

PSH Health Services warns students about "date rape" drug

Melissa A. Jago
Staff Reporter

Without warning you can become a victim. It's colorless, tasteless and odorless. Rohypnol, a tranquilizer 10 times as potent as Valium, has become the "date-rape drug of choice" among college-aged students.

When slipped into beverages, the tablet quickly dissolves and within about 15 minutes of ingestion, it triggers euphoria.

The effects of Rohypnol, which include: slurred speech, swaying, lack of coordination, blood-shot eyes and temporary amnesia, may last more than eight hours. Results may be adverse when combined with other substances.

"It's something of a silent affliction," said Dr. Johanna Sullivan of the Drug

information and Pharmacoepidemiology Center at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center.

"Because of the amnesia affects, someone may not even realize what's happened to them. Unless there are obvious signs of assault or a very large chunk of time missing, they may not even realize something's happened."

The drug's blackout effect makes sexual assault easy and prosecution nearly impossible because the victim often cannot reconstruct the assault or describe their attacker, Sullivan said.

It has been suspected that at least 10 students at

University Park have been victims of Rohypnol this fall, however, not all students were sexually assaulted.

According to Marylou Martz, coordinator of Health Services at Penn State Harrisburg (PSH), "There have been no reports of the drug or sexual assaults at this campus."

Although illegal in the United States, Rohypnol is often prescribed in 64 countries for insomnia, anxiety and panic disorders.

The drug surfaced primarily in the South and Southwestern states by South American smugglers.

On the street, this new illicit drug is known as

"ruffies," "R-2," "rib," and "rope." The "bubble packaging" of Rohypnol makes it appear legal.

According to Penn State health officials, the quick, dramatic high Rohypnol produces has made it a popular recreational drug likened to the Quaaludes of the 1960s and '70s.

Martz believes that Rohypnol is only common among college-aged students because the drug is associated with sexual assault and can be easily used at large parties.

In an effort to deter future assaults, Penn State University Health Services have alerted students through memos and fliers on campus and in the dorms.

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"We are doing all we can to make students aware of Rohypnol."

-- Marylou Martz, coordinator of Health Services at Penn State Harrisburg



photo by Jeff Warren

Penn State Harrisburg reaches out to neighboring communities at the Community Arts and Crafts Fall Festival Sat. Oct. 5.

PSH celebrates first fall festival

Ann Mease
Staff Reporter

The sound of laughter, the aroma of food, and the sight of children playing, were some of the many sights and sounds at the first Community Arts and Crafts Fall Festival on Oct. 5, at Penn State Harrisburg (PSH).

The festival started at 9 a. m. and lasted till 6 p. m. and included activities such as: the Middletown Marching Band; Sweetwater Reunion a

bluegrass and contemporary folk music band; poetry readings, face painting and arts and crafts vendors, from all over the country.

Some of the clubs and organizations on campus set up stands to raise money for their club activities.

According to club president George Daka, The International Affairs Club was selling hand painted Egyptian bottles to raise money for

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Clubs voice budget concerns to SGA

Jeff Warren
Staff Reporter

Was it a show of force or a show of support? That's what some people attending the SGA meeting are asking themselves after the XGI Club's strong showing because of funding problems with SGA.

According to Gordon Moon, XGI president, the club's concern stems from a decrease in funding for the club by \$1300. Moon says the club did not anticipate requiring money from the students activity fee and did not request the funds prior to the October 4 deadline, pending approval of their 1996-97 budget. When the budgets were released on October 2 the club was given significantly less than they requested and endangered an upcoming blood drive on Wednesday, October 9 and Veterans Day activities.

Among those in attendance were: Mrs. Mary Cowar, former campus employee and wife of Harry Cowar a former veteran and recipient of 18 units of blood last year

through the XGI program; Tom Steck, XGI faculty advisor; Lieutenant Colonel Harry Owens, a professor at Dickinson College; Warren Gill, Commander in charge of 10 local VFW posts; Steve Carley, president of the University Park chapter of XGI; John Flickinger, representing the Middletown chapter of the VFW. Moon thought the strong showing would demonstrate how valuable the club is to the campus.

