

# Behrend Collegian

Published by the Students of the Behrend College of the Pennsylvania State University

VOLUME XXXV NO. 6

Station Road, Erie, Pa. 16563

October 25, 1979

## Seventy-three Die In Research Experiment

By Laura Seman

Seventy-three sprague-dawley out-breed albino male rats died in a research experiment conducted over the summer.

Seven seniors and graduates participated in a research experiment over the summer. The research project dealt with the toxicity of plastics commonly found in residential usage.

Under the advisorship of Professor Louis Balmer of the Engineering and Science Division of Behrend, the research was conducted for the National Science Foundation. The researchers received a Grant of 13,300 for the project.

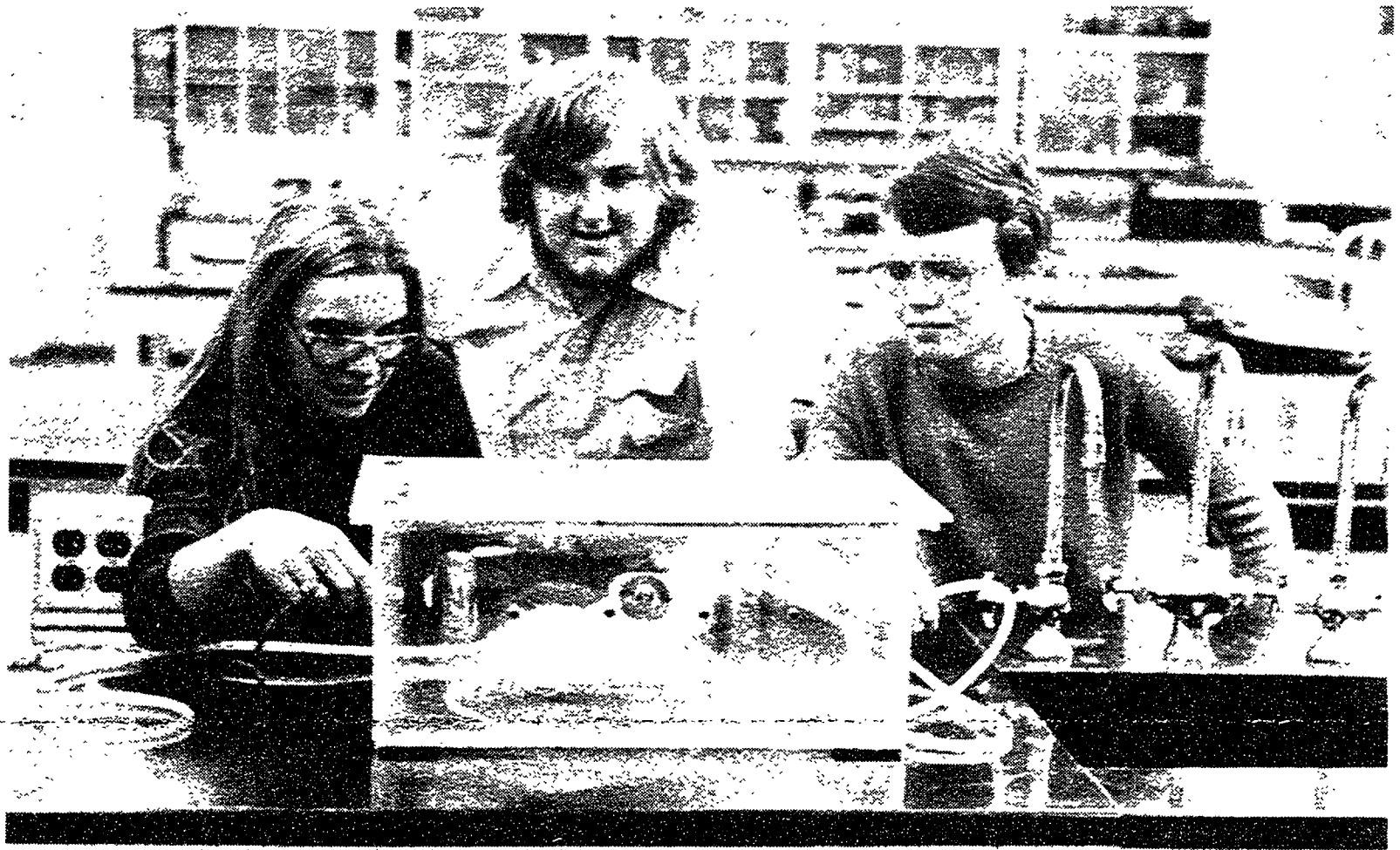
Ann Wykoff, Project Director, stated that in order to receive a Grant you must first send in a Grant Proposal. A Grant Proposal states exactly what the research and experiment entails, the procedure used, the time involved, the number of people involved, who they are, their explicit duties, and their qualifications.

The proposal itself took numerous hours of library research and was sent in a year before the grant was actually received.

The first topic discussed was fire. But since fire is a very broad topic it had to be narrowed down to a more specific area.

One reason that the toxicity of plastics was chosen was because the facilities and equipment available here at Behrend was limited, for the researchers to work with, and Anne Wykoff, having worked in the plastic industry as chairman of the safety committee in a local plastics company was especially interested in this topic.

The research was conducted by Elizabeth Angotti-Project Engineer currently at Main



Suzan Zajackowski, Anthony Ignocheck and Anne Wykoff pictured above.

