

NEWS

Weekly Weather

Monday: Few showers. High 62/Low 49. Chance of Precipitation 30%.

Tuesday: Mostly sunny. High 63/Low 45. Chance of precipitation 20%.

Wednesday: Mostly sunny. High 64/Low 50. Chance of precipitation 20%.

Thursday: Showers. High 65/Low 55. Chance of precipitation 40%.

Source: weather.com

The Behrend Beacon is constantly searching for innovative writers. If you are interested, contact Rachel Reeves at rcr5057@psu.edu.

THON fundraising kicks off at Behrend

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This week marks the opening of this year's Penn State's University fund raising drive known as THON. The first official day for Behrend to raise money for THON was Wednesday, October 1. Students can raise money until February 20th.

Last year, Penn State as a whole raised well over \$6.6 million for juvenile cancer research and care, making it the largest student-run philanthropy in the world. The Behrend campus raised \$18,015, setting a new personal record.

"This year," Molly Thomas, co-chair of Behrend's THON, said "we hope to raise at least \$30,000"

To achieve this ambitious goal, THON has many events planned for the student at Behrend. On Friday, October 2, THON will kick off with a walk around campus Friday. The walk will begin at the Lion Shrine at 3:45 p.m. and end in the Junker Center. Participants will be treated to free food at the end of the walk. There will be prizes for those who raised the most money and all donations are welcome.

The following Friday, October 10, THON is hosting a bowling night at Eastland Lanes on McClelland Avenue. Cost per student is \$8, a portion of which will be donated to THON. Bowling opens at 7 p.m.

Following the Bowling event is THON's first canning drive. Behrend's THON organization will have representatives around Erie taking canned donations. "We will be on Peach Street and in front of Giant Eagle on Buffalo Road and K Mart on Grandview Boulevard," Thomas said.

The event that truly defines THON is the 24-hour dance marathon. This year it will be held in Erie hall on November 1 and run into November 2. There are meetings on Mondays in Reed 113 at 7 p.m. for anyone who is interested in participating in an event or just getting more information.

Organizations are also encouraged to participate. Any group interested in raising money together can contact either Thomas or her co-chair Linh Nguyen at mbt5012@psu.edu and lmn5024@psu.edu respectively.

Each Commonwealth THON, including Behrend, organization gives its raised money to the THON group at the University Park campus.

THON's mission is to "Conquer Pediatric Cancer" and provide "Outstanding emotional and financial support to the children, families, researchers, and staff of The Four Diamonds Fund." According to their website,

The first year, THON donated over

\$2000 to the Butler County Association of Retarded Citizens.

In 1978, THON donated its proceeds to a recently-founded group called The Four Diamonds Fund.

Just before the 1979 dance, the partnership between THON and The Four Diamonds Fund was made permanent.

The Fund, based in Hershey, PA, is a charity whose mission is to assist families suffering from the trauma of childhood cancer.

They specifically help with offsetting "the cost of treatment that insurance does not cover, as well as expenses that may disrupt the welfare of the child, such as car repairs, rent, or household utilities," their website reads. The fund also supports the medical team that cares for the children and funds pediatric cancer research through start-up grants and the Four Diamonds Pediatric Cancer Research Institute."

According to the fund website "The Fund has helped over 2,000 families since 1972. Approximately 90 new families receive support each year." and over 90% of the money raised by THON goes directly to families in need.

Total fund raising has gone up by staggering amounts every year, passing milestone after milestone.

THON broke the six-figure mark with \$131,000 in 1983. Just nine years later, THON broke \$1 million to thunderous applause.

"THON is changing the lives of students and children, reinforcing the importance of caring for one another, and inspiring the determination needed to beat cancer," continues the website.

"THON is a year-long event. THON is soliciting. THON is canning. THON is people. THON is dancing. THON is pain. THON is the children. Most of all, though, THON is seeing real heroes." Greg Tallman, overall Chairperson for 2008 said on THON's website.

The history of THON, according to its website, is a colorful one. It was founded by the Interfraternity Council as a dance marathon competition in 1973. It used money raised as prizes for dancers and to give to a charity of the year.

Greek societies have played an important role in THON since they first founded it, and to this day, fraternities and sororities have been major sources of independent fund raisers and major contributors to the dance every year, regularly raising the most money.

Since its inception in 1973, THON has donated over \$46 million, and plans to add to that amount again this year.

Behrend's THON program is much younger, having been paired up with its first Four Diamonds Family in November 2007. It is a growing force for Charity in the commonwealth.

What is THON?

