

i'll feel better if you let me vent!

By Geoff Conklin

Capital Times Staff Writer

Does anybody remember the scene in *Aladdin* when Aladdin and his monkey were running around on the roofs of his ghetto town stealing apples and dreamily watching the palace, wishing he could live there someday?

Does that remind you of anything? Like Meade Heights living arrangements? Well, I'm not Aladdin and I don't have a monkey, but I do have about 300 squirrels in my yard and as I sit on the roof of my Mars Drive apartment, I think of the \$17 million library that a Penn State advising board believed was more important than its students' living quarters.

I mean, let's be honest, Meade Heights is hardly more developed than a Third World country and here we have a half-empty monstrosity of a library towering over the campus.

Now I'm not the most brilliant guy in the world, but even I know that having adequate living quarters on campus near classrooms is a tad more important than having a library so grand that it is now considered the 7th wonder of the world. The new dorms are going to cost about \$15 million. Why did Penn State spend \$17 million a few years ago on the library?

Maybe I can explain. You know that

guy? The guy who has to have the most pimped-out car with the loudest speakers? The guy who has more pairs of Air Jordan's than he has pairs of brain cells? The guy who wants to have the reputation as the biggest, baddest mother east of the Mississippi?

Well, Penn State is that guy. Let's be honest, did we need a \$17 million library on our small campus? No. We needed, and still need, a decent place to live. Our new place is coming, but my point is it should have been done first. So Penn State, here's a tip. Next time you want a new car . . . think bargain . . . think Big Al's Pre-owned Pinto lot, be happy with the factory speakers, forget the Jordan's and buy some Voits. We're already the best college in Pennsylvania, so let's stop trying to look good and think about what's best for the people who pay your salaries . . . the peasants . . . oops, I mean the students.

Editor's Note: When I reviewed Geoff's column for publication, I couldn't help but think about the difference in perspective between the team of good people who work hard to make this campus the best it can be over the long haul, and the students who come and go without an understanding of where PSH has been or where it's going.

Campus Question & Answer

By Cathie McCormick Musser

Capital Times Editor In Chief

The *Capital Times* addressed this question to Director of Business Services Ed Dankanich, whose responsibilities include overseeing what Penn State calls the "physical plant." The physical plant includes all buildings, systems, grounds and parking lots at Penn State Harrisburg.

According to Dankanich, prior to the start of construction of the new library, the parking spaces in question were reserved for 15-minute parking. Dankanich recalls that this became an "enforcement nightmare."

While work was underway on the new library, the parking spaces housed a construction company trailer.

The master plan for PSH includes the creation of a mall atmosphere and a new roadway that will connect Olmsted Drive to Penn State Way, making a campus loop that directs campus vehicle traffic to the

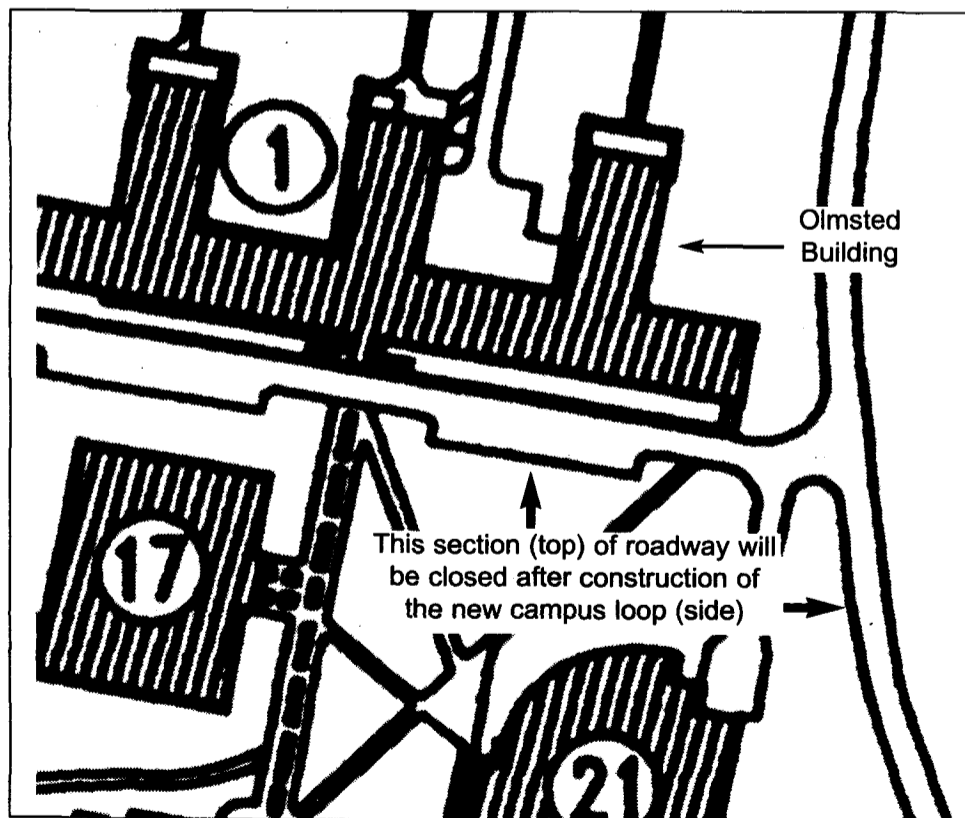
right side of campus and avoids College Avenue. Once the loop is complete, the road in front of Olmsted will extend only as far as the handicap parking spaces. The remainder of the road in front of Olmsted will become a mall area for pedestrians only.

The new food court under construction in the area once occupied by the library will extend onto a patio area facing the new library.

According to Dankanich, since the parking spaces in question are scheduled for elimination, the decision was made not to re-open them for a short time only to close them again.

Dankanich remembers that campus folks weren't happy when the spaces were closed originally. He smiled and said, "no sense making them mad twice."

Why are the parking spaces to the left of the Olmsted building front doors roped off?



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Q&A Column

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