

PERSPECTIVES

THE BEHREND BEACON

FOUNDED IN 1948

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Letters should be limited to 350 words and commentaries should be limited to 700 words. The more concise the submission, the less we will be forced to edit it for space concerns and the more likely we are to run it.

The Beacon does not publish anonymous letters. Please include your major, faculty, or administration position and semester standing. Deadline for any submission is 3 p.m. Thursday afternoon for inclusion in the Friday issue.

The Behrend Beacon reserves the right to edit any submissions prior to publication.

Please keep complaints as specific as possible.

Email submissions to rcr5057@psu.edu or drop them off at the Beacon office.

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Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

Beacon Thumbs Up



- Syllabus day
- Street signs
- Reacquainting with old friends
- The new school year

Beacon Thumbs Down



- Working all day and all night
- 8 a.m. classes
- Traffic on College Dr.
- The new school year

This week in politics

By Christopher Brown
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This week the Democratic National Convention kicked off and ended, book-ended with Michelle Obama's address on its opening night and concluded last night with Barack Obama's acceptance of the Democratic nomination in front of over 75,000 people at Mile High Stadium in Denver. The convention has had its highs and lows, but overall I think it was a success.

Michelle Obama's opening speech served as an introduction of the Obama family to the rest of the country. She highlighted their struggles, their triumphs, and their character by telling personal anecdotes. She described Barack driving her and their new-born daughter "home from the hospital ten years ago this summer, inching along at a snail's pace, peering anxiously at us in the rearview mirror, feeling the whole weight of her future in his hands, determined to give her everything he'd struggled so hard for himself, determined to give her what he never had: the affirming embrace of a father's love."

The first night was emotional. Michelle's speech, combined with Sen. Ted Kennedy's appearance only months after being diagnosed with brain cancer and his promise to be at Obama's inauguration in January, left few dry eyes in the convention center and perhaps the country. Democratic strategist and former advisor to President Bill Clinton, James Carville, thought that the first night was a waste since neither John McCain, Republican Presidential Candidate, nor George W. Bush were mentioned by name.

I disagree. Michelle did what she needed to do. The Presidential Election is as much about who can connect with voters, than who has the better plan or policies to lead this country forward. I wish it were different, but that is the way it is. It made perfect sense then to start out the convention as an introduction to the Obamas, even more given McCain and Republican efforts to paint the Obamas as un-American.

After Tuesday and Wednesday I think the convention and Democrats everywhere let out one giant sigh of relief. There was plenty of worry about how the Clintons, Hillary and Bill, would speak and treat the convention. Would they be lukewarm? Enthusiastic? Would they speak more about their accomplishments than Obama's?

Hillary made it clear that this election is bigger than her alone; it's about the movement and the future of this country. "Were you in this campaign just for me?" Hillary asked her supporters. I believe that it is not only selfish, but stupid for Hillary supporters to vote for John McCain or sit out this election. They share no similar convictions on policy or the state of the country, he has voted against women's rights, and in his comments about his wife and joking about Chelsea Clinton during the 1990's he has shown a disdain and disrespect towards women.

I think it is fair to say that the convention didn't truly get started until Thursday night. On Thursday, Democrats finally started making the case against John McCain and for Barack Obama. I was astonished by the vitality and energy exhibited by the usually subdued Sen. John Kerry ("Let me tell you, before he ever debates Barack

Obama, John McCain should finish the debate with himself"), VP candidate Joe Biden ("...when John McCain proposes \$200 million in new taxes for corporate America. \$1 billion alone for the largest companies in the nation -- but no, none, no relief for 100 million American families, that's not change. That's more of the same"), and Bill Clinton ("Barack Obama is ready to honor the oath, to preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States. Barack Obama is ready to be President of the United States").

Bill Clinton is one of the Democratic Party's greatest assets in this election and he showed why on Thursday night. Many people look back longingly to the peace and prosperity that occurred during his presidency. And no one can speak with more authority than Bill on how bad the last eight years have been for the country compared to the 1990s. He made a good case for Barack.

There was a real chance that Obama would be overshadowed by the Clintons during this convention. But I think a balance was struck and their message was delivered: John McCain today is not the John McCain of 2000, a McCain Presidency would look awfully similar to the last 8 years, and Barack Obama is ready to lead. Now they just have to make it stick.

