

Entering the Christmas Zone, Season expands each year

Michael Starkey
Staff Columnist

I went out one day for some bread and milk and KABOOM I must have fallen into a worm hole. There must have been a stargate, or an entrance to another dimension just down the street, 'cause dammit I don't recognize the place I've returned to! Help me with this one, folks, as my mind reels under the strain of sorting this problem into a form my mind will accept. Submitted for your inspection: the holiday that wouldn't die, a season that expands to fill available space and time. You've just crossed over into the X-MAS zone.

The question first revealed itself as a credulous flash of intuition that someone, somewhere, was messing about with the temporality of my life. There seems to be a new calendar every year, and I'm not talking about the standard issue days and months stuff; rather the organization of holidays and dates of remembrance. Not that I mind National Dill Pickle Week, or even the ever popular Grandparents Day and, lest we forget, Smoke Detector

Week and Secretaries Day. I mean, everyone has a right to make a buck if they can and a manufactured "holiday" is just the ticket to stimulate the old invisible hand of Mr. Smith. No, I'm not stodgy enough to deny the beekeepers and cotton underwear makers their due. Rather I now go on

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record with my defiant stance against meddling with tradition.

It is Thursday, October 27 as I process these words (yep, uh huh, he said that!) and I have spent the past two hours trying to find out how Hallowmas (nee Halloween or All Hallow's Eve) was morphed into a celebration this date. I'm not blind, any damn fool can see the date, those of us who read can even spot the glyphs on the parchment proclaiming October 31 as Halloween. So what

gives? Why are all the little kids out on a sugar jag four days early? Where does this time shift come from? What wizard of scheduling put "official date" on this day? Nobody has a ready answer and there sure is a lot of "official" waffling out there for us to consume; for instance "... safer for the kids", "... an orderly way to deal with what normally is a difficult time", "... we like to coordinate with other communities", and the list goes on. I don't buy any of it! "Safer for the kids"? Is Thursday safer than Monday, if so you can bet your ass I won't be in on Mondays anymore! "... what normally is a difficult time"? The stats for homicide

and bestiality are off the scale JUST on Halloween? I don't think so, Tim. "Coordinating with other communities"? Is this like the school administrators, spiral where one wanker gets a raise so everybody else needs one too? Sheesh! I'm mad as hell and I don't give a damn anymore! No wait! That's I'm mad as hell and I'm not gonna take it anymore! Yeah, that's it. Not gonna take it anymore.

Now I'm really cranked so I'm off the mall to grab some new

music and kick some tunes. But wait, what's this? Christmas stuff is out already? Help! It's not even REAL Halloween yet and there are little angels and ceramic Santas imploring me to get into the holiday season.

Ah, NOW it begins to soak in... Yes, Virginia, there IS a Christmas and it is expanding like the national debt (or your tuition bill whichever appears larger to you). I get it now, we need to hurry all these minor celebratory days along in order to get to the MAIN EVENT, the MOTHER OF ALL HOLIDAYS, the REAL THING, BABY. You guessed it, (an off page voiceover)... "I'm John Barry and you have Twenty-one!"... X-MAS is the reason.

Let us not, in this PC age, confuse the huckster's holiday with anything remotely resembling a pagan celebration stolen by "god-fearin' folk". Forget all that mythology and religious stuff, come join in the real spirit, get a head start now on next year's debt. Smoke those credit cards with many trips through the little electronic schutes. Hell if you're too much of a idiot just dial us up on QVC and we'll ship direct to your door!

Pass on election day, there is no reason at all to vote, (it just encourages the bastards anyway), who cares what form of vermin inhabits which office. Take this reality test: (1) Which of the following has more political clout: a) one guy with a million dollars in his pockey, or b) a million of us with a buck each? (2) We live in..

"No need to wait for Thanksgiving...save yourself the indignity of gorging and passing out...just head right for the outlets and SPEND BIG."

a) a democracy or b) a representative republic? (3) Who runs the country: a) President Clinton, or b) nameless/faceless/brainless bureaucrats? (4) Who elects the President.. a) we do, or b) some college people?

And finally, If politicians persist in lying to us, and we persist in believing them, do we a) have the government we want, or b) have the government we deserve?

Skip right past Veterans Day, those losers won't mind at all. Promise

them lifetime care and benefits in return for risking their lives, then stuff the injured in degrading hell holes. Refuse to care for the victims of radiation testing, Agent Orange, and the bio-weapons of the little party over in Saudi. And don't forget to forget the POW/MIA's, you know... "out of sight, out of mind."

No need to wait for Thanksgiving...save yourself the indignity of gorging and passing out in the second quarter, just head right for the outlets and SPEND BIG. DO IT NOW. DON'T HESITATE!

If you don't, we'll track you commie bastards down and ship you off to the gulag where you can make tinsel streamers and individual glass snowflake tree ornaments for next year!

Be advised that we are monitoring your credit card and MAC card use...those of you who don't join in are in deep doo-doo (to quote that eminent statesman wha-zis-face) and please note that next year we will be trick-or-treating during the Labor Day weekend so you can be with your family and cop a sugar high together, and allow us to get X-MAS underway even earlier!

