

The Behrend Beacon

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Area high school music programs suffer

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Students attending East High school regularly watch cable television instead of singing during their show choir class.

Robert Ohmer, the music teacher of three years at East said that because of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) program, arts programs are struggling to remain important in the school system. Strong Vincent Music Teacher Mike Donch, blames the funding.

According to Ohmer, the problem started after the act was passed in a year when he was teaching at Strong Vincent High School with Donch. The class periods were originally set at seven periods. When the classes were cut to six a day, his student count went from 50 to 15. This resulted in his removal from Strong Vincent and transfer to East.

The reason for the steep decline in students, according to Ohmer and Donch, is the situations for the honors students. Honors students' schedules have become too full to obtain any form of an art class. Classes such as Freshman and senior seminars and extra math classes have taken precedence over electives. Donch says the only way for an honors student to get into a music class is to take a seminar or gym class over the summer. The only students left are the average grade students who, in Ohmer's experience, have the tendency to lack interest in the subject.

"This class is now a dump ground," says Ohmer in reference to his show choir class. He says that students take the class with the sole intent of getting an easy grade. "All except two people [in show choir] are incapable of doing anything." He states about the class, "If I can get them to sing middle grade songs, I'm lucky."

The lack of concern from some students, Ohmer says, is related to the family situations. He states that most students do not have adequate parental figures at home. "They come from nothing, so they don't expect to be anything," he says. "It's a good thing I love what I do. It's a crazy

See MUSIC PROGRAMS on page 6.

Ridge and Swann rally for McCain in Erie

Congressman Phil English and retired Naval Captain Jerry Coffee speak in favor of Republican candidate



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Dozens of supporters of Republican presidential candidate John McCain gathered in downtown Erie's Perry Square on Wed. The rally featured Tom Ridge (former PA Governor and 1st Secretary of Homeland Security), Phil English (U.S. House of Representatives from Pennsylvania's 3rd district), former Pittsburgh Steeler Lynn Swann, and Captain Gerald Coffee (U.S. Navy, Ret.) who spoke in favor of the Arizona Senator. The event was a rally in the truest sense, as its overall theme was to boost the morale of those already committed to McCain, in stead of potentially swaying undecided voters. A moderately diverse crowd turned out for the rally, which took place on

a crisp, cool fall morning.

"I've met John McCain before, so it will be good to see Tom Ridge," said Kate Thompson, a senior Scientific and Technical Sales major at Gannon University. "I'm excited to hear someone new." College students were notably scarce at the rally. "I came out today because I support John McCain," said Andrea Carnisella, a Junior Political Science major at Gannon. "I thought this would be a fun and interesting experience."

By 9:00 a.m., the majority of attendees had showed up to the rally, and new faces stopped appearing. The speakers had not started, despite the rally being scheduled for that time.

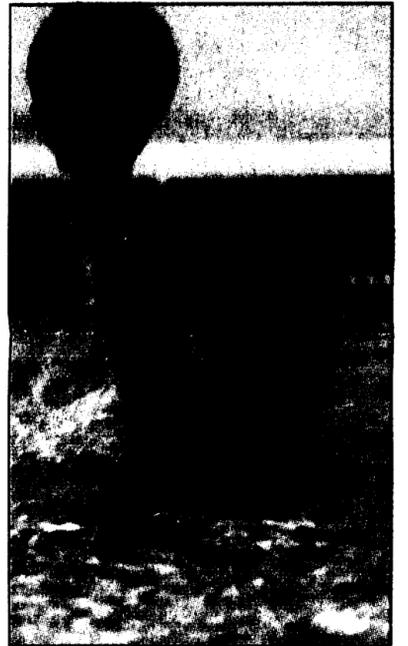
See MCCAIN RALLY on page 2.

Men's water polo team travels to California

By Tracy Banas
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Over the weekend, the Men's Water Polo Team took their yearly trip to California. Prior to the trip Coach Joe Tristan said: "Our trip to California will allow our program to play some of the best teams in the country and in Division III. If we are going to contend as a Division III power, then we need to play the powerhouses in Division III." From this, the team had focused on the trip as they packed up and started traveling to California at 12 p.m. Thursday Oct 2.

They drove to Buffalo and took a flight to California. When the team had arrived in California, many of the players were excited due to the great weather. "Nice and warm," added Freshman Driver Robby Gausman. Then the team took vans to the hotel where each player was suited with three teammates in each room.



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See WATER POLO on page 7.

Between the Buried and Me fills Forward Hall to capacity

By Matthew Schwabenbauer
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Hardcore metal act Between the Buried and Me returned to Erie for the first time in over three years on Sunday night. Touring in support of their new album, *Colors*, the act drew a crowd which filled Forward Hall to capacity.

Opening for the group were local bands Ruined and Precinct aflame. Following them was Path To Misery from Pittsburgh.

Dan Briggs, the bass player of Between the Buried and Me, is originally from Erie.

"It's great to come home and play for such a large crowd," said Briggs. "Even though it's been years since the last time we came to Erie, a lot of people still turned out to see us."

"Last time we played here, *Alaska* (the group's album before *Colors*) wasn't even out yet. We're really proud of our new album, and have gotten

good feedback about it," states Brigg.

Briggs' family also attended the performance. His father went on stage at the end of their set and gave him a hug.

The crowd was very involved in the performance, with lead vocalist Tommy Rogers frequently interacting with the audience.

Between the Buried and Me is atypical of other acts in the metal genre. Many of their songs feature melodic, soft, and jazz-esque sections which are completely different from the rest of the piece. They often switch from straightforward, aggressive heavy metal to clean guitars and singing on the drop of a dime.

The crowd attending the event was diverse, featuring people of different ages and walks of life.

See FORWARD HALL on page 6.

City ordinance jeopardizes students' off-campus housing

Erie city law requires that no more than three unrelated people live together in the same house, causing problems for some students sharing off-campus housing.

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Penn State Behrend students who live in off-campus housing may soon be running into problems with the city of Erie; that is, if they haven't already.

Most students don't know of an Erie ordinance that states that in certain areas, no more than three unrelated people can live together in a dwelling unit. Ashton Haas, and her roommates Kelly Matalka and Cara Jones, certainly did not learn about this until just recently.

They share a house with one other person on

37th St. near the Mercyhurst College campus. Recently, they received a notice from Erie zoning director, Katie Deible, saying that they had thirty days to remove one of the residents. If they did not fulfill the requirement, their landlord would be fined \$100 every day until there were only three people living in the house.

The four roommates have been living together for years without experiencing any problems, and until now have been unaware that they are living in violation of ordinance. However, Haas recently

See ERIE CITY ORDINANCE on page 3.

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Weekend Weather:

Weather.com

Friday: Mainly sunny sky. High 66F. Winds W at 5 to 10 mph. Chance of rain 10%.

Saturday: Mostly sunny. Highs in the upper 70s and lows in the mid 50s.

Sunday: Partly cloudy. Highs in the low 70s and lows in the upper 50s.

Contents

News.....1-4
Perspectives.....5
Arts.....6
Sports.....7-9
Local Dining.....10