If one thing can be said about the convention it was high on emotion and personal stories. It will be interesting to see how the Republican convention contrasts. I find it hard to believe that they will be able to make the same attacks on Obama stick after the DNC convention, which they tried to use before.

It's always different the second time around.

By Jennifer Juncosa
perspectives editor
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Coming to Erie for my sophomore year was extremely different than when I came to Erie as a freshman. As a freshman, I was nervous and excited. The first time I saw Behrend it was freshman move-in day last year. I had chosen the school based on what my friend in Rochester told me. She was right, the campus was gorgeous.

I was in the car with my parents freshman year and I was so excited I couldn't sit still. I was moving from the left side of the car to the right like a little kid. I had no idea what my dorm looked like or where it was. When I pulled up and I walked in, I fell in love instantly. It was a lot like that this year. I wasn't going side to side in the car but I was excited to see my dorm building. It was love at first sight when I walked into Ohio Hall. Gladly, my room was a lot bigger than last year. It was like walking into a hotel

Sophomore year is better than last year; it's only been the first week. It's not just because I have a huge bathroom.

room. Don't even get me started on my bathroom...it's huge.

Moving in was a little different. Behrend is really good about making it easy for freshman, they had all my stuff by my door before I even had my key. This year I was on my own except for the dollies by the door to help the moving process. My mom jumped at the opportunity to make my bed like she did freshman year and she even hung up my clothes. This year my parents didn't take me grocery shopping but gave me some money. They didn't stay as long as they did the last year but this year I pretty much knew how things would go.

It was nice to walk the campus again without the fear of not knowing where I was going. I knew where I liked to get dinner, I knew where it was quiet to study, and I knew where to go if I had the opportunity to get off campus. One thing I did miss about my freshman year was the exploring, because after one year you

It was nice to walk the campus again without the fear of not knowing where I was going.

pretty much have seen everything on campus. But it was still nice to just walk around and run into old friends and talk about our summers and laugh about what happened the year before.

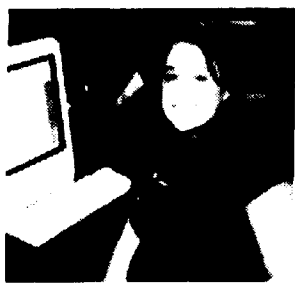
The only downside to this year was the feeling I had of being totally unprepared. Last year my parents just bought my books at the bookstore. But as most of us learned, it's not the cheapest way to go. So to save some money I had to go find my books cheap online. I have about six books out of ten that I need and it's the end of the first week. I wasn't so lucky this year, the first day wasn't only about going over the syllabus, and I had real assignments in books I didn't have yet.

A lot happens in one year. I know how to handle college now. Academics should be a little harder and socially it should be easier. Freshman year was fun, exciting, and new but sophomore year is slightly more relaxing, familiar, and comfortable. It's definitely better than last year and it's only been the first week. It's not just because I have a huge bathroom.

Meet the editors



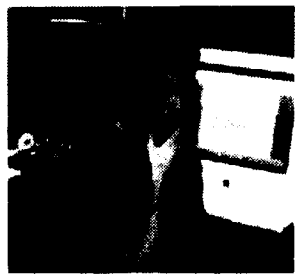
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She should never have three cups of coffee.



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She leaves early to watch Grey's at nine.



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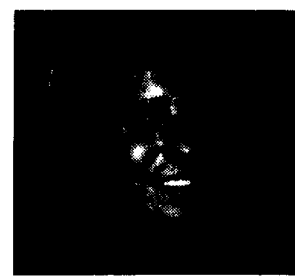
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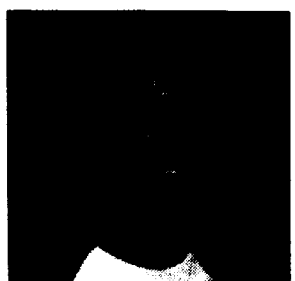
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Both of her pinkies are crooked.



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He is a Republican...enough said.



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He can say anything and get away with it.



Marcus Yeagley
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Communications major
Has nothing to add here.



Chris LaFuria
Last year's editor-in-chief
Communications major
He doesn't work here anymore.

In my opinion:

The world needs to take more deep breaths. It's pretty much the end of the first week and most of us are already feeling the stress. Breathe! It'll help.

Have an opinion? e-mail jdj5061@psu.edu