

Editorial opinion

# 'Plane' facts

Happy Valley — the name students from some by-gone era affectionately tagged the Penn State community. It conjures up images of peace, serenity, complacency, bliss.

And isolation. As we know all too well, making a weekend exodus home is sometimes next to impossible. There are the ride sheets. There are the buses. And, as a last resort, there are our thumbs.

But for University administrators, the logical way to travel to and from Happy Valley is via the air. Trustee meetings, budget hearings and legislative sessions can't afford to wait for a Penn State official to wind his way down Central Pennsylvania's back roads in the family Oldsmobile.

Within the past few weeks, the Collegian has published a series of articles on the University airport.

The information was not easy to compile.

Collegian reporters met with closed-mouth employees, whose unwillingness to talk only increased the Collegian's suspicions and curiosity.

But even after the harsh words and the abruptly-ended phone calls were over, there is still something that University administrators do not understand.

The Summer Collegian does not condemn the University for owning and operating several aircraft; we realize that Penn State is indeed "equally inaccessible from all parts of the state" and that planes are needed to deliver staff members to vital destinations safely, efficiently and in the least amount of time.

But there are certain things that do bother us.

Why, for instance, did the University recently purchase a second Navajo aircraft, valued at \$249,535?

The University already owns one Navajo, as well as a Piper Aircraft. And from a money-saving point of view, the Aztec is definitely the better bargain, since while the Navajo costs \$92.93 per hour to operate, the Aztec costs only \$45.46.

Yet when the University purchased its second Navajo, it traded away the more economical Aztec.

We've been told that the Navajo is better suited for meetings in the air, since it is equipped with conference seating. But we've also discovered that on the average not more than two persons travel in the craft anyway.

It has been said that charity begins at home. So does austerity.



## Reagan 'deals' for Pa. backing

Next month a new television game show will make its debut on all of the networks for a one week run. Called "The Republican National Convention," it will combine the frantic trading of "Let's Make A Deal" with the high-priced bidding of "The New Price Is Right." But you won't find Monty Hall or Bob Barker giving away washing machines to suburban housewives. Instead, it will be Ronald Reagan trying to beg, borrow or steal the Republican presidential nomination from the Republican primary voters.

Reagan, in his latest move to subvert the democratic process and make a deal for the presidential nomination, has somehow seduced U.S. Senator Richard Schweiker of Pennsylvania (and former Ford delegate) into accepting the bid for the vice-presidential spot on the ticket if Reagan wins. Reagan said the choosing of Schweiker was an attempt on his part to be more open and honest with delegates of the Republican convention.

It is open all right. It is an open attempt to buy the Pennsylvania delegation. Reagan hopes that by selecting a well respected member of the delegation of a pivotal state, he will be able to swing enough of the delegates, committed and uncommitted, to himself to wind up with the nomination. But in doing so, a lot of horse trading had to go on behind the backs of the American people.

To get the vice-presidential nod, Schweiker had to trade in something. But instead of Monty Hall asking for a string of rubber hotdogs or a placard with a witty saying written on it in exchange for the chance to win the big deal of the day, Reagan has extracted a handful of delegates and Schweiker's reputation as a honest, intelligent man in exchange for the chance at the second-highest office in the land. Reagan has tried to

justify his selection as being more than just a political ploy by saying he believes Schweiker has "basic beliefs compatible with my own." Considering that Schweiker is one of the most liberal senators the Republicans have and Reagan is so far to the right that some people fear he is a leftist, Reagan's statement is about as hard to swallow as a peanut butter sandwich on week-old bread.

Schweiker listed himself as a Ford delegate until last Monday, when the big switch was announced. Previously he had openly supported President Ford's bid for re-election. On May 5, Schweiker urged the



Chet Wade

President to "accentuate the positive" in his administration in order to stop Reagan's drive. And Reagan, as recently as July 10 said, "I don't believe in the old tradition of picking someone at the opposite end of the political spectrum because he can get some votes you can't get yourself."

So much for honesty. Politically, Schweiker is committing suicide. If he believes that Reagan will give him anything more to do than in a figurehead role, you've got to wonder about the intelligence of the man Reagan wants to put one heart beat away from the presidency.

But the Schweiker deal isn't the only one that Reagan has up his sleeve in order to divert democracy to his own personal course. For example, previously it had been reported and confirmed by Reagan staffers that a plan was under consideration to have delegates committed to President Ford because of the primary

results but who were really supporting Reagan, abstain or not vote in the first or second ballot. That would assure that Ford couldn't take the nomination and then the undercover Reagan supporters could legally change their vote to Reagan during later ballots.

Politically, it is a beautiful piece of maneuvering. But it denies the mandate given to the delegates by the people of their state. What Ronald Reagan is saying to those people is that they have no right to choose the nominee of their party.

