

Editorial / Opinion

COURTING TROUBLE

On recent weekends, many Capitol Campus students have been thwarted in their attempts to play basketball in the gym in the Multi-Purpose Building. The reason for this is a horde of outsiders, many of them from Harrisburg Area Community College (HACC), who seem to have taken it upon themselves to monopolize our gym.

This problem apparently stems from an agreement between Capitol Campus and HACC, in which we allow HACC students to use our gym in exchange for the use of their indoor swimming pool. Though on the surface this appears to be an equitable agreement, in reality it has become tilted heavily in favor of HACC.

For starters, HACC has set rigid hours during which Capitol students can use the pool. In an act of overwhelming graciousness, HACC officials have seen fit to grant our students a whopping six hours per week to swim. As if this weren't bad enough, there have been occasions when Capitol students have not been allowed to swim during the allotted hours because the assigned lifeguard failed to show up.

In addition, Capitol students are denied entrance to HACC unless they can present valid ID's. Upon entering the building, it is stressed that they can use only the pool. The ping-pong tables and other facilities are off-limits—even if they are not being used—to Capitol students.

These prison-like guidelines at HACC are contrasted by the indifferent attitude found here at Capitol campus. The absence of any effective security measures allows outsiders to enter the Multi-Purpose Building unchecked during all hours of the day and evening. Once inside, these people can easily make use of not only the basketball court, but the ping-pong tables and weight room as well. While Capitol students visiting HACC are treated like inmates at Ryker's Island, HACC students make themselves right at home in the Multi-Purpose Building.

Since visitors are normally not required to present any identification, HACC students have begun the practice of bringing family and friends with them. All of this, of course, is being done at the expense of Capitol students, who have suddenly become the minority in their own backyard. Our administration is forever wondering why more students don't stay on weekends, thus earning Capitol the nickname "Suitcase U." If the few students who do remain are unable to enjoy themselves, it is no wonder that most students make a "great escape" every week.

This problem was recently called to the attention of our administration by a few concerned and frustrated students. We can only hope that both institutions can get together soon and solve it. If nothing else, HACC officials should make the swimming hours for Capitol students more flexible so that more people can take advantage of the pool. As for our own campus, some type of system is needed whereby the gym is set aside during specified hours for HACC students. If at all possible, someone should be present during these hours to check visitors' identifications.

Hopefully, corrective measures such as these will allow Capitol Campus and HACC to enjoy each other's facilities in a way that is fair to both institutions.

--Dave Caruso

A SITE FOR SEWER EYES

Most college campuses place a great deal of emphasis on physical appearance, and Capitol Campus is no exception. A recently held phonathon raised \$8,810 for the construction of a new entrance sign. This sign is necessary, according to the administration, to keep the campus attractive to potential students as well as to casual observers and passersby. However, there is a growing problem on campus which—if it remains unchecked—threatens to destroy the image of our university. This problem is the drastic increase of litter which is strewn everywhere about the campus.

Granted, a stray paper cup or candy wrapper can be excused as accidental. Oftentimes people will forget themselves and absentmindedly toss a piece of debris to the ground. Sometimes, a full garbage can will accidentally be upset—either by one of the many animals residing around the dormitories or by a strong wind—and its contents will then be scattered far and wide. These occurrences are all understandable and are therefore excusable.

What cannot be excused, however, is the plethora of rubbish that has become commonplace on our campus grounds.

Much of this litter has been intentionally dispersed by students who are very much aware of what they are doing; they are either too lazy to retain their garbage until they find a proper place to deposit it, or they simply refuse to walk two or three steps out of their way to utilize a trash can. It is not uncommon to observe a student errantly toss—a la Lloyd "All-World" Free—a piece of litter in the general direction of a trash can, and then simply turn and stroll off, leaving the litter lying ostentatiously behind. Another favorite practice of several students is the "toss it to the wind" method of garbage disposal. This method is particularly effective on windy days, when students develop the let's-see-how-far-the-wind-will-take-this-one attitude. This educational little game has no place in modern-day society, much less on a college campus.

The worst offense of these litterbugs, however, is not their random distribution of paper products, but the broadcasting of an assortment of other garbage. By far the most common—and treacherous—of this garbage is glass. Needless to say, most of this glass comes from bottles which have been deliberately smashed by those who have just emptied them. On a recent weekend, students were observed tossing beer bottles—many of them not yet quite empty—out of an open third floor window of a dormitory. Granted, these students' actions were performed during the height of drunkenness, but they nevertheless derived great pleasure from the sounds of glass shattering on the sidewalk below. It is fortunate that an innocent pedestrian did not happen along just then. Yet another student was seen hurling an empty vodka bottle onto the street some 20 feet below. After it shattered, he contentedly turned and ambled off. When asked for the reason behind his Kenny "The Snake" Stabler impersonation, he simply smiled and replied, "Just for the stories I could tell." If this is seen as a viable excuse by these perpetrators, then Uncle Remus must have been one of the biggest litterbugs of his day.

Other refuse is also frequently seen lining the walkways and parking lots of the campus. This debris includes such oddities as empty beverage cans, old fragments of tires and assorted other automotive equipment, discarded milk cartons, and even half-decomposed batteries and other such beautiful decor. In fact, just about any conceivable object—animate or inanimate—can be seen somewhere on campus, doing its part to mar the landscape.

In conclusion, it is obvious that this littering problem has grown to epic proportions, and it cannot be solved without the students' cooperation. Students are urged to be more careful when they discard unwanted items. After all, it's not too late to begin cleaning up our campus. But if we let this problem continue to grow, Capitol Campus will be forever ruined and a permanent eyesore.

--William J. Neil

SUPPORT SOUGHT

The student newspaper on the college or university level is sine qua non for communication of viable and relevant information, ideas, and thoughts. It is capable of being the most effective resource for expression available to students. It has proven to be a medium for communication between not only the students themselves; but, between students and faculty, students and administration, students and community.

A university setting should be the birthplace of ideas. It should provide an atmosphere which allows free expression to flourish. And the student newspaper in this setting offers an outlet for the expression of thoughts and ideas.

Communication has played the biggest role in the development of individuals, societies, and nations. It provides an element whereby growth can proceed. And an institution with growth potential like that of Capitol Campus needs this resource.

It has been the history of democratic institutions which do not have some resource whereby to vent thoughts and ideas or to communicate relevant information to either fail or for individuals within the institution to devise some type of communication medium effective to achieve their purpose. And it should be noted that the end did not always justify the means.

It is, therefore, the responsibility of a democratic institution to provide for or support a communication medium for the students—that being the student newspaper.

To become a useful resource, the student newspaper needs the support and respect of students, faculty, administration, and community. This support and respect is essential for the effectiveness of the newspaper.

--Susan M. Snell

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Pennsylvania State University
Capitol Campus
Middletown, PA 17057
Office - W-129
Phone - (717) 944-4970

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