



Photo by: Richard Chiavetta

Class Trapped in Elevator

Victoria Cuscino
Capital Times Staff

The Olmsted elevator malfunctioned on Tuesday, March 27, trapping 12 passengers inside for half an hour and broke down again on Saturday, March 31--a record of 6 breakdowns since school began in August.

Officials could not explain the cause of either incident.

Professor Richard Ammon and eleven members of his Child and Adolescent Literature class remained trapped in the elevator on the 27th until a PSH student manually operated the electrical circuits in the penthouse area of Olmsted to open the elevator door.

"I would really like to know what happened," said Ammon. "I held the door open button until everyone got on, pushed third floor and we went up about 6 inches and stopped."

Ammon said the trapped passengers talked through the doorway to other students and told them to call Campus Police. "We sat around and told jokes," Ammon said.

On the 31st, a Campus Police officer reset the elevator by manually operating the circuit breakers in the penthouse area at 8:40 p.m., making this the second time in 4 days that the elevator malfunctioned. No one was inside when the doors opened, and Campus Police said the alarm rang for about an hour according to the person who called.

"It is probably a malfunction in the electrical system," said Officer Phil Negrete, who tripped the breaker to reset the elevator on the 31st.

The elevator also stopped in the same

manner and trapped a technical service person from Maintenance during the third week of March--1 week before the other incidents.

Steve Swanson, a mechanical engineering student, manually operated the circuit breakers on the 27th to open the elevator door. Swanson first broke the glass of the emergency box that houses the key to open the elevator door, but found the box empty.

Charles Alesky, Chief of Campus Police, said a Middletown fireman, Mike Krupilis, initially requested access to the penthouse area of Olmsted to check the main circuits for any shorts that could result in a fire. Officer Beard, of PSH Campus Police, opened the penthouse door for the Middletown fireman but denied Swanson access to the area. Swanson entered the penthouse with Lower Swatara Firemen after his initial request for access was denied.

Alesky said Officer Beard called the rescue unit because she thought the elevator doors were jammed and could not be opened with the emergency key. "The main concern was to get the people out right away in case of fire," said Alesky.

Officials differed in their reports of who released the entrapped passengers.

Officer Beard's police report states that rescue personnel released the passengers and initially told Chief Alesky that the firemen operated the circuit breakers. Her report does not indicate that Swanson entered the penthouse area with the firemen and operated the breakers to open the elevator

More Elevator on 3

Professor Resigns Unexpectedly

Christopher Burns
Capital Times Staff

A professor of the Behavioral Science Department unexpectedly resigned, leaving his classes to be taught by his colleagues and his students uncertain how they will finish the semester.

On March 14, Thomas Small, an assistant professor, turned in a letter of resignation to the provost stating "personal reasons" for his sudden and unexpected departure.

Ruth Leventhal, Provost and Dean said, "I can only say that Small has left because of personal reasons, and that is all I can say."

This situation has happened before but usually at the end of a term, Leventhal said.

Department Head Robert Lesniak said he knew the circumstances behind Small's sudden departure but would only say that Small left because of personal reasons. "I promised that it would be left at that," Lesniak said. "I've talked with the faculty and we're working to honor the syllabus of Small's classes."

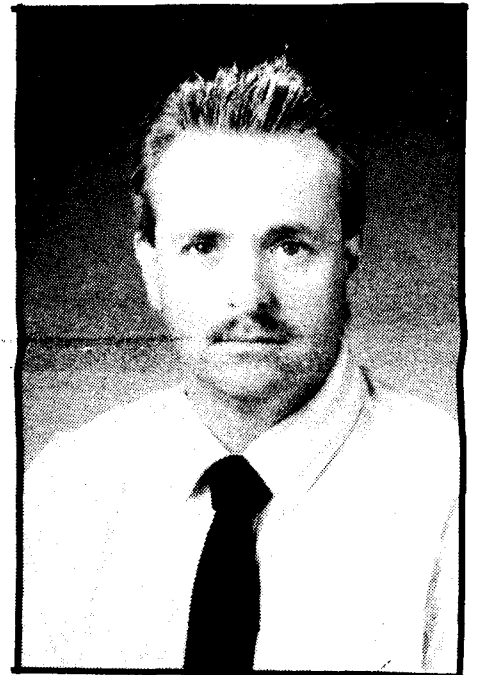
Several calls left on Small's answering machine and a message delivered by the Behavioral Science Department secretary brought no response.

A petition signed by about 36 students was submitted to the administration asking for Small's return. The petition, "would not have changed the situation," Lesniak said.

Students and colleagues of Small's said he was a wonderful teacher and liked by everyone.

"It's quite a loss," said Jan Deiter a psychology major. "He motivated everybody and will be hard to replace."

More Small on 3



File photo
Thomas Small

Continuing Education Expands

Barbara J. Soltis
Capital Times Staff

The Continuing Education Department's success and dedication in bringing quality education to the Penn State Harrisburg community is reflected by their recent expansion.

Continuing Education (C.E.) expanded to accommodate the combining of the PSH and Hershey Medical Center credit offices, and because of the voluminous increase of programs offered in the past three years. According to Fred Ehrhart, Director of Continuing Education, C.E. programming is up 300% compared to 1987.

C.E. has been around since the establishment of PSH in 1966 and currently offers 350-400 credit and noncredit programs a year to students and returning adults.

In October of 1989 nine credit staff members from Milton S. Hershey Medical Center, which specializes in lower division freshman and sophomore

courses leading to associate degrees, combined with the PSH credit staff. Both staffs now occupy two floors in the university apartment building. The noncredit staff remains in the C.E. building, tucked away neatly beside the dorms.

The unification of PSH and Hershey Medical Center C.E. programs was one of the primary goals of Ehrhart when he became Director of C.E. in 1987. "Instead of working together Hershey and PSH C.E. seemed to be competing to see who could attract the most students," said Ehrhart. "Both students and adults were getting confused, due to repeat courses and lots of similarities between the two programs."

The Hershey Medical Center C.E. office has been around for eight years and courses offered at the center are academically linked to University Park's Colleges of Business Administration and Liberal Arts. There is no tie to the medical school, other than the actual location.

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