

Campus Forum

Surprise, surprise

By Neil Myers

And you thought it would never happen. Just when you were convinced that Capitol Campus would always look like what it is--a former Air Force base--along comes the administration with not one but THREE programs to do the impossible and make Capitol into a nice campus.

Most of us knew something was up when we returned to campus last fall and saw that the fluorescent buildings weren't fluorescent anymore.

Then there were the little things. Flowers started popping up. A crew descended over night and paved over the axle-crunching railroad crossings. Another crew dumped what must have been tons of shredded bark around the Olmsted Building--not once, but several times. And lots of chain-link fences disappeared.

Now we are told that the administration plans to change the decor of the dorms from Air Force Yuck to College Modern. If this means thermostats, hot showers, and walls thicker than Kleenex, I'm all for it. Carpeting, working plumbing and an end to metal lockers were beyond my wildest dreams.

But wait; there's more: this year's phonathon money is designated for even more campus beautification. Twenty-five thousand dollars worth.

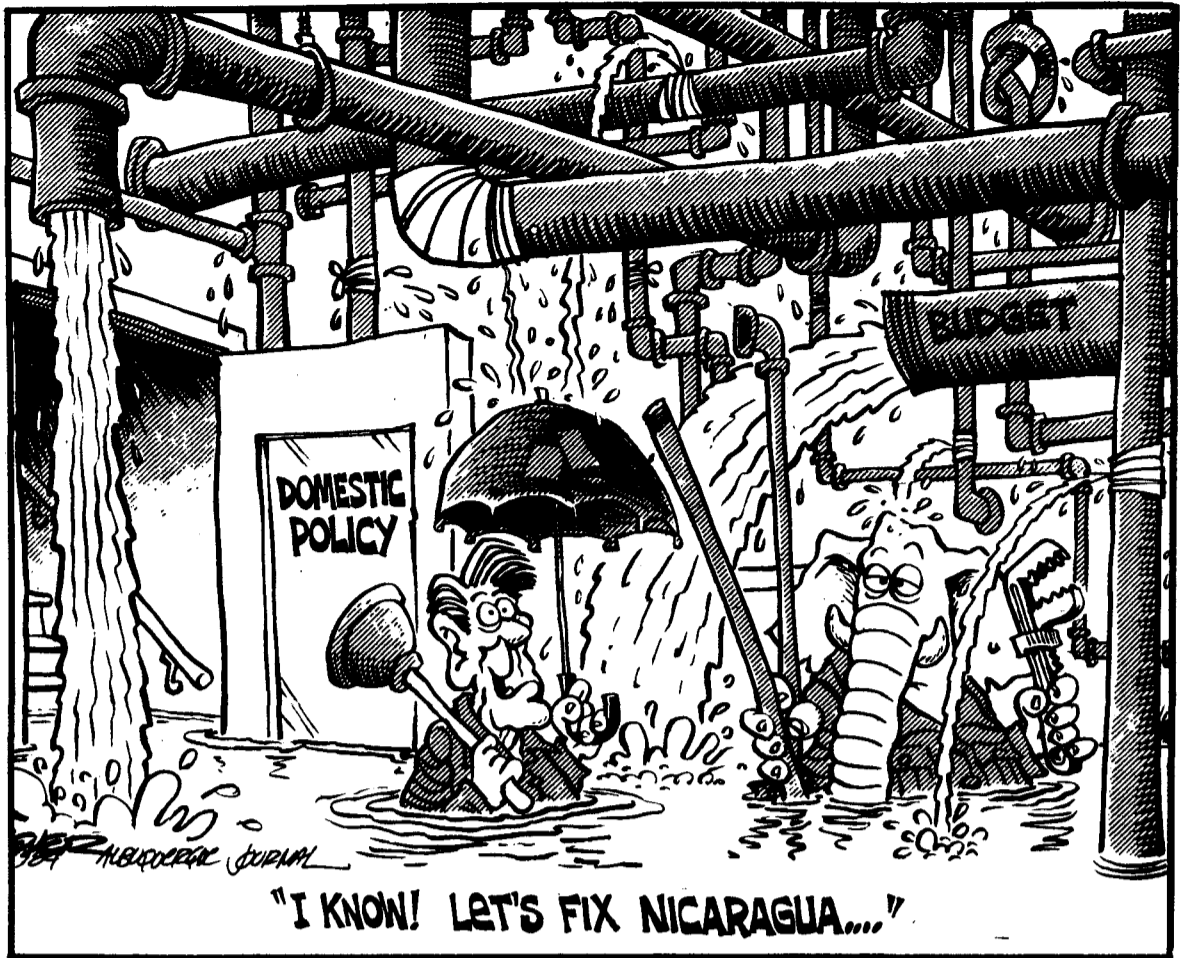
Mind boggling for a campus that only a few years ago acquired a real brick entrance sign, isn't it?

