

EDITORIAL

Hazleton: My Kind of Town

by Scott R. Hnasko

As I sit here typing, I can hear the gasps of many students as they read my headline. They make some kind of joke to their friends, and then comfort themselves by saying that the article is going to be loaded with sarcasm.

Fasten your seatbelts, kids. Hazleton is my kind of town.

I was born in Hazleton and I have lived here all my life. According to some people, this makes me a "Hazletoid" - someone who is stereotyped as a backwater hick whose favorite hobby is sitting on the front porch and watching the Buick rust. In my opinion, I am a "Hazletonian." The stereotypes of many students make me feel ashamed. However, I am not ashamed of myself or my hometown. I am ashamed of the students.

A student's time here at Penn State Hazleton is supposed to be a learning experience. When I say this, I don't just mean classes and clubs. There's plenty to learn by interacting with the environment. Unfortunately, the meager explorations conducted by students have encountered boredom and what they considered to be (INSERT SINISTER MUSIC HERE) "hostile mutations from the Hazle zone."

Here's a startling update -- boredom is curable. It's all what you make of it, folks. It's who you hang around with

and the legality of what you consider to be fun. As for rude Hazletonians, jerks and idiots are universal. Just because you may have had a run-in with one of our local citizens doesn't mean we all behave the same way. In fact, many of us seem "normal enough" to "pass ourselves off as out-of-towners."

I will readily admit that tension exists between our town and the campus. It's a basic situation involving culture shock. In this case, I am completely confused. Both sides hate each other when both sides should love each other.

By placing a campus here in Hazleton, Pennsylvania State University has helped to boost the economy of Hazleton. In that same move, Hazletonians have been provided with a fine place to enhance their educations while staying at home.

Out-of-town students also benefit. Hazleton represents an opportunity for students to move out of their parents' houses and start life on their own. The size of the Hazleton campus also allows students to learn in an individualized

atmosphere instead of going to bigger campuses and attending classes of 200 students or more.

So why the conflict? Personally, I'm at a loss. Both sides benefit from the relationship, yet there are always disputes.

Why do many students feel persecuted by local police? Why do students bash Hazleton without good reason? Why aren't there any recreation areas in Hazleton designed with college students in mind? Why is it that many of the students at this campus don't seem concerned enough to realize that our town is spelled "H-A-Z-L-E-T-O-N," instead of going by the mythical rule "L before E except after Z?"

I don't have any of these answers, and I'm not going to hold my breath while waiting for them. All I can say is that I have seen the pros and cons of both areas and I try to appreciate the areas to their fullest. I invite all of you to really experience Hazleton. Just maybe you'll find out that Hazleton is your kind of town, too.

What is there to do here? Read

by Steve Kirk

A chilly Saturday afternoon descends on the Hazleton campus. Many students sit bored and lost in a lonely dorm room. The gym is open for a few short hours, and even then, can only offer so much entertainment. The city holds some enjoyment, but for the numerous non-drivers, it is a long walk away.

These are classic problems of the campus. The solutions, though, have not yet been found. Year after year, ideas are presented, but none ever take root and grow into a useable form of recreation.

If a solution is to come, it must come from the student body. They are the ones who decide what they do and do not want. They are the ones who must get what they want.

Ideas are not hard to be found. Some faculty members have discussed building a fitness trail on the campus. Such a trail would offer room to run or walk, along with exercise stations. Also, why not make room on campus into a video movie theater on weekends? The school has the equipment and movies are easy enough to find.

Another idea is weekend activities in the gym. Games, contests, fairs, or nearly anything that comes to mind can be organized. Our campus has resources, but the resources must be effectively used. The administration cannot do everything for the student body; students must speak their minds and work together to organize a project. Sometimes the task will not be easy, but (continued next page)

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