Petitioners advocate for police to get guns

Kimberly Roach
Staff Columnist

A petition has been circulating around campus over the past few weeks, as the Resident Student Council has taken action to make students feel safer on campus.

The purpose of the petition is to allow officers of Police and Safety Services to be provided with guns and bullet-proof vests. RSC feels that the campus police will be able to provide better protection for the students, as well as themselves, if these items were accessible.

Students here at Penn State Harrisburg have voiced their opinions to me about the circulation of the petition around campus and how safety should be enforced here. The answers I received ranged from, "I don't think they are responsible enough to carry guns" to "I'm all for it!" But there were some mixed feelings about the whole situation.

"I have mixed feelings about

it, but if I had to lean one way or another, I'd feel safer if they did have the guns," Christi Strouse, a senior in management said.

Most students feel very strongly that the campus police should carry guns.

"It is necessary to enforce armed police. We are at risk from outsiders," Yvette Martin, a junior journalism major said. "I feel it is an important safety precaution."

"You would think we wouldn't have to petition something like this," an outraged Kristine Seyler, another management major said.

Because of the sexual assaults that occurred on campus this past year, many of the students, especially the residents, have felt uneasy about the security on campus. They feel they cannot trust the campus police.

"I feel that they aren't protecting me, they're just patrolling the cars," said Seyler.

Amy McCarthy, president of RSC, questioned the reasons why the

campus police weren't armed, and was told that it was the university's policy. Which, contradicts the fact that the campus police at University Park allowed to wear guns.

McCarthy is greatly concerned with the rising crime rate in the neighboring towns of Highspire and Steelton. She hopes that arming campus police will decrease chances of an incident occurring here. McCarthy also stresses that the campus police are responsible people and are capable of carrying loaded weapons.

"They are not Rent-A-Cops," said McCarthy. They have been through the Police Academy. If they weren't responsible, I wouldn't want them to carry guns."

After petitions are completed, they will be sent to Dr. James D. South, associate provost for administrative operations. After that, RSC and the other students will wait patiently for a response, and they hope, immediate results. Until then, keep your eyes peeled and your ears open.



THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary

THE WHITE HOUSE

For Immediate Release

November 11, 1994

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

Hillary and I are deeply saddened by the news of the death of Pedro Zamora.

In his short life, Pedro educated and enlightened our nation. He taught all of us that AIDS is a disease with a human face and one that affect every American, indeed every citizen of the world. And he taught people living with AIDS how to fight for their rights and live with dignity.

Pedro was particularly instrumental in reaching out to this own generation, where AIDS is striking hard. Through his work with MTV, he taught young people that "The Real World" includes AIDS and that each of us has the responsibility to protect ourselves and our loved ones.

Today, one in four new HIV infections is among people under the age of 20. For Pedro, and for all Americans infected and affected by HIV, we must intensify our efforts to reduce the rate of HIV infection, provide treatment to those living with AIDS, and, ultimately, find a cure for AIDS.

Our hearts are with Pedro's family in this difficult time. In the months ahead, let us rededicate ourselves to continuing Pedro's brave fight.

My drinking days are history

Scott McIntyre
Staff Columnist

October 16-21 was Alcohol Awareness Week at Penn State. My first thought was 'who gives a rat's ___.'

Well, you know what I'm saying. I think it would be nice to have, since you are spending \$2500 a semester, a "you can park for free week" or even better, "we'll stop running through your bag and violating your Fourth Amendment Rights every time you leave the library week," but I'm a good sport, and someone had to do the story.

I can't say why I stopped drinking. I didn't fall in love, find the Lord, or kill a busload of kids and suddenly decide to go on an anti-drinking campaign. I just stopped one day, in case I ever run for Congress. We'll leave it at that.

It is, however, fun to reminisce about my past high-school and college drinking experiences.

I couldn't say when I had my first drink, fifth grade, I believe, half a bottle of Miller, maybe. The first time I got drunk was in the eighth grade with a half a gallon of beer. Up until that point, I can't remember a time when I acted so silly or had so many bruises from falls I apparently took.

I remember leaving a party one night and rolling the cars of two friends with toilet paper. The funny thing was that a kid who left four minutes after me got picked up

by the police for my escapades. He never got in any trouble. The police took him back to the party and he was released. Of course, it's not like he sends me Christmas cards or anything.

I did make a lot of friends drinking. Maybe I was even more popular than I thought. Earlier this year, I ran into a guy I went to school with. I didn't recognize him. It's surprising what being thrown through a windshield will do.

I went to my best friend Dave's over the summer. Not a better guy in the world to have a beer with. As long as he remembers his shit. He's sneaky that way.

The only bad time I remember was when I fell through a coffee table at this girl's house. Her parents come home as Dave and I were trying to fix it with crazy glue.

This guy, Don, and I met in a psychology class at HACC. I don't think I've ever met a bigger scammer in my whole life. Don worked for a local no-tell motel at night. He would rent rooms to couples, and re-rent them after the people left and pocket the money.

Two things that really stick in my mind were the time Don and I threw this couch off the balcony of his apartment, and the day his dad called me at work to tell me his son was killed in a head-on collision.

Enough said. I think I've more than adequately made my point.

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Write-In Scott Mateer for SGA President

(Face it, he rocks.)
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