

# Eye on Campus

## Rites, and wrongs, of spring

One by one, they emerge, like bears from a winter's slumber, and they go about the annual spring ritual of a student on the Penn State Delco campus.

First, they sense a ray's warmth through the doors and windows — yes, even all the way through the two sets of doors and into the inner sanctum of the Lion's Den — and they stretch and amble toward the daylight to investigate.

They run through the checklist:

- 1) Are there leaves on the trees yet?
- 2) Has the grass started to get long?
- 3) Has the snow melted?
- 4) Is there salt on the concrete where the smokers congregate?
- 5) Is there anything moving out there?

If they can answer yes to any three of the five questions, the door swings open. A tentative step into the lobby, another hard look at the surroundings — one last sniff of the crisp air with a suspicious nostril — and, finally, with a wave of hand, the OK for others to follow.

Spring has arrived on the campus.

All winter, you can look down on the grounds, designed as they are in a perfect square, and see nothing for hours at a time. Nothing but white, the remains of a winter's worth of snowstorms timed perfectly so as to replenish the inches-deep blanket all season. During class times, during common hour, during every time except those precious 15 minutes between classes, when there are bundles of clothing with people somewhere underneath hustling from building to building, there is nothing but white.

Gone and forgotten are those now-nostalgic days of late August, September and October, when there was the occasional football game, with the Rio Delco and the main drag between the Main and



Photo by Meredith Becker

The quad, for lack of a better term, on the Penn State Delco campus, begins to show signs of life as soon as the snow disappears and the students and other campus community members come out for a breath of fresh air.

Commons buildings serving as out-of-bounds lines. Gone were the study times — or naps, what's the difference — on a bench or picnic table, or just on the grass, with the periodic dropping of a green apple alongside the noggin serving as a reminder that class time is near.

Long gone was that concert from the fall, the pep rally to send off the volleyball team to University Park, the freedom to just leisurely stroll along the tarmac at your own pace, knowing but not even realizing that the weather was perfect for such luxury.

Gone.

All of those things have been gone since before

Thanksgiving — remember Thanksgiving? — and the students that populate the great outdoors here in Middletown have gone inside, somewhere, to hibernate.

Nowhere is hibernating better than it is in the Lion's Den, where there are billiards balls to be hidden, couches to ruin your posture in, a stereo system to be played entirely too loud and with too much bass — just right, in other words — and a big-screen TV upon which MTV is always on display.

But the Lion's Den is hardly the only place where students hide themselves during the winter. There are the lounges in the Classroom and Main buildings, where studying, Internet surf-

ing and the fine art of passing time are in evidence in equal parts. There are the computer labs, for the most high of the high-tech campus denizens.

And, for the most desperate among us, there, of course, is Vairo Library, where term papers are researched and written, essays are concocted, tests are crammed for and final exams are cursed.

And then, finally, there is that ray, and that warmth, and that first hint of activity.

And all is right again.

The doors swing open, and there ... are ... people! Real people! Outside! And instead of looking down at the quad — is that what we have out there, between Rio Delco and the

Classroom Building, between the Main Building and the Commons Building, a quad? — you are standing, or sitting, or throwing a Frisbee or a ball in the middle of it.

It is spring. In a month, finals will be over, and all these people will be off to summer jobs, or taking summer classes or throwing that same Frisbee on a beach and doing a little bit of all the things students do in the summer.

And then, in the end of August, you and many of them will be back, and there will be concerts and touch football and naps beside apple trees.

At Penn State Delco, just like everywhere else, the cycle is complete. And continuous.

## Project Linus: Helping, one blanket at a time

BY JENNIFER RUFO

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Lion's Eye staff writer

One of the most beloved characters from Charlie Brown is Linus, always dragging his blanket around. Project Linus' mission is to provide love, a sense of security, warmth and comfort to children who are seriously ill, traumatized, or otherwise in need through the gifts of new, homemade, washable blankets and afghans. Project Linus is a 100 percent volunteer non-profit organization where the volunteers are known as "blanketeers."

As of January 2002, Project Linus had delivered over 400,000 security blankets to children around the world and now has over 300 chapters in the United States. Project Linus has been mentioned in *Family Circle*, *Parade Magazine*, *PEOPLE Magazine*, and *Readers Digest* among other publications, and has been mentioned on the *Rosie O'Donnell* and *Oprah* shows.

At Penn State Delaware County, Dr. Laura Guertin organized a Penn State chapter of Project Linus. On

March 6, during National Craft Month, 14 people, a mix of faculty, staff and students, came together to sew together crocheted and knitted blue and white squares. The blue and white squares then made up Penn State blankets to donate to Project Linus. In one joining party, the group was able to make twelve blankets.

"I have been crocheting squares and putting together blankets at home, but I wanted to share the activity with others," Dr. Guertin said. "It didn't take too long to find out that there are many of us on campus that knit and crochet."

Dr. Guertin brought the blankets to the local area Project Linus coordinator who then will distribute the blankets to children in local hospitals.

Unofficially known as the Knittany Lion Needleworks, Project Linus will be an ongoing event with the group. More squares, joining parties and donations are in the works.

If you are interested in joining the Knittany Lion Needleworks, which is on its way to becoming a full-fledged club, contact Dr. Guertin at UXG3@psu.edu. No experience is necessary to join.

