

The Behrend Beacon

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AN EXPANDING CAMPUS

A COMPREHENSIVE LOOK AT HOW, WHY, AND WHERE BEHREND IS GROWING INTO THE NEW DECADE

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This is the first part of a four-part series examining the ways in which Behrend is growing. Throughout the rest of the year, the Beacon will examine changes on-campus from four aspects: physical expansion and renovation, admissions and personnel, technology, and academics.

It seems a foregone conclusion that Behrend has grown massively over the past decade. Freshman classes are jostling for the record of the largest at the school. Any teacher who has been part of the university for more than five years seems to have an "I remember when" story.

It is in this environment of proud, expansive growth that the modern Behrend student is assailed with statistics.

This is the first of a four-part series. For more information or to catch up on other articles, check out www.thebehrendbeacon.com.

Behrend's admissions are growing by such and such a percent, there are new buildings popping up on every corner. The Beacon, over the next four weeks, will look at how the campus is changing and how those changes will affect the average student.

The first, and perhaps most immediately noticeable change in the campus is its physical expansion and renovation for current facilities. The bookstore renovations are planned for completion this fall; construction on that has already begun, so students are aware of the changes. Many other projects, though, are flying under the radar amongst the student population.

With individual projects aside, the question asked by many Behrend students deals with the idea of the future. Where will Behrend end up? In fifty years, will the city of Erie see a campus as large as University Park?

The answer, says Associate Dean David Christiansen, is no. "Simply put," he says, "we want to be Behrend. We don't want to become University Park. We feel that we offer a high quality education here, in an intimate setting. There's no large lecture classes, and unlike at University Park, the majority of classes here are not taught by graduate students."

According to Christiansen and the Admissions Depart-

ment at Behrend, the university plans to hit a "sweet spot" of about 5,000 enrolled students, plus or minus a few hundred depending on interest from commuters and world campus students.

Physical expansion and renovation, says Christiansen, will follow enrollment. However, the prospect of a Penn State campus as large as University Park seems unlikely, even decades in the future.

So, in the meantime, Behrend will continue to renovate and improve existing facilities, and construct new buildings or wings as necessitated by the student base.

Chancellor Jack Burke, who will be entering his last year at Behrend this fall, says the time is ripe to start construction projects. "Right now, we're seeing the best bid atmosphere since the early eighties," he says.

Behrend certainly has no short list of things that it wishes to accomplish over the next decade. Projects that are set to commence and have either not received bids yet or are aiming towards construction shortly include the current renovation to the bookstore, a renovation of Dobbins Dining Hall, the new Metzgar Admissions and Alumni Center, a retrofitting of the chemistry labs in Science, and renovations to Reed.

Each item that is set to begin



The site of the Metzger Center.

construction or a bidding process must first undergo a feasibility study, which looks at a project's usefulness, cost, and likelihood of completion. Currently, Behrend is exploring the possibility of a turf soccer field and a track, which is currently in the middle of a feasibility study.

Projects that fall under "pre-feasibility" are generally ideas that are being seriously considered but not acted upon officially yet. This list includes a convenience store and a recreation center, as per the Student Facilities Fund (SFF) proposal, which was proposed to the chancellor last week. It called for feasibility studies on many different improvements to the campus, the most popular of which was a new convenience store on-campus.

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Lady Lions dominate in double-header

By Christine Newby
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The Lady Lions remain undefeated in the AMCC with a record of 5-0 as they were victorious against the Pitt-Bradford Panthers in two games on Tuesday and added wins to their overall record 11-4.

"I feel that we came out extremely strong for the game," said senior pitcher, Julie Koman. "Everyone performed very well in both offense and defense. This carried over into the second game as well. It is typically hard to come back into the second game and continue to hit and field as well as we did the first game, but we refocused and were able to do it."

In the bottom of the second inning, senior outfielder Katie Whitby singled which loaded the bases. The Lady Lions put the first points on the scoreboard when senior outfielder Allison Babish drove in a run to make the score 1-0.

Hitting proved to be contagious in the bottom of the fourth for the Behrend Lions. The team hit three consecutive singles. Whitby and Babish both reached first by bunting. Freshman third baseman Ashley Gruber hit a hard grounder up the middle into center field which drove in Whitby and moved Babish to second. Sophomore Maddie Wieser stepped to the plate and added



Contributed photo
Senior pitcher Julie Koman

two RBIs for herself as she drove in two runs to put the Lions up 7-0.

The Lady Lions defense in the top of the fifth inning made two outstanding plays. Freshman right fielder Nicole Ganster snagged a difficult catch and then threw the ball to second base for the double play. Senior catcher Lindsay Baughman made a diving catch in foul territory for the third out of the inning.

Pitt-Bradford only scored one run against the Lions which was in the top of the seventh.

Senior pitcher Julie Koman pitched a complete-game with six strikeouts and earned a 7-1 win.

"I thought the team did a great job from bouncing back with the hitting from this past weekend," said head coach Stacy Pondo. "They worked as a team both on the offense and defensive sides. As for the second game, we talked to them to make sure that they were still up for the second game and to stay focused from start to finish, and this is what they did. Our team plays best when they are relaxed."

