

Fall Fest a success

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This year, Fall Fest took place at noon, Oct. 18, in the Vartan Plaza. Students and staff alike gathered to celebrate the upcoming start of fall.

The free food, sunny weather, activities, and The Scott Celani band practically called everyone's name. The food stands included cake, corn bread, chilly and caramel apples. Free candy bags and Fall Fest t-shirts were also available. Activities included pumpkin painting, a club pumpkin contest and a pie-eating contest. Several students participated in the pie-eating contest and in just a matter of minutes there was a winner. His name is Mike Edwards. Congratulations to Mike.

The caramel apples were by far the favorite of the food. Dipped in hot caramel and chocolate sprinkles, some students even got seconds of those sweet, red, candy apples. "I like the candy apples" was a common statement made throughout the

entire student body. Augie Bravo, senior Information Systems Technology major, said that it's not Fall Fest without the free chilly and corn bread.

Free. This is a word that means a lot to college students. Many times students wonder how their tuition money is spent. When asked what she thought of Fall Fest this year, Laura Cope, junior Communications major, said, "I know one place my tuition was used. It's nice to have something here for free." Krishna Mandavia, sophomore Health Administration major, said she is looking forward to attending Fall Fest this year because, "it's fun and it's free." "Free food makes all the difference," said Rachel Mahan, sophomore Criminal Justice major. Mahan helped organize the event. "We put out grilled cheese and it was all gone in about 40 minutes!" she said.

So why is it that the turnout rate was better this year? Well, the advertising and weather played a key role. "We advertised a lot and put flyers around," said Mahan. And the weather? It was much warmer than it has

been in the past few days. The Scott Celani band also helped a lot. Wayne Davey, sophomore Political Science major, said it's good to have music and friendly folks.

Which Fall Fest was better, this year's or last year's? Saud Albuainain, junior IST major, said, last year's was good, but this year's was better because it was outdoors on a nice day. Cope said it was not as fun last year as it was this year, because there wasn't a band playing. Samantha Lewis, sophomore Psychology major, said that it was better this year since more people knew about it, and as a result, more people attended.

Fall Fest was an event to get students to relax and have some fun during mid-semester when their class workload begins piling up and students begin to fall behind. Whether it was because of the pie eating contest, listening to The Scott Celani band, or just sitting outside enjoying the free food and weather, "Fall Fest is awesome!" said senior Secondary Education major Lutfia Hnesh.

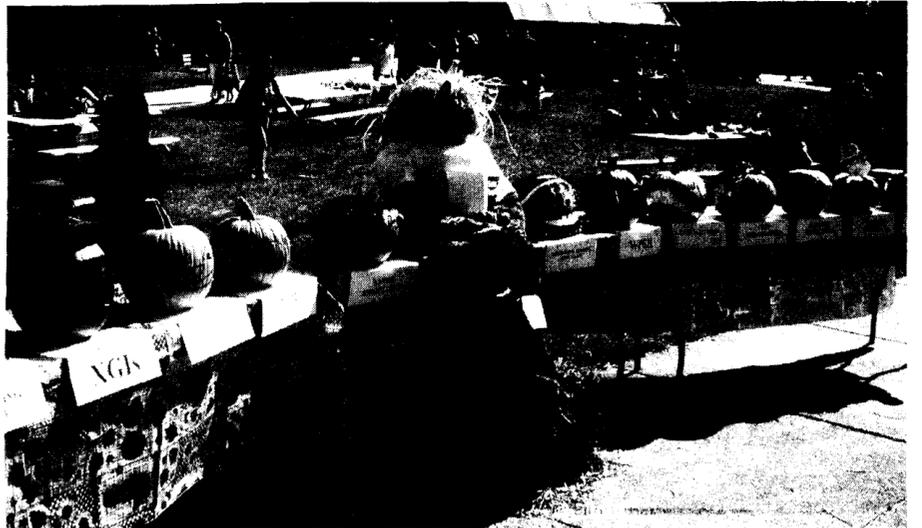


Photos by Ashley Lockard/The Capital Times

The pie eating contest was messy and exciting drawing a huge crowd of people to watch and cheer as these brave guys tried to devour chocolate or pumpkin pies as fast as possible.



The Scot Celani band performed at Fall Fest this year, featuring lead singer Scot Celani himself and band members Marty Nightengale on guitar and Lars Rizzuto on drums.



All the clubs of PSH were able to compete in a pumpkin decorating contest. Lion Ambassadors succeeded in winning the popular student vote with their lion face pumpkin.

Penn State smoking policy evaluated

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what the policy is and it is not advertised."

Students at Penn State Harrisburg expressed mixed emotions about the present smoking policy.

"I think it's kind of silly to put a no smoking sign right on top of the ashtray. Put the ashtrays away from the sign. It's common courtesy. It is also human nature not to go way down there to smoke if the ashtray is here," said Robert Anspach, 27, communications, Fredricksburg, smoker.

"I would like for there to be a designated place for it because the smell is offensive. When I smell it, I say, 'Did I smell like that? I want to apologize to everyone I was with,'" said Andrea Rung, 48, secondary education, Harrisburg. This comes from a smoker who quit in July.

