



Photo by Steven Shearer

While PSH enjoys a good reputation for low rates of binge drinking, friends still enjoy a few beers at local pub *Shane's Flight Deck*. Several bars in the Middletown/Highspire area cater to PSH students. Wednesday is Penn State night at *Shane's*.

PSH Ranks Low in Binge Drinking

By Kathryn Wix
For The Capital Times

In the midst of a nationwide alcohol crisis, Penn State Harrisburg has emerged with one of the lowest rates of binge drinking among its students compared to other schools and other Penn State campuses.

The PSH Alcohol Task Force, made up of university staff and community members, focused on dealing with the problems of binge drinking, conducts core surveys every three years to monitor student behaviors. Binge drinking is defined by the Harvard Survey as five drinks for a man, or four drinks for a woman, at one time. Steve Backels, with the Alcohol Task Force at PSH, said "In 1996, 72 percent of PSH students had a drink within the preceding 30 days; on average, they drank 4.5 drinks every two weeks and 29 percent had binge drank in the preceding two weeks." In 1999, those numbers dropped respectively to 62 percent, 2.8 drinks, and 24 percent. It is evidence that the program is working. Backels added that "the surveys are reliable and scientifically accurate, although the 1996 survey may have over-sampled resident students."

Backels says that "due to PSH's older population, binge drinking is not a huge problem here." Although that does not mean there are no incidents of binge drinking occurring on campus, Backels reports that "the numbers so far have been low."

There are programs available to ensure that binge drinking will not become a huge problem at PSH. They include confidential counseling, referral services and awareness programs for students living in Meade Heights. George Young, coordinator for residence life at PSH, says programs are sponsored by the residence life department and, while they are not anti-alcohol in nature, they are

designed to promote awareness and responsibility to help students make informed choices about using alcohol.

Currently, approximately 356 students occupy the Meade Heights area. Some of these students live in LIFE, Living in a Free Environment, residences. This means no smoking, alcohol or drug use is permitted. Students at PSH have mixed feelings about the position that binge drinking is not really a problem on campus. Many students take pride in being a member of such a responsible community, while others offered different conclusions. Chad E., a communications major, says "I don't think that there is a problem due to the fact that there are so many cops around that have control. If we were at a bigger campus, then there would be a problem." Erica, also a communications student, disagrees with the definitions the survey used in coming up with their numbers. "Consider what is actually considered binge drinking before approaching the problem. The degree to which drinking occurs matters more than the numeral amount of drinks per week or month. Two drinks to one person is 12 to another, and the person who drinks two drinks a day five times a week correlates more into alcoholic tendencies than the individual who consumes twelve once a month. The security and school departments are more likely to appease the wishes of the community by citing the lowest statistics in highly extreme circumstances." Several students laughed openly when the survey results were disclosed to them, possibly suggesting that there is more of a problem than the statistics show.

Police presence, campus size and student age have all been cited as reasons why this campus handles alcohol decisions so well. Many students agree that PSH offers a quality education. If they wanted to party, they would have chosen a larger campus.

Warmth Arrives In Time For Winter

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recently serving. In addition to the academic buildings, the boilers originally heated the former Fruehauf warehouses, the old dorms, child care center and dining hall buildings, Dankanich said.

The new boilers are smaller than the former ones. According to Dankanich, the former units were oversized for the demand. He added that a boiler working at full capacity is more energy efficient. The current heat plant serves Olmsted, the Science and Technology building, the

bookstore, the library, EAB and the CUB.

The second boiler's installation and wiring process continues and will be complete prior to the colder weather. Once the heat plant retrofit is complete, contractors will focus their attention on beautification. The exterior is scheduled for new brick and siding.

Directly behind the heat plant, a small building designed to house switchers for the new underground electrical lines will soon replace the unsightly above ground metal structure west of Olmsted.

Equipment Purchase Saves Money

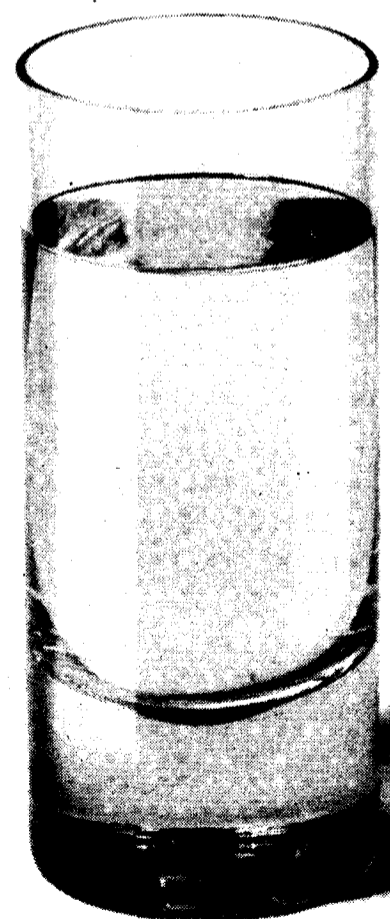
By Cathie McCormick Musser
Capital Times Editor In Chief

In the past, organizers of live campus performances spent approximately \$600 to rent sound equipment. Last week, PSH's office of student affairs purchased a versatile, portable sound system which will eliminate the need for rentals.

Disappointment with the cost, variable quality and delivery hassles of rented equipment prompted the purchase. Director of Student Affairs Dr. Donald Holtzman noted multiple benefits of a university owned system. "We own it, manage it and our technicians know it," Holtzman said. Holtzman's office worked


with Mike Kalbaugh of IIT and student Roderick Lee to select the appropriate system.

According to Holtzman, the components are mounted in a portable rack that can be moved easily from building to building as needed. The system includes an amplifier, mixer, cassette player, CD player, equalizer and six wireless microphones. It will be used for the first time during the performance of Gospel Rama 2000 on Oct. 23 in the CUB. The Student Activities office will handle scheduling of the equipment.



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