

# Campus Forum

## Elevator repair hurts many

The sound of progress is in the air. Anyone venturing into the Olmsted building during the day can hear the all too pervasive sounds of an elevator being built. Hammering, sawing, banging. All the noises that go along with building renovations abound throughout the entire mid-section of the building.

What's that? You say you can't hear your professor lecturing? Don't worry about it. It's only a minor inconvenience. All the classes that have wheel-chair bound students in them have been temporarily relocated to either the multi-purpose building or the new science and technology building and the new elevator is scheduled to be completed by January 10.

What's that? You say you have to carry large objects up the staircase? Don't worry about it. It's only a minor inconvenience. The personnel servicing the soft drink machines on each floor have to carry cases of soda to the third floor. Instructional Services, those wonderful people who supervise the audio-visual equipment used in classes, will have to station an assortment of equipment on each of the floors so that there is a chance that equipment will be available, and on the right floor, when it is needed.

What's that you say? You think the project is more than a minor inconvenience? Now you're talking. The old elevator was a thorn in the side for many students, faculty and staff members who relied on it for transportation of people and freight. And, although it did not perform to current standards for building accessibility by mobility-impaired individuals, the project certainly could have been postponed until the summer term, when fewer people could have been inconvenienced by the construction work.

What? You say you can't wait to see the new elevator in operation? You are not alone. The middle of the fall semester was, without a doubt, the worst possible time to leave the Olmsted building without an elevator. In fact, the entire campus community will be so happy to see the doors of the new elevator open that they probably will be willing to accept a rope-ladder on the side of the building.

What? You want to know who is to blame. All credit goes to the ever-popular Murphy and the Penn State version of his famous law: If anything can be done badly, it will.



## Hasty moves spell trouble

By Neil Myers

It was the chief of one of Capitol's academic divisions that hit the nail on the head. He said that getting anything done here is like moving a glacier--it takes forever to get it started but it's impossible to stop once it's rolling.

The current round of musical chairs with campus offices is a prime example. Lots of people seem to agree that a change is in order. The provost thinks so. S.G.A. thinks so. Some of the clubs think so, too.

What nobody can agree on is exactly what to change.

The current plan started last summer as a way to move the provost's office to the first floor bookstore area in the Olmsted Building. S.G.A., WNDR and club offices were to move from their current site across from the Gallery Lounge to a large suite next to the auditorium on the second floor. Student Activities, now in W-104, was to move in next to the clubs in room 212. Classrooms were to fill the vacated space on the first floor.

But change isn't as easy as it seems. There were problems from the start. First, the XGI veterans group was worried that its lounge would be eliminated or shrunk. Next, WNDR decided it wanted room 211, across the hall, so that it would get better exposure and have fewer problems with noise. The administration refused, saying it had invested too much money in audio-visual equipment in room 211. The S.G.A., meanwhile, grappled with the size of a proposed dressing room for the adjacent auditorium and pondered the dimensions of a conference room that seemed more like a closet.

Then everything fell apart. Someone discovered the measurements were wrong and the plans were meaningless. WNDR made new plans to stay

where it is on the first floor. About that time, someone remembered the newspaper and yearbook offices out in the boondocks at W-129. Were they moving too? (So far the word is they're not.)

This week, as the saga continues, the XGI's are still worried about their lounge. Dr. James South from Student Affairs is touting the administration plan, but with a new twist: moving WNDR to a third site in the west wing of the third floor.

While all of this negotiating goes on, some important questions are being overlooked.

Just last year the campus came very close to doing something really avant garde by Capitol standards. It produced a plan to put all of the student activities, the Student Activities Office, a snack bar, a TV lounge and a game room under one roof in the Multi-Purpose Building. The plan would have given Capitol Campus something most other campuses take for granted--a student center that is entirely for the students. It would have also freed a lot of classroom space in the Olmsted Building.

Unfortunately, the scheme never got off the ground. The S.G.A. decided it had to be near the Student Affairs Office. The Capitol Times and WNDR objected to logistical problems and space limitations. The TV lounge and snack bar were

deemed impractical by the administration.

Instead of working to solve the problems, those in charge scrapped the plan and created the disappointment we now call a student center.

As several student leaders have said, let's not make the same mistake again. Let's establish a few objectives and stick to them.

For example, let's decide if all of the clubs and organizations need to be together or if it's O.K. to spread them throughout the Olmsted Building or around the campus.

Let's consider how much exposure to the campus community the organizations will be afforded at the various sites. Will some clubs be hidden away and left to die?

Let's decide whether we want to keep classrooms separate from non-instructional areas or mix the two.

Finally, let's look at the status quo and identify the specific problems that need to be addressed.

If it's not broken, then let's leave it alone. If there are problems, let's be sure we deal with them in the final proposal.

Last spring's fiasco with the student center should be the last time we waste what limited resources we have here at Capitol. If we produce an unworkable mess, we'll have no one to blame but ourselves.

## Letters

To the Editor:

Your recent coverage of the proposal to change the Engineering Technology degree (from B.T. to B.S.E.T.) incorrectly claims that this would be the first Bachelor of Science degree at The Capitol Campus. Actually, this campus has already graduated more than 100 alumni who have earned a B.S. in Mathematical Sciences and who now possess not only a B.S. degree from the Pennsylvania State University but also a broad education in mathematics, statistics, and/or computer science.

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## Capitol Times

Thursday, Oct. 18, 1984  
Vol. 19 No. 4

Published by students of Penn State's Capitol Campus, Middletown, Pa. 17057

The Capitol Times welcomes letters from readers. Letters intended for publication must be signed by the author and indicate his/her club or organizational affiliation, if any. The Capitol Times reserves the right to edit or reject letters at its discretion.

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Printed at the Press and Journal, Middletown. Text disks processed Jednota Printery, Middletown.