And if that's not enough,

there's a new mission statement floating around that talks about innovation and excellence. It's almost enough to make one wonder if we're going to become a legitimate part of Penn State. But let's not jump to conclusions.

We at the *Capitol Times* hope the students, faculty and staff will respond positively to any improvements. We hope people will have enough sense not to uproot trees or break signs. We also hope that the administration will spend its money wisely; there's more to a good school than a fresh coat of paint.

We'll be looking forward to the changes. We hope you will, too.



Meade Heights: a resident's view

When first deciding to come to Capitol Campus, Central Pennsylvania residents have a choice of living at home, living off campus or living on campus.

Students who live further away are only given the latter two opportunities. Unless appropriate time for apartment-hunting can be taken, the out-of-town student is left with the choice of living on campus.

Many of these out-of-towners are leaving home for the first time. That's right, they are leaving the safety and security of the nest to brave the

"big bad world" called "campus life."

Safety and security are the key issues in leaving home. No, I'm not talking about having Mom and Dad there to immediately help solve a problem.

I'm talking about how safe and secure the students are while living on campus.

For starters, an unidentified person recently broke into a Meade Heights house, taking some cash and chewing tobacco. The house's residents can be lucky that the "burglar" was not in an excessive taking mood or feared getting caught just enough to leave quickly.

This is not an attack on the campus police officers who are doing a good job under tough circumstances. It is an attack on the current living conditions on campus.

Everyone has probably heard the cockroach and termite legends of the Heights, but were you aware of things like windows, which are about three feet off the ground, that can not be locked?

Have you heard about smoke alarms and fire extinguishers that don't always work?

Just think how safe it is to live in a house in which the windows can not be locked.

You will probably hear that your predecessors in your house did the damage and it is not the university's responsibility to repair anything. However, is there a difference between a University housing contract and the lease to an apartment? Does the contract say that the University will not replace any missing items or repair any damaged parts of your dorm room or house?

Maintenance will obviously replace things like missing mattresses, refrigerators and even furniture, but will they replace missing bolt-locks on windows in the Heights?

We will never find out until it's too late. Or will we? Hopefully, part of the renovations proposal includes new security for Meade Heights houses. If not, insurance on all personal items is the next best thing.

Other courtesies included in a lease are neglected in the Heights as well. Many apartment complexes do such avant-garde things as shoveling

sidewalks immediately after it snows. This eliminates the risk of injury from walking on snow- or ice-covered walks.

After Friday night's snow squall, the Meade Heights sidewalks were covered with ice and snow resulting in one injury -- a dislocated knee -- early Monday morning (yes, two full days later). You can't miss him, he and his crutches have been seen several times moving slowly through the halls of the Olmsted Building.

Oh well, almost to quote a bad pun, while walking the campus sidewalks, "have a nice" slip, "see you next fall!"

- Don Strausburger

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Letters:

Dear Editor,

The recent change of residence of the S.G.A. and all the organizational offices to room 216 was not completed with the systematic approach, which has created a lot of tension in the student body.

In my opinion, it is evident that there is a desperate need to narrow the distant communication gap between the students and the school's bureaucratic system. Although, better part of the President's Council meetings last semester was utilized in planning space distribution, the valuable time invested by those club members discussing the change was not heard by all. Upon my recent visit to room 216, I discovered that most club's articles were squeezed into boxes, and arbitrarily placed anywhere in the room. Whatever became of the talks in those President's Coun-

cil meetings? Does what we, the students, say serve any significant purpose in the decision of this change? The move occurred, but none of our club members were informed, which would have gave us a chance to remove our valuable items. I just wonder who is responsible for all those items that are missing.

I am sure there are valid reasons behind the sudden change, but on the other hand, this time of the year is critically important and busy for most clubs to have full use of the office facilities. Clubs are forced to wait until room 216 is properly facilitated for their use.

I have also learned from a source that one of the clubs had reserved the room 216 in early November for conference use in February, but, unfortunately, the club was never informed on the room not being available. Is this all examples of the so-called "strategic planning," I ask?

- Ghan Desai