The Behrend Lions did not hesitate to start

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Erie County to establish a community college

By Jennifer Juncosa
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County Executive Mark DiVecchio is making positive strides towards establishing a community college in the city of Erie. Through surveys, the residents of Erie County have expressed huge interest in a community college that would offer affordable educational opportunities.

The ideal range for tuition is \$2,000 to \$2,500 a year. The college would provide a place for workers to update their specific trades. It would also be a place for students to start their four-

year degrees at one-fourth or one-eighth of the cost of attending a four-year college or university. Community colleges also tend to see adult and returning students who hope to train for a new career path.

Starting up a new school is a long and complicated task. The process for establishing a community college consists of 100 one-on-one, hour-long, meetings with community leaders, and eight regional forums with community leaders, according to the director of Economic Development, Bob Spaulding in news conference in Feb.

Although the community college does not yet have a set lo-

cation, DiVecchio and others working to establish the college are expecting 700 students in the first year. The college's first year is expected to cost six million dollars. Despite the cost of running the college for a year, the tuition will be affordable for Erie residents even taking into consideration the fact that Erie has the highest poverty rate in the state of Pa. DiVecchio said that the students would pay one-third of the tuition; the state and county will pay the other two-thirds of the tuition. DiVecchio believes that an affordable education is what will help the community get a post secondary education and ultimately reduce the number of those living in poverty in Erie.

Over 2,100 Erie residents took part in the online survey to determine if a community college would be a good idea. "We have never seen such a community response, in surveying, like this," said Spaulding. Seventy-five percent of the parents that took the survey said that they would like their child to consider a community college. Two-thirds of the students that responded to the survey said that they would like to stay in Erie and go to a community college because it would be accessible and affordable.

According to Spaulding, the response from the community shows that Erie would support a community college. Only 16 percent of Erie residents have a post secondary education and the surrounding schools Gannon, Mercyhurst, Penn State Erie, The Behrend College, and

Edinboro are unaffordable to the people in Erie. According to DiVecchio, only 18 percent of Mercyhurst students are from Erie and Gannon only has 22 percent.

However, there are still some doubts floating around the community. Some concerns have been made apparent through letters to the editor in the local newspaper. The primary concern is the extra strain it would put on taxpayers, along with worries that there is no need for another college in a community with four already-established colleges and universities.

The next step for DiVecchio and those working with him to establish a community college is to send out an application in June of '09 to the state. The application is expected to prove that Erie needs the community college so that unqualified Erie residents can become contributing members of society. The application must project the first ten years of the college and show sustainability.

DiVecchio believes, that in ten years, the admissions will be 7,000 students in a degree, diploma, or certificate program. "The governor has the ultimate decision," said Spaulding. "He will support it, he will make a line in the budget for it, or he will not. It's our job to make sure the application is strong enough and contains enough information within it to sell [the college]."

Baseball team wins back-to-back games

By Shawn Annarelli
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Penn State Behrend's baseball team has comfortably coasted into conference play by sweeping their first three double header match-ups against rivals Frostburg State University, Medaille University, and, most recently, Mt. Aloysius.

Their most recent contests against Mt. Aloysius (11-10, 4-2) patted their overall record to 13-2 and continued their undefeated streak in conference play to 6-0.

The first game of the double-header against Mt. Aloysius was a battle on the mound as Mounties pitcher Chad Mattis and Lions senior Dave Koerbel matched each other pitch for pitch, stifling batters on each team. Koerbel, though, would go on to have the last laugh of the pitcher's duel as he pitched a one run complete game. He held Mt. Aloysius batters to just six hits, forced several double plays to prevent being in jams, and struck out eight batters.

The Lions got an early 1-0 lead in the second inning due to their middle infielders bats

and brawn. Short-stop junior Josh Fyffe got on base with a two out single and then stole second for the lone stolen base of the game. Second-baseman junior Ryan Liddle followed Fyffe's lead as he swung away for a two-out RBI double.

After the early lead the Lions' bats cooled off, but their pitcher just kept getting hotter. Koerbel and the Lions' defense held off the Mounties' bats for the first six innings before things turned sour in the seventh and final inning.

The Mounties' Dan Clark led off the inning with a double. The next batter attempted to bunt Clark to third, but popped out to the Lions' freshman catcher Ryan Geibel.

With one on, the Mounties' Matt Cornetti hit a game tying RBI single off of Koerbel. Koerbel responded to the comeback by picking off Cornetti on first and striking out the final Mounties' batter. He continued his individual undefeated streak and now has a 4-0 record and a miniscule 1.40 ERA.

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Friday



High: 59°F
Low: 35°F

Rain showers.

Saturday



High: 43°F
Low: 34°F

Mostly cloudy and cooler. Rain possible.

Sunday



High: 50°F
Low: 38°F

Partly cloudy.

Forecast courtesy of student meteorologist Matt Alto

Forecast continued on page 4

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