Perhaps the only thing that could result in the new game show's demise is that it resembles a great deal that popular series from the summer of 1973 — "Sam Ervin and the Watergate Hearings." For those of you who don't remember, Senator Sam and his boys had great fun in revealing all of the tricks and treats Richard Nixon and his gang at the White House had in store for the people of the country.

During the run of the show, political deals were uncovered, complex plans to keep the American people from having their mandate carried out were revealed and the reputations of men who were considered honest and intelligent were destroyed.

There is an outside chance that the American public grew tired of these sorts of things back in 1973 and won't stand for the same thing again this summer. Maybe this time they will stand up for what they believe is right and won't let some third-rate movie actor trade some political deals for a nomination to the highest office in the land. Because if they don't, there is good possibility that the old television formula of copying a winner will again prevail. And once again the people of America will have to sit in front of their television sets and have a senate investigating panel unravel the workings of their government for them.

Oh, how I hate re-runs.



## 'Crater,' 'Raygun' in Mars election

You're traveling through another dimension... a dimension not of sight or of sound but of mind...

America's Viking I space probe arrived on the planet Mars last week. The landing was hailed as a significant step forward in space exploration by scientists and also by science-fiction writers invited to be on hand at the Viking control center, the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, in Pasadena, California.

"I'm sure we'll find primitive life of some sort," Ray Bradbury, author of "The Martian Chronicles," said.

Gene Roddenberry, creator of the popular "Star Trek" television series was also at the control center as was George Pal, producer of cinema science-fiction that includes "War of the Worlds," "Destination Moon" and "When Worlds Collide."

"I have a feeling Viking is going to find some kind of life on Mars — not the kind we know, but something primitive and strange," Pal said.

Sure enough, strange things have been happening. Even before the spacecraft landed it was running into difficulties — it couldn't find a parking space.

When Viking finally settled on the Martian surface it sent back pictures that seemed to show an old automobile muffler among the rocks. As if the thought of landing in a Martian junkyard

isn't mind-boggling enough, other pictures showed graffiti-like scribbles on a couple of large rocks.

Viking program director Carl Sagan was quick to discount the theory that what seemed to be the letters "B" and "C" and the number "2" were fragments of a suggestive proposition and its accompanying phone number and instead attributed the seemingly familiar shapes and figures to shadows on the rocks and viewer's imaginations.



Don Hopey

This explanation seemed a little too neat so I called a friend of mine, Zeke Linke, who was the technical adviser on the sci-fi classic, "The Three Stooges on Mars," and who was among the science fiction luminaries invited to spend time at the Viking control center.

"Zeke," I said over the phone, "what's really going on out there at Viking control? I have a feeling we're not getting the whole story."

"It's all very hush-hush," Zeke said. "Security is very, very tight around here but maybe you should know."

"Know what?" I asked.

"We've found life on Mars," Zeke said.

"You're kidding."

"I'm serious," Zeke said. "We've talked with one of them. We have pictures too."

"Well, what do Martians look like?" I asked eagerly. "Do they have antennae? Do they have green blotches? Can they bend their pinky finger?"

"Actually, and this is a disappointment to all of us," Zeke said with resignation, "the one we've been talking with looks like a cat."

"A cat!?"

"Yes, one that smiles and disappears," Zeke said. "We've only seen one and he keeps fading out and reappearing in different positions at the oddest times. We're sure it has nothing to do with the t.v. camera or the reception."

"So what's happening on Mars?" I asked.

"According to this Martian, nothing is happening," Zeke said. "He said they were in the middle of an election year. He looked rather bored by it all."

"I can see why," I said. "Their year is 687 days long."

"We asked him to take us to his leader but he said the leader was out trying to sway uncommitted Martians to vote for him and therefore didn't have time to attend to affairs of state," Zeke said.

"That's a tough break," I said.

"Actually we were lucky," Zeke said.

"If we had come to Mars early next year,

a new cat might have been in power, our Martian connection tells us, and he might have shot down the Viking. As it is, this character is making an issue out of our landing site."

"Why?" I asked.

"It seems we've landed in one of the Martian canals and this cat, name of Raygun, said that the canals are sovereign Martian property and any attempt to take over the canal by us would be met with armed force. He threatened to blow us out of the solar system."

"Long distance war — the next best thing to being there. No wonder Viking command is keeping this from the American people," I said.

"Actually," Zeke assured me, "the chances of war are slim. An Air Force general in the control room suggested that we sell a few atomic bombs to the Martians but the Martian we were talking to refused and said they had been through all that before."

