

Is PSH Y2K Ready?

By Tabitha Goodling
Capital Times Staff Writer

A web page has been created to alert students to Penn State's Year 2000 Plan - a plan to ensure that all Penn State electronic equipment is operational on Jan. 1, 2000.

University Vice President and Provost Rodney Erickson prepared a letter for the page in collaboration with University Vice President for Finance and Business Gary Schultz.

The letter identifies the many concerns that Penn State students have about Y2K. The letter answers such questions as "Will their be classes in January?" and "Will financial aid be affected?"

The information can be found on the Instructional and Information Technology page, www.hgb.psu.edu/iit/.

On the page, students will see the various options under "Services Offered." A click on the title "Penn State's Year 2000 Plan," opens in the letter from Erickson.

Reading the letter addressed to students and faculty, PSH students may wonder if the information is directed to them since Erickson makes references only to University Park's student paper and its residence halls.

Erickson states that Penn State is "ready for Y2K." Perhaps the main branch of PSU is ready, but the fate of the remaining branches is still in question.

The Year 2000 Officer for PSH, Bob Brinkley, says the information on Erickson's page is accurate, but he will determine if we are indeed ready at the Capital College.

"If main campus says we're ready, Capital Campus is not ready until I indicate to them that we are ready," Brinkley said.

The Capital Campus is directly linked to University Park through the offices of financial aid, admissions, and registration, which are all Y2K ready.

Brinkley, as well as Ken Blythe, Y2K Coordinator for Main Campus, agree that there will be

no glitches in those systems when classes start in the spring.

This past summer, Brinkley participated in four meetings with professional staff at PSH as well as representatives from Blythe's office.

Information and tools were distributed and explained in order to prepare the computers on campus for 2000.

Making sure the systems had a clock that would read 2000 when 1/1/00 appears on the computer instead of 1900 was a prime concern.

The group also tested all e-mail equipment. Brinkley says, "Any computer that does not meet requirements will be disconnected."

Computer labs in W304 and W305 Olmsted will not be disconnected and are ready for the millennium bug, Brinkley said.

The concern at this point, according to Brinkley, is the Computer Aided Drafting (CAD) labs on the second floor of Olmsted. He says they should

be ready on time.

Other general preparations are detailed on the web page. The College of Agricultural Sciences has prepared a guide, "Consumers and the Year 2000" which can be found through the web site.

There is an explanation of the possible crisis, how to prepare by stocking up on food, as well as how to determine if your home PC will be affected by Y2K.

A more detailed approach of how to correct your computer can be found at <http://ftp.cac.psu.edu/pub/year2000/PCfixes.htm>.

Brinkley recommends this page since it details a step by step approach appropriate for a computer whiz or the computer illiterate.

Blythe encourages all PSU students to take a look at the Y2K page and indicated that "it gives an up-to-date status report on the University system as a whole including the 24 campuses.

"Any computer that does not meet requirements will be disconnected,"
— Year 2000 Officer
Bob Brinkley

International Perspective on American Culture

By Deb Hoff
Capital Times Staff Writer

Who on campus has crisp, blue eyes, a charmingly mellow European accent, and knows as much about German culture as he does American?

If you're taking a class in Civil War, Western Expansion, or Regionalism you have an advantage in venturing a guess.

The rest of the student body, however, might have to dig a little deeper to find the answer.

Dr. Werner Steger, 36, is a new faculty member in the American Studies Program this year, replacing Dr. Michael Barton.

Originally from Germany, Steger has resided in the United States since 1987.

He did his undergraduate studies at the University of Munich in Germany and then went to Florida to study for one year on an Exchange Scholarship.

After that, Steger transferred to George Washington University in Washington, D.C. where he earned his Masters and Ph.D degrees in American Studies and History.

Teaching at Comenius University, Bratislava, Slovakia in 1996-'97 seems to have whet his appetite even further for the flavor of international teaching.

One thing Steger would like to do eventually is "go on to teach in international places," he reveals.

Though he muses he's always wanted to take a trip around the world, "I got my job too soon," Steger confesses.

Nevertheless, he has efficiently worked out arrangements to accommodate his position.

His wife, Susan, still resides in New York and he goes there three weekends out of the month and she visits here one. They have postponed starting a family until he "gets settled," he says.

Steger became interested in American Studies while living in Germany. He explains there was a large contingency of soldiers close to the Czechoslovakian border and he wanted to learn the English language. He also used to listen to the American Force Network on the radio.

He recognized that the American Studies Program afforded him the opportunity to learn the language in a curriculum that was "less stiff" than some of his other choices. "My interest



Photo by Matthew McKeown

Dr. Werner Steger

came via the language," Steger reflects. In 1989 he switched his major to History.

You need not think Steger is all work and no play, however. Among some of his favorite hobbies are reading Central European Literature and enjoying early German films from the 1920s and '30s.

He's also an avid photographer, or at least he was, until all his photography equipment was stolen while he was in Washington, D.C. He hopes to resume this hobby sometime in the near future.

He is also in the process of writing a book which began with his dissertation topic.

It is about the "formation of political and social identity of artisans and immigrants in antebellum and Civil War [periods] in Richmond, Va."

He has spent many summers in Richmond working on this project and is now quite familiar with the area. He has been working on his book for about five years and

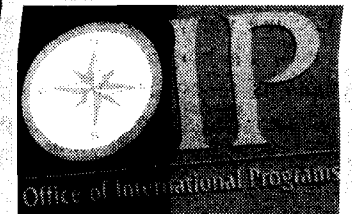
hopes it will be published within the next two years.

In the spring semester, Steger will be teaching 19th Century American Civilization and Labor History. Dr. Simon Bronner, Coordinator of the American Studies Program, feels that Steger "brings a comparative international perspective to Penn State Harrisburg."

And what does Steger think about PSH? He says that the faculty and staff have been so supportive and everyone has been very nice. He concludes it's "a very nice place."

If a ready smile and a firm handshake are indicative of the German culture, then Steger is an ambassador par excellence.

If you happen to run into him in the halls, perhaps you'll reciprocate a cultural experience in kind by way of introduction and welcome.



What're you doing for Spring Break?

CART 440:

Art in London
May 6-13, 2000 (Spring Break)
London, England

HLED 501:

Global Health Promotion
June 24-July 1, 2000
State of Hidalgo, Mexico City



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W106
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