

# Eye on Campus

## 'THE SECRET OF THE CHIMES'

Now it can be told ... they're  
'a tape player in a janitor's closet'

Where are those bells that ring on the hour?

By **RENEE BLISARD**  
*Lion's Eye staff writer*  
REB202@psu.edu

What is that beautiful sound of bells wafting through Penn State Delco?

Is it local church bells?

No, it's Penn State's very own chimes, tolling each hour.

The actual name of the chimes is "carillon," according to Penn State Delco Director of Development and University Relations Joe Biscontini.

But ... we see no bells. Where are they?

"The chimes are a big tape player in a janitor's electrical closet in Main Building," said Biscontini. "Speaker units for the chimes are clearly visible on the roof of Main."

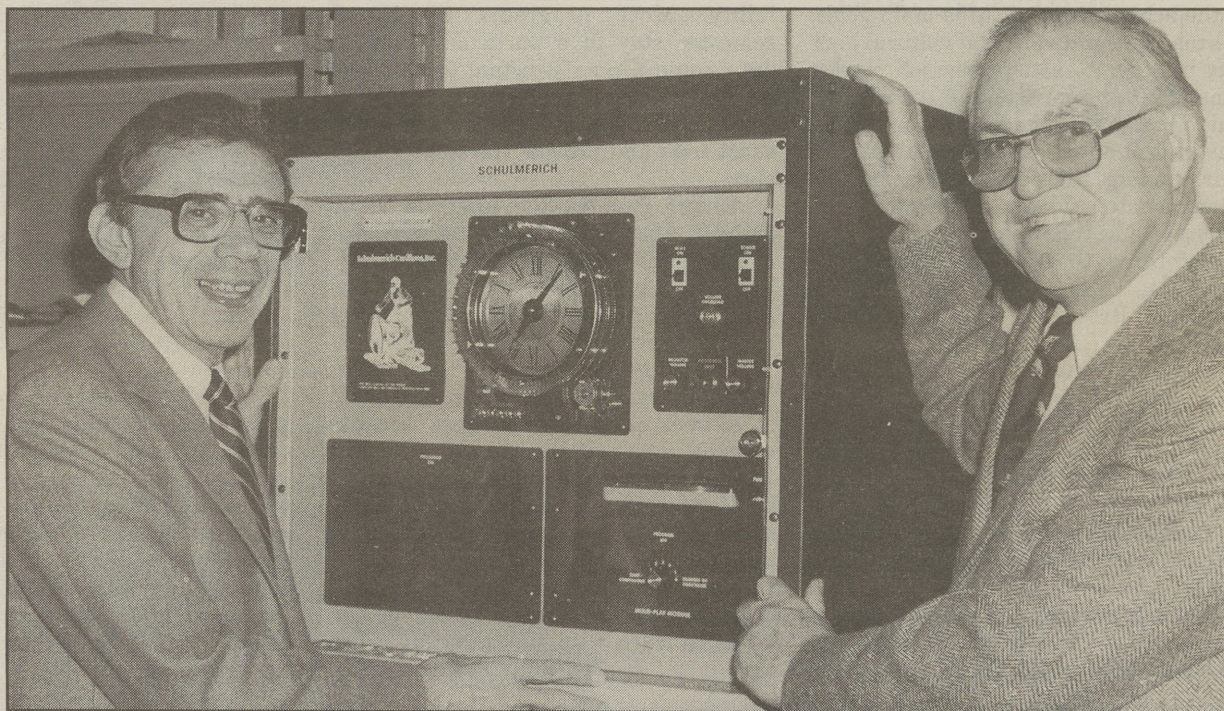
In addition to chiming the hours, the carillon plays music, such as Penn State's alma mater, show tunes and Beatles songs.

"They used to play 'Michelle, My Belle' and 'Never Walk Alone' on them," said Biscontini.

The chimes are not new; they were obtained in 1982 by Delco's first CEO, John D. Vairo, for \$8,200. Biscontini said the carillon chimes, a Tyme Stryke-41 model from Schulmerich Carillons, Inc., were funded by various alumni and Penn State Club of Delaware County's phone-a-thon headed by the club's president, David E. Pergrin. The chimes were purchased in memory of James Armstrong (1936-1982), a past president of the club.

But now, as 2004 approaches, what is their effect?

"I didn't know there were chimes," said Stacey Kelly, Penn State Delco junior and senator of athletics. "A lot of people don't know there is a clock on



John Vairo, the first CEO of Penn State Delco, and then-Penn State Club President David Pergrin unveil the carillon chimes. The tapes that run the chimes still sit in their humble surroundings in the Main Building.

the classroom building, let alone chimes. They think the chimes are from a church."

Penn State Delco purchased the chimes because having chimes is a collegiate tradition.

"The intent was to emulate Old Main at University Park that always had a carillon unit," said Biscontini. "It's the same as why they have the lion statue; it's very collegiate.

In an original memo to everyone who helped get the chimes, John D. Vairo agreed.

He wrote, "The carillons will add a new dimension to this campus — one with which all Penn Staters are familiar — the tolling of the time bells and the playing of Penn State songs. Now everyone will hear them throughout the countryside."

Hear them, even if they can't see them.

## Trying to keep budget crunch 'invisible' to students

Continued from **PAGE 1**

anticipate any changes that will affect students.

"We're working hard to keep it invisible to students," Franz said.

While Franz doesn't think that students are going to see any problems anytime soon, the future is uncertain. His biggest concern is that indeterminate funding limits the school's ability to start new programs.

Lack of monetary support from the state isn't the only problem: Enrollment decline in most Commonwealth College campuses also poses difficulties, since enrollment is

where most of the university's money comes from. Tuition increases affect enrollment, and Franz worries about students who work and a national trend shifting responsibility of education to the student.

"There is a higher proportion of students working," he said, "and working more hours. It's more pressure on students and their performance is not as good. A student that could be an A or B is a C student."

For now, the university is doing its best to deal with the unpredictable situation with the state budget. University President Graham Spanier

has proposed a three-tier budget for 2004-2005. Each tier is based on a different appropriation amount, since the amount is uncertain until the assembly actually meets. And with increasingly declining appropriation, the university has become less dependent on the state.

"The positive side of a bad picture is that we don't get as much money from the state," Franz said. "When I first came here in the late '60s, half of the budget came from the state. Now it's 12 percent."

Tomezsko acknowledges that something will have to be done to raise rev-

enue. His hope is to create an educated workforce, therefore creating jobs in Pennsylvania in order to make the commonwealth appealing to both its own residents and residents of other states.

But first things first: A finalized state budget would be a great start, and the Penn State alumni grassroots association is doing its part by contacting legislators and applying political pressure.

According to state Rep. Tom Killion, R-Delaware, the budget will be final sometime this month.

If Penn State only had a dime for every time they heard that one ...