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THE NITTANY LION RECIEVES DUI

Special to the Lion's Eye



Photo courtesy of www.raymonddeg.com

By Elizabeth Murphy - Collegian Staff Writer

Forgiving errors is part of the Nittany Lion mascot's job. He still supports the basketball player who misses the 3-pointer at the buzzer or the baton twirler who drops the baton on the last throw.

This legacy -- provided by co-author of The Nittany Lion, Steven Herb -- is especially fitting with the Nov. 22 arrest of the current mascot, James Sheep, Herb said.

"I think probably there isn't anyone around who wouldn't like him to be able to rewind and do that day again," Herb said. "I'm sure the way he feels right now -- nobody feels worse."

Sheep, a senior, was charged with DUI after he was pulled over by Penn State Police at 3:16 a.m. Nov. 22 on Curtin Road and recorded a .164 BAC, according to the criminal complaint.

He was pulled over after a police officer noticed there were too many people in the car he was driving, police said. Sheep had "watery, sleepy eyes," and police detected the odor of alcohol emanating from the vehicle, according to the criminal complaint. Sheep failed field sobriety tests and consented to a blood test, police said.

University spokesman Geoff Rushton said the incident is "disappointing."

"Any time there is an alcohol-related violation with a student it's disappointing, but it wouldn't be fair for me to single out one person," he said.

He also said he wouldn't necessarily call the mascot a figurehead, but he is certainly "recognizable" and a "well-regarded part of the campus."

The Office of Judicial Affairs has not taken any action against Sheep yet, Rushton said.

Rushton said any decision

about suspension of Sheep from the role as mascot is up to cheerleading coach Curtis White. White did not respond to repeated phone calls by press time Monday. Sheep refused comment Sunday.

Herb, also the head of Penn State's education library, said the mascot is the one of the few physical representations of Penn State that can move from place to place.

"I think whatever that mythical thing of Penn State's spirit is -- that is what he, and eventually she, symbolizes," Herb said. "Excitement at victory, sympathy at defeat."

Herb said he hopes Sheep finishes out his senior year as the Nittany Lion mascot.

Jackie Esposito, the other author of The Nittany Lion and Penn State library archivist, said the Nittany Lion is the most recognizable mascot in the nation.

"It's all the good things that reflect Penn State about spirit and sportsmanship," she said, "and I think that's what the man in the suit symbolizes."

Esposito said the name of only the last few of the 43 mascots have been publicized.

"Part of it is to make the reality of the person in suit more realistic to fans -- the humanity of the person in the suit," she said.

Still, Esposito said, Sheep should possibly be held to a higher standard as the mascot.

"If he was any one of other 42,000 Penn State students on a big football game weekend, it would have just been in the police blotter," she said. "The reason it is a story is because when he is not being a normal Penn State senior, he's wearing the suit."

World AIDS Week 2008 on Brandywine

By Rahel Teklegiorgis - Lion's Eye Staff Writer - rtt129@psu.edu



Laura Lam, Santeena Brown, and Matt Zangari proudly hold up the AIDS question box for AIDS Week - Photo courtesy of Rahel Teklegiorgis

Lead-empower-deliver! This is the theme for 2008 World (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) AIDS day which was observed on December 1st this year. Monday also marked the beginning of the newly adopted AIDS week on our campus. Members of Brandywine's Student Government Association decided to not only acknowledge global AIDS day, but to implement an entire week dedicated to raising awareness.

This week serves as a time of encouragement for those who have been directly or indirectly affected by this disease. The student body was asked to wear red the entire week in order to show support for those who are battling the disease and to remind everyone to get tested.

John Strawbridge, President of Brandywine's Gay-Straight Alliance, was handing out condoms to students on Monday and plans to continue doing so throughout the week. "These are for protection not for fun," SGA President Ashley Wood responds lightly when asked about the condom distribution. This friendly and simple peer-to-peer communication has been a powerful method of spreading the importance of protection from HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus)/AIDS on college campuses.

Students also left red boxes and signs around campus, allowing those who may have uncertainties about AIDS or STDs to leave questions. This method allows for questions to be left anonymously and saves students from openly speaking on the topic, seeing that many students may feel uncomfortable asking these questions in a public setting.

The questions collected throughout the week will be submitted and answered on Thursday, December 4th by Kim Agozzino, a Registered Nurse and

Faculty member of Brandywine. Professor Agozzino is scheduled to make a presentation in the Lion's Den on vital information about AIDS and explain the importance of getting tested regularly. Additionally, a simulated AIDS quilt is displayed in Student Life.

Students are welcome to leave a memory of friends and loved ones who have been affected or have lost their fight with HIV/AIDS. Anyone interested in adding to the Brandywine AIDS quilt is welcome to visit Student Life where you will receive a patch to create his or her own personalized message. The student body is welcome to come and pay their respects as well as receive a first-hand view of the impact this rapidly spreading disease has left within our own community.

This year, the Center for American Progress reported that there are roughly 33 million people infected with HIV around the world. Some eye-opening statistics were also released. In our capitol, Washington D.C., the HIV rate is 1 in 20. This is the same rate of HIV infected people in sub-Saharan Africa. African Americans in particular make up 12% of the U.S. population, yet account for 45% of recent HIV infections. AIDS has been identified as the number one cause of death for African American women ranging from ages 25-35. World AIDS day has reached its 20th year since first observed in 1988.

With the semester winding down, this week will remind students to get tested over the holiday break. Hopefully these efforts on campus will leave students with information they can share with family and friends in our surrounding communities.



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