

Opinion

Share the wealth

Students short on cash for the holidays

Americans think Black Friday is a reason to C-H-A-R-G-EEEE

Yeah, I was warned, I had heard the stories, and I was told it was not a good idea. You know what? I did it anyway.

I went shopping on Black Friday.

That's not quite true; I attempted go shopping on Black Friday. The content of which I came home with, was the same as which I had left with, except nearly all my buttons had been pushed.

As a foreigner I must say I have witnessed several strange American customs, but this one has topped them all (at least so far).

On my quest for Christmas cheers and presents for my friends and family, let me tell you; I got yelled at, bumped into, pushed around, shoved, kicked, stepped on, and smacked around with shopping bags (not all of the above were deliberate I'm sure).

I know there was lots of sales and stuff and that saving a buck or two is great, but come on people, be nice about it.

Rant 'n Rave
by Mari Ostbye

It's like common courtesy, etiquette, manners, respect, the golden rule — along with dignity — just got flushed down the toilet, tossed out the window, and whatever else one can do with refined behavior.

The amount of bickering about everything and nothing is beyond me. There were people creating all kinds of scenes all over the place.

There was a lady at a cash register I could not help but overhear. She was captivately loud, and all over 42 cents. You see, the 10 percent discount did not register, and she apparently felt this was unacceptable. Believe me, she made it perfectly clear that this was unacceptable.

This event was fascinating, and I would have probably been mesmerized for an even longer period of time had it not been for the fact that by just standing still, I was in the way of everyone else.

I soon learned that I do not have the psychological capacity to participate in this tradition, and after about an hour or so, I decided to make a run for it, hoping I could do so unharmed and without having to inflict pain or damage myself.

I am proud to say I made it out alive. Not that they made it easy. I was stuck behind a wall of women and packages. Four women — each with four bags in each hand — walked side-by-side, blocking any hope of an escape route.

My perseverance paid off. I got out. And, to my knowledge, so did everyone else.

People, hear this: Never again!

Mari Ostbye is a staff writer for the Lion's Eye. She's graduating this semester. If you'd like to rant 'n rave about something, write us and drop in the Lion's Eye mailbox in Main. Be sure and include your name, phone number and e-mail address.

By OWEN A. BERGWALL
Staff Writer

During this time of year, there are many problems, confusion and somehow, a friendly spirit in the air, not to mention old people driving slower than water could flow up a hill, but they're trying their best, so I'll let them slide today.

The holidays are here! Hanukkah, Christmas, Kwanzaa, and anything else I missed.

It is the time of year for cheer, working, looking forward to the holiday, and looking backward to visiting all your wonderful families. But, to get to the point, it is a time of financial stress.

Being college students, we have to work, often two jobs, maybe even three. Delco students often have to work extra hard to support a car, gas, insurance, maybe an apartment and sometimes a signif-

icant other. To make things even more exciting we all have to buy Christmas presents.

My friend Paul Butler, a student at Delco, said, "I work two jobs, one at a hospital and one at Old Navy. I live in an apartment in Darby, and take care of a car as well."

Paul, we all feel your pain.

I work at a restaurant myself, and this time of year, we can be slow. I mean filthy slow. Just like the water running uphill again. When one works at a restaurant, they often depend on tips, besides the minimum wage. As if being a full-time student weren't enough, we all mostly work our butts off.

The average student works a good 30 hours per week. So, when you go to school all day, come home, get changed, fly out to work, then sit there and get people tipping you not too awesomely.

I received 2 beautiful bucks on a \$120 bill last week. The season for giving? Whatever is that? Sure every six customers are nice and take care of you, but overall, I pray for about 10 percent.

So, let's help each other out.

Here's my plan, if you are getting a service provided to you, and kindly, and you think there's an outside chance the person depends on tips, help them out. Chances are they'll put it to good use. I thank anyone who takes this to heart.

Owen Andrew Bergwall is a student at Penn State Delco. Checks can be sent to him in care of the Lion's Eye (just kidding.) If you'd like to write an opinion piece for the campus newspaper, drop something off in our mailbox on the first floor of Main. Be sure and include your name and phone number.

Letters to the editor:

Fresh fruit: Is this too much to ask for?

For eons man has enjoyed fruit, and with good reason — fruit is good! That is, fruit used to be good. There was a time when the fruit you ate was the fruit you picked. This practice is all but lost, except for a few "pick your own" fruit stands, or third-world nations, where they are not as "progressive" as we Americans are.