"This is where everybody stands. I'm sure if there were a more dedicated spot, people would go there. I think if there was a specific area covered from the weather, it would work," said Michelle Allen, 28, criminal justice, smoker.

"I would go to my car to smoke if I had to," said Evan Myzithras, 25, electrical engineering, Harrisburg.

"I think there should be designated areas because not everyone smokes," said Matt Ruffner, 19, criminal justice, Hummelstown, a non-smoker who does not have a problem with smoke.

Penn State University has a university-wide policy to promote a healthy environment. Wellness initiatives typically include cessation programs. The Commission for the Prevention of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drug Abuse (CPATODA) is preparing to announce campus mini grants and student mini-

grant opportunities to support Penn State campuses in their efforts to reduce tobacco use among students.

"The university wants to promote a wellness program and good health in general," said William Mahar, Senior Dean for Academic Affairs, Penn State Harrisburg. "It's one of Penn State's values."

After participating in a Harvard School of Public Health study in 2001, 85 percent of 393 health center directors from 4-year colleges concluded that smoking among college students was a serious problem. Recognizing that tobacco companies market to 18-24 year old college students, universities initiated smoking cessation programs. In May 2003, 84 students from 14 Pennsylvania universities met at Clarion University to participate in the first annual Tobacco Summit for the Pennsylvania Smoking Cessation and Prevention Campaign (PSCPC). Students voted to become known as PA-SWAT (Pennsylvania Students Working Against Tobacco).

More and more, colleges are looking at becoming tobacco-free, both in the United States and abroad. In addition to Riverside Community College in California and Ozarks Technical Community College in Missouri, both smoke-free since 2003, the new policy at Alvin Community College in Texas went into effect in August. Glasgow University in Britain is also proposing a ban.

LaSalle believes half of the people right now aren't aware that they can change the environment and the policy. In states where they're changing legislation to prevent smoking in bars and restaurants, norms are changing, and people get used to breathing clean indoor air, she said.

"It's really a matter of social change," said LaSalle. "People don't complain because it's accepted culturally. Part of the issue in our culture is that smoking is for a segment of the population. It's perceived as normal, so people accept the fact that they have to walk through smoke. Accepting the fact that there's a smoking section is a cultural norm."

A general smoking policy exists at each of the fourteen schools within the State System of Higher Education in Pennsylvania. In the policy, preferences of both nonsmoker and smoker are to be respected except when preferences conflict, then the preference of the nonsmoker will prevail. Each school can also elaborate beyond the general policy. Several other mid-state colleges have rearranged their campuses because of smoking policies.

Smoking banned a few years ago at Hershey Medical Center proved to be problematic. People took longer breaks and smoked in bathrooms. Designated smoking areas now exist away from buildings, inside gazebos and glass bus stop shelters.

Despite the hopes of those pushing for a smoke-free campus, a referendum at Penn State Schuylkill moved all smoking receptacles 50 feet away from buildings and added a small gazebo with receptacles for those who smoke.

For over a year, Penn State York, a small campus of five buildings, has designated smoking areas. "It used to be times 30 people standing smoking," said Bill Vangreen, director, safety and security. By establishing smoking areas and the university having a policy, it's a lot better. It's a safety



A smoking policy does exist which mentions not smoking within 24 feet of the doors but many students do not follow this rule.

factor affecting other people with secondary smoke," he said.

Students and faculty walking through clouds of smoke changed the policy at Bloomsburg University last spring. The designated smoking areas are now at least 25 feet away from building entrances and ventilation systems. People are still complaining. "This smoking policy will always be something to look at and change," said Liza Benedict, Communications Director.

Harrisburg Area Community College acquired four gazebos over the last two years in which Deb Eichenberger, coordinator or grounds and arboretum, doesn't think anything has really changed. "It is pretty much status quo," she said.

Smoking is permitted at Temple University 25 feet away from building entrances and exits. The policy review committee is looking into the idea of a smoke-free campus. "It's not a particular position Temple is interested in pursuing at this point, but it does seem there is sufficient interest from staff and students," said Michael McNeil, director of the health empowerment office. "The

first step was not smoking in academic and administrative and residential halls, then the number of feet from buildings. Ultimately, it will happen in time."

More relaxed policies exist at Lebanon Valley College, Dickinson, and the University of Pittsburgh where it is simply preferred that people not smoke in front of buildings. No designated areas exist and, in some cases, no minimum distance from buildings is required.

In January, San Francisco became the first major city in the United States banning smoking in public parks. Since July, local and statewide smoke-free laws changed the atmosphere in restaurants in Alexandria, Virginia; all public and private dormitories in New Jersey; all enclosed public areas in Montana; and the University Hospital in Syracuse New York.

"The social wave of change is now nearing a tipping point," said Terry Pechacek, Ph.D., Associate Director of Science in the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Office on Smoking and Health in Atlanta. "These type of changes ... are not atypical anywhere anymore."



Photos by M. E. Adams/Capital Times

Many more colleges are looking at becoming tobacco-free. PSH already has policies promoting wellness of its students.