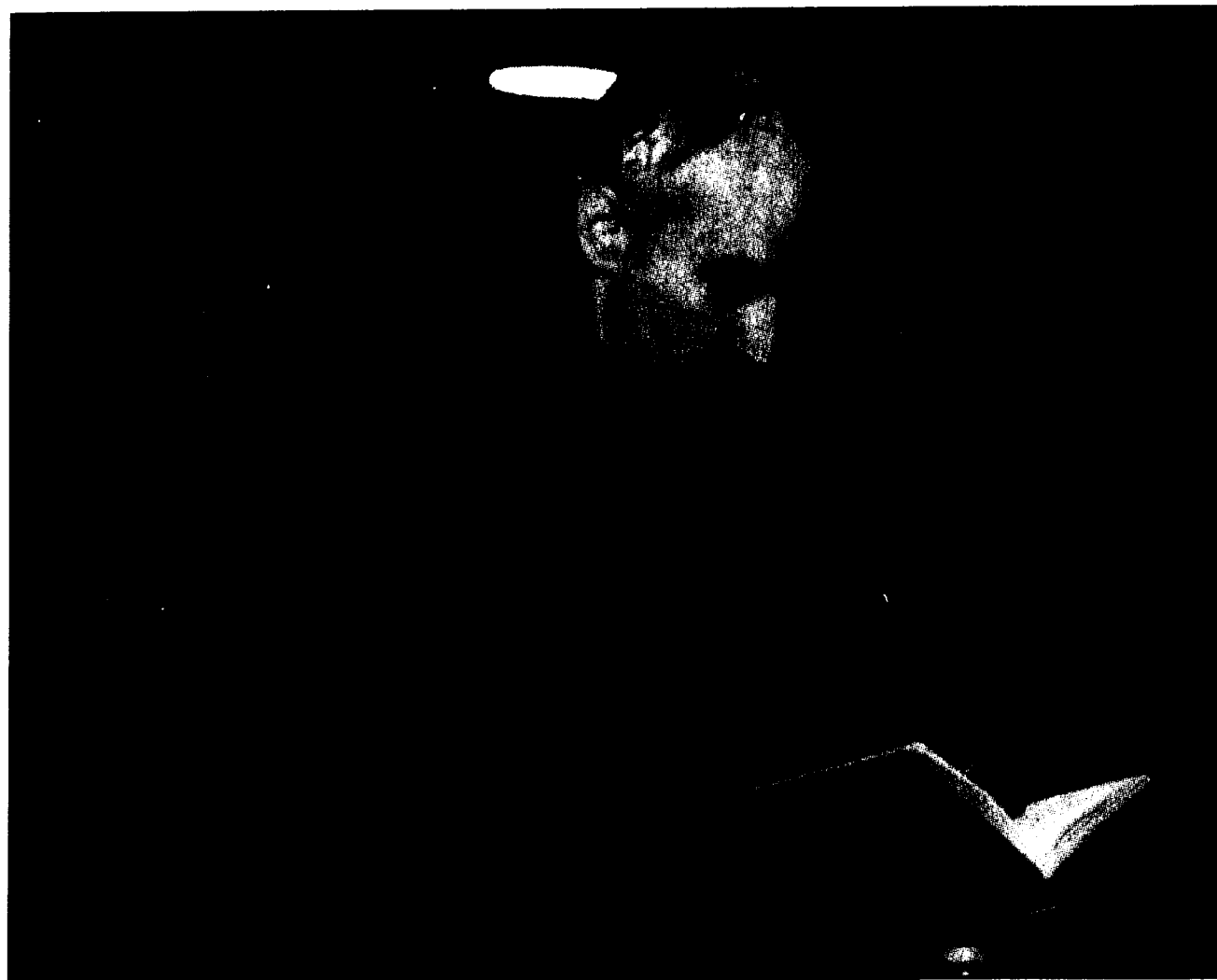
Important Facts

- No family has ever been turned down by The Four Diamonds Fund.
- No dancer ever stands alone; organizations raise money together, morale together, and support the families together.
- THON™ is the largest student-run philanthropy in the world, through it more than \$46 million has been raised for kids with cancer.
- The Four Diamonds Fund provides money for comprehensive care of children with cancer, support for their families, and for research of pediatric cancer.
- The Four Diamonds Fund allots over 92% of the proceeds from the Dance Marathon and other fundraising efforts straight to patients and their families.
- This year there will be more than 300 organizations, 700 dancers, and 3,000 organizers participating in a two day, no-sitting, no-sleeping Dance Marathon.
- More than 2,000 families have been helped by The Four Diamonds Fund.
- THON has emerged as one of the greatest unifying factors among Penn State students, teaching that it is okay to reach a hand out and help another person.

Milestones

- 1973:** The very first Penn State Dance Marathon is held in the HUB, raising more than \$2,000 for charity.
- 1977:** THON makes its first donation to The Four Diamonds Fund. This partnership would become permanent the following year.
- 1979:** THON moves to the White Building, where it continues to grow for years.
- 1983:** The six-figure mark is passed with a fundraising total of \$131,000.
- 1992:** THON raises more than \$1 million for the first time ever.
- 1999:** THON moves again, this time to Rec Hall.
- 1999:** THON pledges \$5 million over 5 years to establish a research center at the Hershey Medical Center. This pledge would be fulfilled two years early.
- 2002:** The first THON 5K takes place, an event which has now grown to include nearly 1,700 runners.
- 2004:** THON pledges \$10 million over six years to create a new "Pediatric Cancer Pavilion" at the Penn State Children's Hospital, promising to revolutionize family-centered care for the kids of The Four Diamonds Fund.
- 2005:** THON breaks the \$4 million dollar mark, raising \$4,122,483.65 for The Four Diamonds Fund.
- 2007:** Back at it again... THON celebrated its 35th anniversary in the Bryce Jordan Center - it's new home! THON 2007 broke the \$5 million mark, raising \$5,240,385.17 for the kids.

Source: thon.org



KEEGAN MCGREGOR / The Behrend Beacon

Mark Halliday read portions of his poetry in Smith Chapel at 6 p.m. on Thursday night. It was part of Behrend's speaker series program and was received well by those in attendance.

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