



(Photo by Lynn Dudinsky of the Daily Collegian Staff)

The Nittany Lion mascot passed out balloons to youngsters enjoying the parade kicking off Spring Week '79 at University Park last month.

The 'Miracle' System Will Meet Needs of Non-Traditional Students

By **ROBERT G. QUINN**
Dean of Academic Instruction for Commonwealth Campuses

The Commonwealth Campus system of Penn State is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year. There is good reason to celebrate, for it is a unique, multi-campus system, the largest and one of the best in the country.

In 1915, "Extension Branch Schools" began offering three-curricula on an evening class basis. There were six of these Branch Schools by 1926. Centers were established during the decade of the 1930s to meet the emergencies of the Great Depression. Additional centers were established immediately following World War II during a period when returning veterans occupied all available space. Although they were originally considered as temporary solutions to temporary problems, the Undergraduate and Technical Centers served a continuing and growing need during the decades following the war.

In 1958, the college-age population in Pennsylvania numbered about one-half million. Predictions were that this population would expand until it reached, in the 1970s, nearly a million. University President Eric

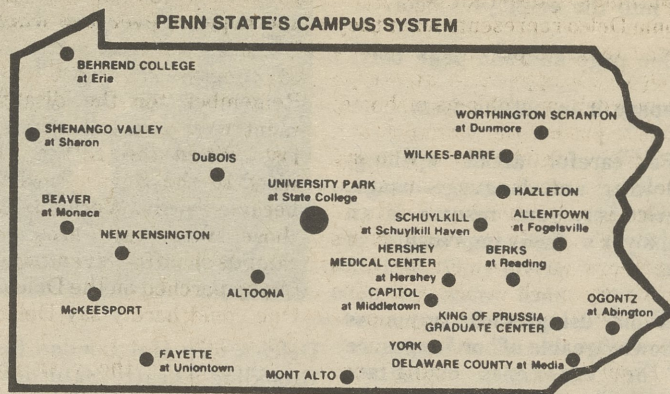
of existing centers and campuses to provide specific long-range development programs and proposals for future operations. In January 1959, the trustees took formal action to recognize the establishment of a system of "Commonwealth campuses" and to integrate the operation of the University throughout the system under a set of uniform academic, financial and public relations policies.

The validity of the approach has been demonstrated in the dramatic growth of the system. It has expanded to include eighteen campuses, one of which became the Behrend College. The physical plant now includes more than 120 major buildings on more than 1,500 acres of land. Today there are approximately 1,500 faculty and staff at the 17 campuses who annually serve approximately 16,000 students in the resident education programs. About 65 percent of the freshmen who enter Penn State enroll at a Commonwealth campus.

Students who seek a small, intimate environment, a professional University faculty, small classes, easy and close contact with faculty and advisors — indeed, all of the academic advantages of a small college, but at a much lower cost — may choose to begin their Penn State education at the Commonwealth Campuses.

There is a trade-off. Students at many of the campuses do not have the "extras" — the extensive, non-academic facilities, athletic and social, which are available on a large scale at the University Park Campus. However, there is plenty of activity in

Walker said at the time that if the Commonwealth could provide appropriate educational opportunities for the population it would be "something approaching an educational miracle."



The "miracle" was about to begin. Representatives from commonwealth asked the University to enter into a joint venture with them: they would provide all the land, and money for half the necessary buildings, if the University would place campuses in their regions.

In July 1958, the Board of Trustees took an action which was to be a most significant event in the history of the University. They directed the officers of the University to develop a program for the study

sports at the campuses — intramural recreational activity in approximately 10 sports, from basketball to fencing; and tournaments in 10 sports, from soccer to golf. Social events are a part of student life at every campus.

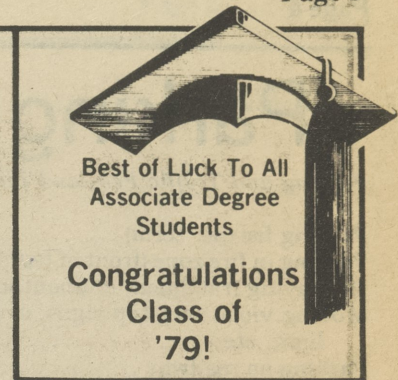
Repeated studies of many kinds over the years show that students who begin their education at the campuses articulate the move to the University Park Campus freely and easily. One-half the members of each year's graduating class started at the

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Spring Week at U.P.

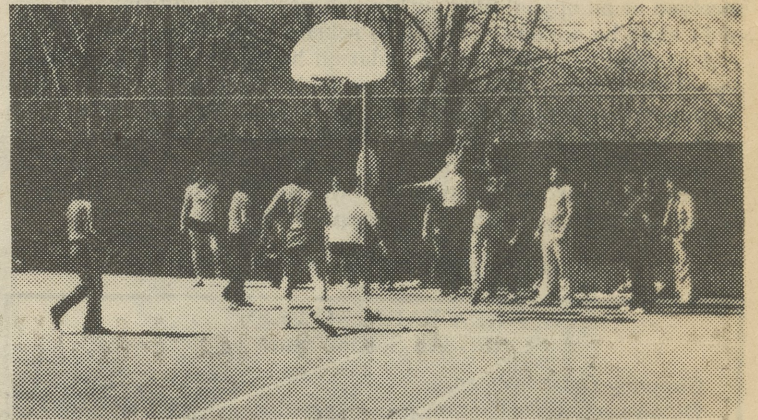
Spring Week '79 took place at the Penn State University Park Campus April 21-29.

The theme for this year's festival was Spring Week-Spring Loose. Activities included a Black Arts Festival, Blue Band Concert, Music Fest, parade in downtown State College, Carnival, Awards Ceremony, and a



Regatta. Fraternities and Sororities participated in the Great Greek Chariot Race, the carnival, which included games, rides, booths, and a tent party — and the Regatta on the Stone Valley Lake.

HOOPLA



(Photo by Hank Finkel)

Delco B. Ballers take part in intramural basketball action during Spring term

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