Though no time limits are specified in the SGA Constitution, SGA yielded five minutes for Moon to express his concerns, but was reluctant to discuss financial matters in open forum.

Moon countered saying "it's an open forum, we can discuss anything." At this time Moon introduced those attending the meeting on his behalf, highlighting the role XGI plays on the campus and community at large.

At the expiration of Moon's time limit, additional time was yielded to him by George

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photo by Mandy Souchack

Liane Bankos and Missy Smith join Associate Provost for Administration, James D. South in a line dance at the Dining Commons on Oct. 1. Barbara Negrete was the line dancing instructor.

Students in Church and Wisburg Hall dormitories had two special guests on Oct. 1. Director of Student Affairs, Donald Holtzman and Associate Provost for Administration, James South "bunked in" for the night in an effort to make themselves more accessible to students. The programs was organized by Community Resource Assistants (CRA's) Liane Bankos and Tarik Griggs as part of the dormitory educational and wellness programs. Holtzman and South had dinner with students in the Dining Commons and participated in the country line dancing that followed. Afterwards, CRA Chloa Williams introduced a film "Sober Reflections" which addressed the topic of binge drinking. The evening concluded with a "snack and gab" session where the administrators and resident students could socialize.

SGA Election votes are in

Joanne C. Ramirez
Staff Reporter

Despite a recent policy amendment, part-time Penn State Harrisburg students "did not take advantage" of their newly awarded voting privileges, according to Senior Senator for Public Affairs, Crystal Woodley.

Turn-out at the polls during this year's Student Government Association (SGA) elections failed to surpass that of past years when only full-time students were allowed to vote. This lower level of participation was not due to lack of effort on the part of SGA Board members who were greeting students in the lobby of the Olmsted Building well into the evening hours of last Tuesday with the question, "Did you vote yet?"

As evening students and visitors to the library hurried by, SGA President Frank Nieves and other Board

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PSH students affected by tragedy at University Park

Jody L. Jacobs
Editor

On Sept. 17, Jillian Robbins of State College, Pa. allegedly fired five shots from a 7 mm Mauser bolt-action rifle on the lawn of the Hetzel Union Building (HUB) at University Park. This incident, which has been termed a "random act of violence," left students Melanie Spalla dead, Nicholas Mensah injured, and penetrated the entire Penn State University community.

"My brother had an 8 a.m. class and passed by the HUB lawn 10 minutes before it happened," said Jason Beifeld, secondary education student.

"I was concerned about his safety, and I was also concerned about my mother because I knew that she was worried about him," he said.

Like Beifeld, many students knew of someone that was in the HUB area when the incident occurred.

"My friend was there, so it hit close to home for me," said Brian Hair, communications major. "It made me stop and think that it could happen here."

Chief of Police and Safety Services Leonard J. Supenski said that such a random act of violence is something that "can't be controlled." If an individual is determined to commit such a crime, there is nothing anyone can do to stop it, he said.

"The reality is that an incident like the one at University Park can happen on any campus, or in any community. Unfortunately, violence doesn't hit home until it happens to an organization to which you are a part of," Supenski said.

Student Government Association (SGA) President Frank Nieves said that he learned about the shooting from PSH Provost John H. Bruhn. Nieves said that he was shocked that this incident occurred on a Penn State Campus.

"It makes you realize that it can happen anywhere. Penn State isn't exempt from violence," he said.

Nieves said that although he believes the event was tragic, he doesn't feel that it has an effect on the PSH campus or its student body.

"When I think of Penn State, I think of Penn State Harrisburg first. Main Campus is that 'other'," he said.

Liane Bankos, SGA vice president agreed that

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