

Editorial—

“Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Collegian.”

“We think, therefore we are.” That’s easy enough. After all, Descartes never had deadlines to contend with. He was dealing with absolutes; with eternal truths. I must deal with filling space on a four page periodical, making sense when possible, and watching my grammar as well. Phase II. As editor, I not only assume responsibility for getting a paper printed, but also for the content of the paper, and its ultimate direction as well. Of these duties, direction is the most important.

The format will take time to develop, as does anything in an evolutionary sense. Yes, but the format will logically follow the plan — the ideal — of its founders. A newspaper reflects the conscience of its staff just as our actions might reveal our intentions from time to time. Sooner or later a bias is uncovered, once or twice a stand is taken.

I personally feel a newspaper should serve a purpose — a valuable purpose. If we were publishing out of service only to ourselves, I’d just as soon change the texture of the paper to something more suitable for paper airplanes. Then I’d exchange news items for little dotted lines — so everyone could make a paper airplane. But that is not our purpose — our goal. Getting back to what I said on format, I’d like to make some statements on what may appear in the paper from time to time.

First, I plan to have news covered in four dimensions; campus, local, national, and international. All four can be of interest, all four can affect us tremendously. Sports shall also have the best coverage we can offer. It is the active results of a lot of personal striving right here before us.

Second, great attention will be paid to the editorial regions this paper decides to cover. I am personally inclined to subjectivity in my writing, but I

promise a correct use of facts, and a proper circumscribing of opinion at all times. In the receiving area of this policy, all letters to the editor are welcome. The insights of a single man have often altered the lives of countless others. (Who was that Jesus guy anyway?) All letters will be welcomed.

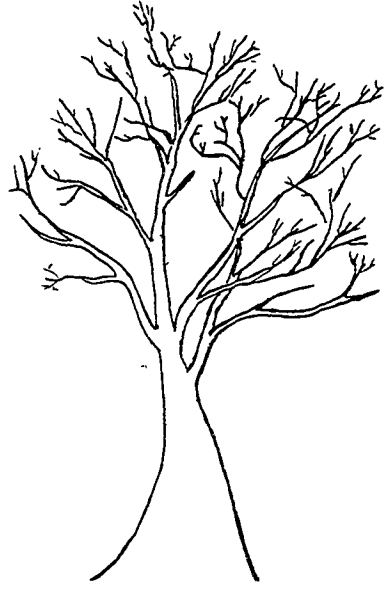
Branching out from the editorial page will be the gray area of politics. A few literary devices such as satire or irony may be employed for effect. The goal here, as with all standard news, is still truth, though it be often disguised as pun or parody. Watch the world of government. The politically aware are the politically able.

Ecology has to be next on the agenda, though a good argument can be made for its importance above and beyond the realm of politics. You can oust a politician, but you can’t elect a clean environment. Once you get over this injustice, however, you may get an inkling of how supremely important the issue of ecology is. Are your gas masks ready? Hope you like to walk to work; a lot of us will be doing just that in a few years.

Next, reviews of various sorts will be included in the paper’s new format. These criticisms make generous use of opinions, but in exercising an opinion, one may learn how to strength it.

Finally, I hope to see a proliferation of many special features. These will take the form of columns dedicated to particular interests. Right off hand, I’d like to see a column on the Erie geography, highlighting spots and activities that make a good time, but are often undiscovered by students at Behrend.

Well, that’s it. Let’s all give it a blessing, and hope it flies as high as the dreams beneath it. Perhaps it will someday emerge as something very thematic — with you, the student, as the center of its theme.



Collegian scouting new talent

Unsteady on its new wings, the Collegian welcomes all the support the student body can muster. This can come in many forms. We’d like to see feedback in the form of letters to the editor. Even greater than that (with more opportunity for expression) would be some people to volunteer for staff positions on the paper. We encourage young writers, and are willing to let them run as free as possible in the field of journalism.

Hopefully we will also establish ourselves as a fine channel for advertising, bringing in more revenue as our circulation builds up. Soon we would like to see a student classified ads section, to supplement the bulletin boards in fulfilling student needs. If a paper is read, so is its advertising.

We look forward to a successful year; success due in part to the many valuable contributions from members of the student body.

Excuse our haste: we have almost forgotten to invite the administration and faculty members to write essays or articles on any topic they feel is of some interest to our readers. No doubt a wealth of insight could be relayed through the medium of a campus newspaper.

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punishment for violators of the studded tire ban. Hell, we can’t have people breaking laws all the time just because they want to!”

“But didn’t you just say —”
“And another thing, Charles, I want a speech worked up immediately in case this raise thing backfires. Get the names of all the big guys who started the legislation. I’m gonna need lots of ammo if I’m gonna shoot at my own troops. Don’t look at me that way, Charles. A kite doesn’t fly against the wind, you know.”

I sighed again, this time in disgust. Oh well. A white van went by outside, giving the senator a start. “Whew,” he said. “I thought it was a protest sign.”
“No. It was a snow job.”

Writer, photographer meeting planned

An official meeting has been scheduled for those seriously interested in staff positions on the Behrend Collegian. The editor’s office will be open all during first and second periods on Friday, December 15. The office will be likewise open the same two periods on the following Monday, the 18th. In addition to those hours, there will be a Collegian representative in the office after sixth period, until 5:45. That’s both days, this Friday and Monday, first and second periods, and after sixth.

The office is located behind Jay DiFrank’s office, right there at the RUB desk. Check in if you are interested, especially if you are handy with a camera. Photographers have excellent chances of seeing their photos in print for the Collegian.