Campus, Robert Beckwith, a Biology Graduate, Anthony Ignocheck, a Biology and Chemistry major, a senior at Behrend, Cathy Wantz, a Biology Graduate and also a Certified Laboratory Assistant. Anne Wykoff-Project Director, a Chemistry and Psychology major and also a senior at Behrend, Suzan Zajackowski-Associate

promoting positive social, physical and psychological well-being of the entire community; but often must be directed to particular at-risk population and focused in specific developmental and-or life stages. The term does not include activities related to treatment or rehabilitation.

The Primary Prevention Task Force of the Youth Services Coordinating Council and the Junior League of Erie have been working together for more than two years to develop a collaborative Inter-Agency Community Model of Community Based Programming focusing on Primary Prevention. Such efforts have resulted in professional workshops, seminars and lectures, a completed needs assessment, and a beginning library of relevant materials on prevention.

The Sponsors of the Primary Prevention State Conference welcome the participation of Human Service professionals, Medical Personnel, Administrators, educators, students or anyone interested in participating in or learning about prevention efforts.

Cost for the full Conference is \$35.00. For further information concerning the Conference, contact the Youth Services Coordinating Council, 421 Baldwin Building, 1001, State Street, Erie, Pennsylvania 16501. Telephone: 814-453-4637.

Director, a Psychology Graduate with a degree in Operating Room Technology, Michelle Lackovic, a Chemistry major and Murry Baker, Vincent Presta, and Teri Wright as technical consultants.

The title of the experiment is "Thermal Degradation of Polymers in Combination: Synergistic Effects on Laboratory Rats."

They conducted the experiment by exposing rats to byproducts of combinations of three household plastics. Byproducts are the gases given off when plastics are exposed to gradually increasing heat but not actually ignited.

The experimenters hypothesized that death of the rats was caused by exposure to the toxic fumes of varying combinations of the plastics. They stated that combinations of plastics are more lethal than any single plastic alone due to chemical interaction.

Some of the byproducts included Vinyl Chloride Gas, Carbon Monoxide, Hydrogen Chloride, and Hydrogen Cyanide.

The purpose of the experiment was to show that the inordinate number of fire deaths in this country compared to the rest of the world is substantially high. Most deaths attributed to residential fires are classified as due to smoke inhalation. Smoke inhalation of the same toxic fumes used in this experiment.

American households, with numerous synthetic items are apparently responsible for the higher per capita death rate due to fumes. Some of the numerous synthetic items, that give off toxic fumes when ignited are; television sets with polystyrene cabinets, vinyl sofas with polyvinyl chloride coverings with polyurethane filling, plastic tables, laundry baskets, and childrens toys.

Prior research has shown that fires involving plastics produce vastly more toxic atmospheres than those involving natural materials such as cotton and wood.

They do not suggest that you rid your house of all plastic items, but when purchasing an item, consider an alternate made of a natural material. They may be more expensive but alot safer.

The researchers are presently working on data analysis. In December Anne Wykoff and Suzan Zajackowski will present the research finding at the National Science Foundation Annual Symposium in Washington D. C.

Research compiled with all Federal and State Regulations concerning Animal Research and Experimentation.

Note: The deceased rats were originally from Charlesriver, Mass. Names are being withheld pending notification of next of kin.

### Prevention Conference Set For Nov. 5-7

Erie will be the site of the first State-wide conference on Primary Prevention on November 5, 6, and 7, 1979. Some 400 Human Service professionals, administrators, education and medical personnel, and others will aid in development and promotion of prevention efforts. The conference will target key areas at the local community, state, and federal levels. The keynote address will be given by Dr. Thomas F.A. Plaut, special assistant to the director, National Institute of Mental Health.

Sponsored by the Primary Prevention Task Force of the Youth Services Coordinating Council, Junior League of Erie, Erie County Office of Mental Health, and The Governor's Council on Drug and Alcohol Abuse, this landmark conference is designed to foster cooperation and coordination among federal, state, and local human service professionals in the area of prevention.

Primary Prevention, as defined by Dr. Stephen Goldston and Dr. Donald Klein, recognized experts in the field of primary prevention, includes activities directed at enhancing as well as

### Going To Scandinavia?

New York, N.Y. (Scandinavian Seminar)-Scandinavian Seminar is now accepting applications for its 1980-81 academic year abroad in Denmark, Finland, Norway or Sweden. This unique learning experience is designed for college students, graduates and other adults who want to study in a Scandinavian country, becoming part of another culture and learning its language.

After orientation and a 3-week intensive language course, often followed by a family stay, students are placed individually at Scandinavian folk schools (small residential liberal arts schools) or other specialized institutions. There they live and study with Scandinavians of diverse backgrounds. At the Seminar's Midyear and Final

Courses students and staff meet to discuss the year's studies and experiences and to review individual progress and language ability.

An independent study project provides a focus for an in-depth study in each participants own field of interest. On the basis of a detailed written evaluation of their work, most college students receive or partial academic credit for their year.

The fee, covering tuition, room, board, and all course-connected travels in Scandinavia, is \$4,900. Interest-free loans are granted on the basis of need, as are a few partial scholarships.

For further information, please write to: SCANDINAVIAN SEMINAR, 100 East 85th Street, New York, N.Y. 10028

### Scholarship Information

If you've checked out the costs of college and have second thoughts about whether you can afford it don't give up hope. If you have the goods or leadership potential, you may be eligible for a full time Army ROTC scholarship to Behrend College. And if you are already in college and finding the financial going rough, you still might qualify for a two or three year Army ROTC scholarship. Besides full tuition, you receive up to one thousand dollars in living allowances each year the scholarship is in effect, plus books, lab fees, and other benefits. Find out if you qualify. Call Cpt. Bob Schneider at 899-7028 or ext. 218.