

Tough Job But Somebody Has To Do It

By Denise Reinas

Resident Assistants have a job which is more difficult than many people know. Aside from being on duty in the residence halls and Mead Heights, and also enforcing rules and regulations, RAs must endure a very hectic and difficult two weeks of training before the school year even begins.

Resident Assistants perform five major roles. They are the source of information for students; they answer questions such as where to go and who to see about different problems. They plan educational programs; each must plan two programs per semester which pertain to things that the students are interested in

such as breast cancer, Three Mile Island, career services, time management, etc. They handle emergencies such as first aid, C.P.R., and fire safety. They enforce rules and policies such as quiet hours, drinking alcohol, parties, etc. And lastly, they perform the duties of a counselor; they have skills in interpersonal communications, basic counseling and crisis intervention.

Two weeks before school begins, RAs must attend a leadership training program which lasts three days and takes place at a camp off-campus. Then they attend a residence living programs with RAs from other branch campuses of Penn State. This also lasts three days and its purpose is to find out what it is like being an RA on

other campuses. Within the next week, RAs must meet with the different departments on campus, such as campus police, the housing and food services, the counseling center, health services, career services, and financial aid. The purpose of these meetings is to learn how to work along with the different departments.

RAs also attend a session on policies, rules and procedures where they learn how to discipline people who break the rules. They also meet with Dave Doaty, who informs them of how to take care of and help the students with special needs.

Besides the two weeks of training, RAs must be on duty for two nights weekly and every third weekend in the residence

halls and Mead Heights. There is one RA living on each floor in the dorms and one on each street in the Heights. Even when they are not on duty, if something goes wrong or rules are being broken, they still must be there to react and take care of the situation.

Also, throughout the year there are weekly staff meetings and every two weeks there are in-service training sessions which cover topics such as substance abuse, suicide, depression, death and dying, time management, and whatever else the RAs want to learn.

In February there will be advertisements posted for those who would like to become RAs. An application must be submitted along with three letters of

reference. In March, George Young, coordinator of residence life and Leslie Eames, assistant coordinator, conduct interviews with the applicants. There will be a group interview which consist of general questions, a group project to see how well the applicants perform in a group, and role playing to see how the applicants act in certain situations. Then individual interviews are conducted. These interviews are in deeper detail than the group interviews.

In order to be a Resident Assistant, a cumulative average of 2.0 is necessary. Also, qualities such as leadership, maturity, responsibility, and commitment must be present. There will be thirteen applicants selected to be RAs.



"Harv" slaving over a hot grill in the Lion's Den.

Behind The Scenes:

By Sharon Olmstead

Mary Alice Pittman, better known as "Harv" at Capital College, believes in having fun while she works. She jokes and laughs as she talks. "If my husband reads this, I want a new red Volkswagen convertible for Christmas," she says.

Harv is the petite daytime grill cook in the Lion's Den at Capital College. She says her husband, who is an electrician, is "laid-back" in contrast to her.

"I get excited," she says. "I want something finished right away. I want to know Penn State won before the game," she adds. "I hate to wait!"

She is a busy, active person, she says, playing racquetball on campus and hiking, cross-country skiing, and tent camping with her family.

On weekends and week nights she judges United States Gymnastics Federation (USGA) and high school class three and four gymnastics. She doesn't have much extra time, but she hurries home to watch a favorite TV program, "St. Elsewhere."

Harv worked two years as a nurse after graduating from nursing school in Pottsville, but

didn't like it, she says. "It was my mother's dream," she says in a serious moment.

Choices for women were more limited then, and you did what was expected of you, she says. "It was later on that I got rebellious."

She should have become a physical education teacher, she says because she's an outdoors person who is always active.

"I could never have a job sitting. I've got to move!" She says she is happiest in sneakers, sweatshirt and jeans.

At home, Harve likes making family meals special with gourmet food and pretty dishes. They usually have candlelight, especially in winter, and white wine with dinner--her favorite is Blue Nun.

Fifteen years ago Harv moved to Middletown with her husband and two daughters, now ages 15 and 17, from Mahanoy City, PA. "It's coal country between Hazelton and Pottsville," she replied. Harv is a nickname after her maiden name, Harviletz.

Harv says she has many friends, but doesn't have any "close" friends. "People here

are friendly, but they keep to themselves," she explained. People in Mahanoy City, where her parents and younger sister still live, are easier to get to know, according to Harv. Her older brother lives in Harrisburg where he is manager of the City Market.

Harv has experience as a waitress, and had become manager of a pizza parlor. But after the TMI accident, she quit the job to be home with her daughters more. The accident really upset her then, and it still does.

She memorizes faces of people with standard orders using association, she says. "Oh, you're a grilled ham and cheese," she says, "but I don't know their name."

She and the other two women on the day shift name sandwiches and dinners after people for fun.

There's the Mike Behney sandwich, a lunch special of whole wheat toast, fried egg, bacon, cheese, lettuce, and tomato. Humanities Chairman William Mahar has a sandwich named

(continued on pg. 6)

Capital Times

EDITOR: Jan Travers

STAFF:

Tom Boyle	Julie Larson
Ray Burkett	Jean Meitz
Mike Camilli	Sharon Olmstead
Thalia Cook	Alan Pincus
Luke Hess	Denise Reinas
Vicki Koon	Bob TRs

ADVERTISING MANAGER: Kris Hansen

CARTOONIST: Joe Kupec

BUSINESS MANAGER: Diane Fitzgerald

PHOTOGRAPHERS: Todd Hammaker, Sylvia Johnson

ADVISOR: Joanne Smith

Printed at the Press and Journal, Middletown.

The Capital Times is published by the students of Penn State at Harrisburg. Concerns about content of any issue should be directed to the editor in Room 212, Olmsted Building. Any opinion expressed are those of the author and are not representative of the college administration, faculty or student body. The Capital Times does not endorse its advertisers. The Capital Times welcomes signed letters from readers. Unsigned letters cannot be printed; however a writer's name can be withheld upon request.

DISABILITY SUPPORT GROUP FORMING

Several students have expressed an interest in establishing a new support group at PSU, Harrisburg. We would be very interested in establishing a group of students, faculty and staff from the campus who may have concerns or special needs concerning their disabilities or disabilities of family or friends. This support group would gather either on a personal basis or perhaps converse by telephone in the event schedules do not match. Although you personally may not need additional services or need support, you

perhaps could be an individual to help others find ways to make their lives easier.

If you do have a disability and you have learned to cope with it and have overcome obstacles, certainly you could be a strength for the group. If you have a disability and have some problems, the group could help you learn to cope with situations and to overcome the barriers you may encounter. The group also could work as a unit to make any needed changes not only within the university but also perhaps with some of the state

regulations.

We are very interested in getting this group organized. If anyone is interested in becoming associated with such a group, please contact Dave Doaty, Room 200, Olmsted Building, 948'6017.

We perceive this group doing a number of things. This can include guest speakers from the State, University Park, or a multitude of other areas. The group really would go in the direction that it would determine to be the most useful and most productive. The group can only be as successful as you make it.