

In the Beginning . . . THERE WAS ORIENTATION

by Stephanie Guion

This passage is dedicated to all my fellow classmates who have diligently withheld the agony and cumbersome agenda of orientation week here at the Hazleton Campus of Penn State, and to those sophomores who have willingly suffered through the massive confusion caused by 500 eager, naive freshmen.

Arrival time on campus consisted of anywhere from 9:00 Tuesday morning, August 31, through mid-morning on Wednesday, September 1. It was in basic English, "Mass Confusion." Upon entering the lounge you immediately received a room key, a few forms, and an outstretched hand requesting five dollars for RHC dues. Luckily they hit you with this while your parents were still available and most kids took advantage of the situation. Bulging boxes, crates, and suitcases were unloaded and hauled to the individual rooms. An empty, quiet concrete building was slowly being transformed into an anxious, busy, crowded, overflowing, people-filled "home." Most people will question the term "home" when it is referred to a dormitory, but knowing you're going to be living there for the next 30 weeks, you try to make it as liveable as possible.

One of our first impressions of the campus was established through our first meal at the cafeteria. I thought the meal (roast beef) was rather unusual until a sophomore told me to expect it three times a week.

Our first day was wrapped up with a dorm meeting in the lobby, where we were introduced to the "Chiefs." It's funny the way they always show you the ones to watch out for first.

As hard as I always thought it was to meet people, I kind of got used to exchanging glances with someone and then introducing myself and asking their name. It is incredible how many names can be thrown at you in two days and equally as incredible how many you forget in one.

We finally met as an entire group Wednesday, September 1. They packed us like sardines into the Commons building and put us through another torturous session of "Welcomes," (the 15th one we'd encountered up until then), procedures, and lengthy explanations. Before we knew it, we were split up again, this time into three groups, and we either proceeded to

get stabbed with a TB needle (one of the more exciting things that happened to us during orientation), or attended a "Survival Session." Now we as freshmen knew we were in dire need of help, but this sounded like we were going through the African Jungle on a safari or something. The purpose of this "Life-saving" experience was really just to get acquainted with some of the "Pros", (I'm afraid to ask what that really stands for), and staff.

In the afternoon, we were reunited with our hometown folks. Up here you learn to accept the fact that your hometown folk may live anywhere from 2-200 miles away from you, but yet you feel a closeness towards them because they're from the same area.

The final quest of the day, assembling into the individual colleges and meeting with our advisors, was another ideal chance to meet new people, learn more names, and finally meet the competitors in your specific field face to face.

The softball game between the faculty and students proved rather interesting. Although most of the rules of the game seemed to be up for grabs, everyone had a lot of fun, even the spectators getting hit by the wild throws at first base. The teams didn't exactly match up to the All-Star players we expected, but... Registration is a book in itself. If you were lucky enough to have a last name that begins with A-C, you had to lead the pack and be in the classroom to register at 8:30 AM. These were the times when I hated my parents for giving me a name that appeared at the beginning of the alphabet. Registration ran through most of the morning.

They really threw the "good" news at us in the afternoon. First, we found out the gymnasium wouldn't be in use until October, our required English course would involve a bit more participation than we had anticipated, and the library was going to be run more strictly this year. And now for the bad news...

The weather proved to be disappointing but our picnic and dance went on as scheduled anyway, (although the picnic was held downstairs in the Commons.) The students really had an opportunity to literally "let loose", and

believe me that's what they did. (For those with "the munchies,") the picnic supplied the eatins' (hot dogs, baked beans and good ol' potato salad.) They also had a keg tapping during the dance, but much to our dismay it was only birch beer.

We wound up the week with a good or bad experience, depending on whether you found out you were a carrier of TB or not. It really gave you something to look forward to the whole week. For 24 hours everyone had walked around with four little holes in his arm, praying the test would prove negative. We also had a chance to sign up for all the clubs and organizations. We all realized that this was our big chance to get "involved" and to help get rid of the "Big Bad Hazleton Campus Monster," better known to those of you who consider yourselves sophisticates, as "Apathy."

The troops started moving out Friday morning and by Friday night, Hazleton was less like a funny farm and more like a campus. It's really too bad the transition couldn't last for longer than a week-end.

CAMPUS RENOVATIONS PLANNED

The area behind the water tower may soon take on a new facade. Plans have been made to transform the now barren area into a study court. The refurbished area will hopefully become a peaceful place for students to not only study and read, but also for relaxation and communing with nature.

Plans for construction are set for this fall and next spring, with dedication planned for the spring of 1977.

Other renovations on campus include the greenhouse located by the faculty parking lot. Complete except for a few details, it will soon be abloom and aiding botanical studies in the Biology Department.