There will be a list posted for you to sign, and you will be contacted shortly.

Ecology—

Mother Earth: no deposits, no reserves

Ecology — the totality or pattern of relationships between organisms and their environment.

Nonreplenishable — nonreplacable; unable to be restored.

We have some good news and some bad news. The good news is that the world did not end when the pope died. The bad news is that it probably will before the next pope dies, at least in the sense of twentieth century transportation.

Fact: A major American business periodical checked thoroughly with the leading experts in the oil industry (after the initial scare, so the reports were more objective) and received sobering data on the state of world energy reserves. Many top experts see permanent shortages beginning as early as 1980 — only a year away! Even conservative estimates fix an eventual “doomsday” for oil supplies sometime in the late 1980’s.

At this time, your younger brother will be a junior in high school. Maybe your little sister just passed her driver’s exam. You are still paying off your first car, or your new, gas-heated home.

Quite possibly by then you are looking into wood burning stoves and fireplaces, and less concerned about the outrageous gas prices than you are about your car’s questionable trade-in value when you go to buy one of those electric cars that are now on the market.

What incredible irony this picture represents when compared to Alvin Toffler’s predictions in chapter three of his book, *Future Shock*. He was concerned about the fast paced society, the increasing technology and accelerated rate of change that seemed to be destined to outleap Man’s best efforts to control it.

Maybe Toffler was only half-right. When he wrote the book, the machine was in full gear, racing away with breakneck speed. Could he have also imagined that very same machine burning itself out only ten years after his book was written?

The 1980’s, the years of the fossil fuel famine. For those of you who never rode on a steam locomotive, you will probably get your chance sooner than you think. No sir, Mr. Toffler, we’re not going to explode with progress. We’re going back to the stone age. Well, at least to the coal age.

At the risk of looking foolish, I want to make two wild predictions. First, I definitely see an end to oil production within a few short years. This will irrevocably change our modes of transportation and industry in general as well. This, in turn, will trigger a great social change, as billions of people will have to cope with permanent shortages of the most common fuels.

A second prediction concerns alternatives to oil and gas. Due to legal battles, zoning definitions and restrictions, and other forms of red tape, nuclear plants are taking years to be built in this country. Demonstrations, lobbying, and public disfavor thwart the production of these power stations. With a cataclysmal (and “unprepared for”) energy crisis, the government will no longer deliberate with the opponents of nuclear power. They will adopt measures similar to wartime policies, and proceed to build the plants, like it or not. They will spring up around the country like the McDonalds franchise in its economic heyday.

Does this sound far-fetched? Then consider two points. Number one, simple mathematics state that if you have five quarts of oil in your engine, and you drain five quarts out, you are now left with no oil in your engine. Apply that law to oil remaining in the earth. Though the numbers are larger, the principle is the same. When it’s gone, it’s gone. And to illustrate the argument for eventual nuclear neighborhoods, think back to the 55mph speed limit. Boy, that was fast. Any chance they’ll change it back to seventy?

What a lovely day for a walk today. Today, tomorrow, and the next day. Everyday is a walk day. Yes, Jimmy, you can have the bike, as long as your father gets it back for work this afternoon.

Politics—

Cards on the table... we’ll raise you ten!

Working as an underwriter for the great Senator Smallmind of the Ohio state legislature has been an experience of a lifetime, especially in the light of the recent raise they gave themselves the other week.

Last Monday, Senator Smallmind strode in his office, giving me that customary nod as he routinely peered through his blinds out at the street below.

“I just can’t get rid of the habit, Charles,” he said, still facing the window.

“What habit, Sir?” I asked.

“You know, checking for demonstrators. Why, at one time you couldn’t see the Salem girl through all the placards swaying on the streets. It used to give me the shivers just to come to work. I can still remember how it felt, being responsible to my constituents.”

“No need to fear now, Sir. Those days are long gone,” I assured him.

“Yes, thank God.” He took off his coat and eventually assumed his customary slouch behind his desk; feet propped up and the phone taken off the hook. He gave me that same look he had displayed a thousand times. I knew it meant that he wanted my opinion on what had gone on in the legislature. This time in particular, he wanted to hear some feedback on the big raise they had all given themselves.

Without waiting for him to ask, I started in — as honestly as possible. (It’s such a rare thing for politicians — honesty — that I wasn’t sure how he’d take it. Or

understand it.) “Senator Smallmind, I know what you’re thinking. You need to hear that the big raise was okay, don’t you? You looked guilty the minute you came through the door.”

“Guilty?” he retorted. “How can I be guilty of anything but enacting a law? Where is there guilt in passing a piece of legislation?”

“I don’t know. Just ask any witch in Salem.”

“But this is different. We can’t go to jail for this. We took it right in front of them. Legal public stealing, you might say. Besides, I’m tired of dipping into the Department of Highways to pay off my Porsche.”

We both exchanged glances, and I drew a long sigh. Senator Smallmind looked up dreamily at the ceiling and lit a Cuban cigar. “Want one?” he asked. “They’re great. Remind Senator Bigtalk to pick up some more on his next fact-finding trip to Jamaica.”

“Getting back to your raise, Sir, I want to say that it certainly won’t look favorable at this particular time. Especially with the recession.”

“Don’t say that word! You understand, Charles? That is a dirty, dirty word around here.”

“Sorry, Sir. But even Carter is upset, extremely upset. After all, it’s in direct defiance of his request to keep wages down.”

“So what? Rules are made to be broken.” An expression of remembrance passed over his face just then. “That reminds me, get Senator Bigtalk to push harder on that law detailing

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