This nation has succumbed to the mindset of market consumerism, and has paid the price. No longer is it possible to drive through an orchard and see fruit ripening on the tree. Anymore, the only place fruit is allowed to ripen is on windowsills and kitchen counters. In a quest for profits, and aesthetically pleasing fruit, farmers have sold out, and pick their fruit too early. The results are disastrous.

In order to look at this problem more deeply, we shall look at a fruit, which is particularly susceptible to foulness from early picking. Peaches are one of the finest tasting fruits; however, when they are picked too early they ripen into beautiful looking

balls of tasteless mush. In order for a peach to develop its taste and firm center, it must get enough moisture. These are facts that are widely known, and yet farmers continue to pick fruit before it is ripe. In an article at channel2000.com titled "Selecting Fresh Vegetables & Fruit," it is clearly stated several times that fruit needs to be picked when ripe: "Vegetables will not ripen in storage. If they are not ripe when they are purchased, they will have poor texture and flavor... Fruits have best flavor if they are ripe when purchased."

By picking the peaches too early, what the farmers are in effect doing is stopping the process that makes their merchandise profitable. This would be the equivalent of jewelers selling shiny pieces of coal; if you wait long enough, it will turn into a diamond. It is utterly ludicrous, when looked at this way, but this is exactly what they are doing. Without perceiving it, they are killing off their very livelihood. This however, doesn't seem to even be a problem anymore, since the family farm has been phasing out of existence as well. Hmm, might there be some kind of correlation here?

It is as Epictetus (circa 60 A.D.)

said: "No great thing is created suddenly, any more than a bunch of grapes or a fig. If you tell me that you desire a fig, I answer you that there must be time. Let it first blossom, then bear fruit, then ripen."

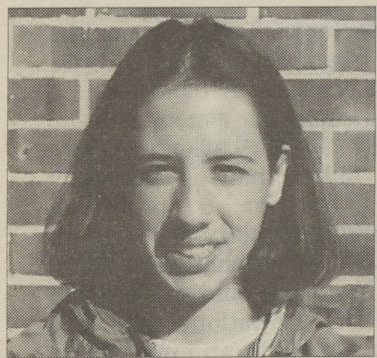
How is it that a man not quite 2,000 years ago could understand this simple concept, yet America with its great agricultural scientists cannot? How is it that in third-world countries, fruit is harvested in season? They don't harvest a couple weeks early because the fruit looks better, they harvest in season, they harvest when the fruit is ready to be eaten. What is so hard to figure out about this? Is America so ignorant that she would rather have something of no value other than appearance, rather than something of substance, something that is of actual worth?

It is not just the matter of the fruit being spoiled by the time it reaches our mouths; that is malodorous. It is the ethic of America, the mindset, and the whole consumer mentality. More this, more that, more, more, more... It is not sitting back and buying that made America great. America was made great through hard work, toil,

See FRUIT: Page 6

Lion's Eye Poll

Lion's Eye staff writer Mari Ostbye asked students at Penn State Delco: What tips do you have to help students make it through finals?



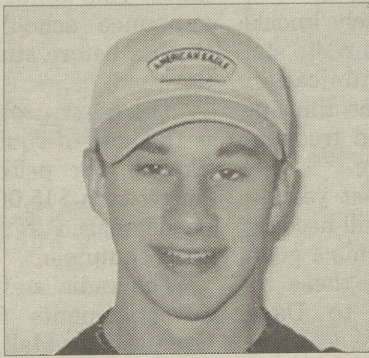
"Make up note cards."

— Trish Russo
HDFS student



"If you haven't started studying yet; make checks payable directly to your professor, not the University."

— Stephanie Deak
HDFS student



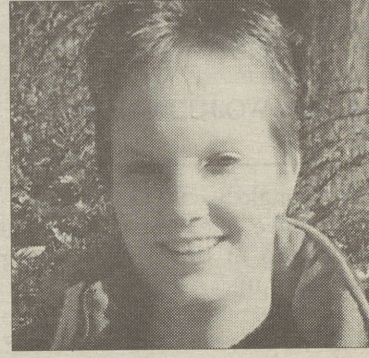
"Review your notes."

— John Gavin
Computer Science student



"Show up."

— Christa Grogan
Liberal Arts student



"Get a good nights sleep."

— Sarah Preston
Student majoring in
Special Education