary's All-Boys Orphanage and worked with the children by playing games and making crafts. "We did activities like painting, coloring, Twister, and Bingo."

After her volunteer work was done for the day at St. Mary's, Sahlmann went to the New Life AIDS Orphanage for Babies to help with feedings and putting them to bed.

"I learned that I'm a lot stronger and a lot more mature than I thought I was," Sahlmann said. "I felt good that I was able to go into a situation and talk to myself and figure out the best way to get out (of a situation)."

Two days before her trip ended, that strength and maturity was put to a test when she found herself in the middle of a riot.

"I didn't think that I would have that much of an impact," she said. "But to just hold their hands and telling them I loved them, they've never heard those words before." "I've learned so much about the world," Sahlmann shared. "In America, we take so much for granted."

The one-time fee associated with joining the Global Volunteer Network will give Sahlmann a five-year membership that will allow her to continue her humanitarian work in the future. "As soon as this semester ends, I want to go back," she said.

Sahlmann plans on returning to Nyeri again. "I figured if I keep going back to this one place I could make the most impact," she said. "This is definitely not a one time thing."

After medical school, Sahlmann already has thoughts on moving to a Third World country and possibly opening up a clinic.

Kennedy rallies at Behrend

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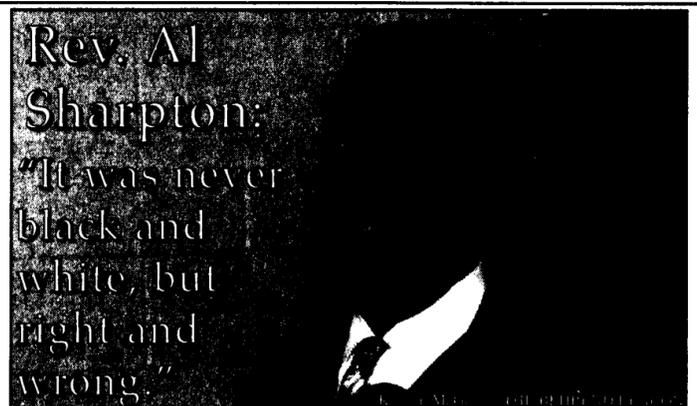
to voting against going to war in Iraq when the target should have been going to war in Afghanistan and going after Osama bin Laden.

We heard that voice that came from Chicago, Illinois."

"We have Barack's opponent talking about elitism and I look out there and I see a Barack Obama that grew up under a single mom," Kennedy said. "A Barack

Obama that lived on food stamps, a Barack Obama that just paid off his student loan. We have enough political theater in this country; we need to talk about things that matter."

"This is a person that is going to bring a new kind of leadership," he said. "This is person that is going to turn the page. This is choice, my friends, between the past and the future and the person that represents the future is Barack Obama."



By Scott Muska
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According to Reverend Al Sharpton, who spoke at Erie Hall on the evening of Thursday, Jan. 24, there has been a great deal of progress made towards the goals of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. since his death nearly 40 years ago.

"Just to make progress," he said, "Was not the point. The point was to reach a society of equality, and the issue was not to do better, but to do right."

Sharpton has made these points his life's goal and work.

He was brought to Erie as part of "His Voice, Our Choice," Behrend's 2008 celebration of Dr. King's legacy.

Sharpton urged his audience to remember King and the other civil rights activists that paved the way towards the progress of the present.

"Progress was indeed made," he said. "But let us remember the prices that were paid for that progress. Many of us are impressed with the results and scorn those that paid the price."

He spoke of the amount of people that admire Condoleezza Rice, but reminded the audience that without a Rosa Parks, there would be no Rice.

"Sometimes, people are more impressed with the fruit than the root," Sharpton said.

"It's not that we didn't have the blacks of qualification," he said of the past. "It's just that their qualifications weren't

considered."

Sharpton stated his displeasure to the war, and said that he couldn't understand how the government can afford to spend \$6 billion a month in Iraq but doesn't have the monetary funds to computerize schools in Erie.

He also spoke of his displeasure with those who are disadvantaged and treated as so, and made it clear that his qualms along with those of Dr. King's were not as race-fueled as many often assume, and said, "It was never black and white, but right and wrong."

Sharpton fended off questions about who he will endorse in the upcoming election in his pre-speech press conference by saying, "I haven't pronounced my endorsement for anybody yet. I'm going to hold onto my vote."

He went on to say that he might endorse somebody a little later on, and during his speech further elaborated that he would remain neutral "So that I can challenge all of the candidates on civil rights issues."

Earl Bass, Sharpton's nephew who introduced him to the audience, referred to his uncle as "strong-minded, strong-willed and set in his beliefs."

These beliefs, according to Sharpton, are to expose injustices and attempt to do something about them, and to make the world and continue the progress that Dr. King helped to begin.

Quotes on Civility

"Never befriend the oppressed unless you are prepared to take on the oppressor."

— Ogden Nash,
American poet
(1902-1971)

Janet Neff Sample Center
for Manners & Civility

