

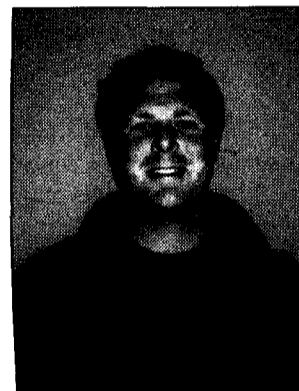


What do you think of the Federal Communications Commission's harsher punishments for broadcasters?



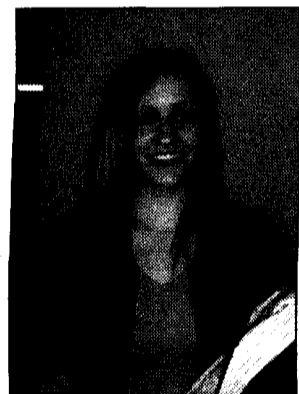
Josh Bashore
Marketing

"If it's completely obscene, I guess it's alright. But pretty much everyone swears. If it's just a slip of the tongue, it shouldn't matter."



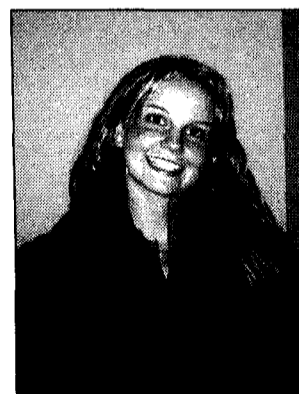
Kristen Mekulski
Communications

"It's a matter of freedom of speech. Howard Stern tells us the way it is. I think deep down, everyone wants to hear that."



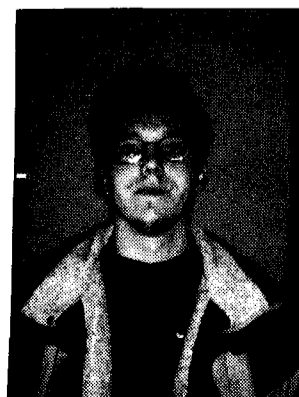
Jess Parsons
Communications

"If you don't like it, change the channel."



Joe Quinnan
Secondary Education

"I don't agree. There should be more liberties. Freedom of speech is freedom of speech."



Joe Quinnan
Secondary Education

"That's bullshit."

25 years later Penn Staters remember the TMI meltdown

By **CHRIS TORRES**
Staff Reporter

March 28, 1979 is a date that will forever live in the hearts and minds of many people at Penn State Harrisburg and central Pennsylvania. It was the day that the Three Mile Island nuclear power plant malfunctioned. Now 25 years later, the impact of the accident is still being felt by the Penn State community.

The incident happened at approximately 4 a.m., on the morning of March 28, 1979. The main feedwater pump at Unit-2 of the plant stopped running. Adding to that was human error and a failure in the warning systems that potentially could have fixed the problem. This led to a partial core meltdown inside Unit-2 and a drama that would capture the nation.

A student at Penn State Harrisburg was interning for WHP in Harrisburg during the time of the accident and broke the story to thousands in the Harrisburg area. Dr. William Mahar, associate provost and staff member of the college for more than 20 years, reminisced about the reporter.

"I remember the reporter broke the story to WHP between 10:30 and noon," Mahar said. "Eton Churchill and myself were very proud that he broke the story. He was a really talented student and we were proud of the fact that he came from our school."

Mahar also recalled some of the feelings that were going through his mind when the accident occurred. "There was a feeling of hysteria and also lack of information. I felt that the utility in charge of the plant failed to inform the public adequately and that the local authorities didn't have a plan for the situation."

On March 30, two days after the accident occurred, Governor Dick Thornburgh ordered the evacuation of all pre-school children and pregnant women within a five mile radius of the plant. Among those that evacuated was Jenny Dimeler, administrative assistant to the library director.

"I had a feeling that I was pregnant but I wasn't 100% sure," Dimeler said. "I went to Liverpool, PA, in a packed van with nine people and then I went to Sunbury and found out that I was indeed pregnant. I remember trying to call anybody in Middletown but I couldn't get a hold of anybody because the phone circuits were full."

Dimeler also had a personal stake in the situation. Her husband, Ralph, was a utility worker at the plant when the accident occurred.

Dimeler was not the only one on campus who had a personal connection to the accident. Sharon Blouch's husband, Edward, was a fire chief with Middletown borough when the accident occurred. Blouch, staff assistant to Dr. Mahar, recalled her feelings of that day.

"I was home that day and it was beautiful. My husband Ralph called me and told me to 'get out now,'" Blouch said. "I had a short period of time to get my things and I went to Fredericksburg, Pa. I was very scared for my husband but I think I was most scared of the fact that I didn't know a lot about what was going on."

The accident at TMI was the worst accident at a nuclear power plant in U.S. history. Unit-2 at the plant has been closed and Unit-1, which still operates today, will be decommissioned in a couple of years.

The accident could have been a lot worse. On April 26, 1986, an explosion at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant in the former Soviet Union killed 31 workers and released enough radiation to equal 10 Hiroshima atomic bombs. The Chernobyl disaster contaminated much of the countryside around the plant and the effects of that accident will be felt for many years to come.

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**- Dr. William Mahar
associate provost
and dean**