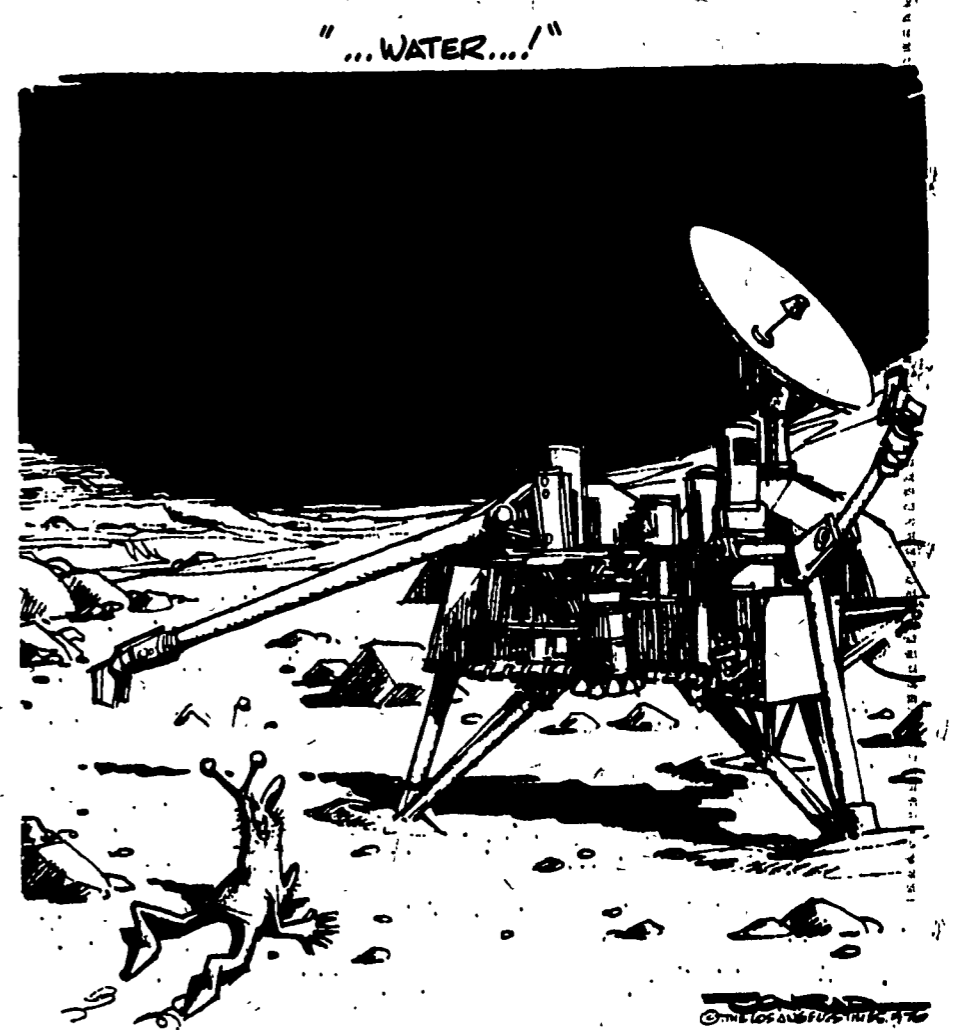
"If he was the leader he said he would — well, he didn't say what he would do, but he wouldn't start a war."

"That's a relief. Did this Martian have a name?" I asked.

"He called himself Crater," Zeke said.

"What did Crater say about the graffiti on the rocks?"

"He wouldn't give us the phone number."



# Letters to the Editor

### Sir John's toy

**TO THE EDITOR:** I read, with much admiration, the letter from Kerry in July 23rd's paper. I haven't seen those sentiments stated so well in quite awhile.

But Sir John's new toy is not the only issue. Every day around here such travesties are forced upon us. Campus Patrol (Reich?) is also at it again — in the past week, one person has been falsely arrested for assaulting a Patrolman, and one person was busted for one seed and some pipe residue (they did have two seeds but lost one). And then there's the crack-down on dorm parties and the pot informers in the dorms — don't kid yourselves, of course they're there.

I ask you, people, do you really believe all this is for your own good? These are only some of the things happening. I haven't even mentioned the ever-present housing ripoff (town and campus) or any of the other "little" things you may never hear of because no one will tell you.

People, if all this doesn't outrage you, doesn't offend your sensibilities, then you and this crazy place deserve each other.

Everywhere, I hear people talk of revolution and the need for change. A lot of you believe in this but feel powerless. Do you have any idea what kind of force you'll present if you're united? Remember the occupation of Old Main several years back? Student unrest isn't gone — it's spreading. I'm sure the powers-that-be (the Wicked Witch of the West, maybe?) don't mind that you think yourselves powerless. We have power, but we just aren't organized well.

We can use what we learned in the last ten years about unrest, violence, and change to work from the inside out this time, and make changes that will stick. Very often around here, I'm reminded of T.S. Eliot and "The Hollow Men". But I can't stop believing that the spark is still alive. It's our only chance. Change is not instantaneous, but we've got to start sometime. Keep your eyes and ears open. Do what you can. Look for others who want the change, and unite to do something about it.

Oh, by the way, Kerry. If the monstrosity flies over you, call me. I'll help.

Karen A. Perkins  
7th-horticulture

### Issues and answers

**TO THE EDITOR:** Tom Gibb's cartoon in Monday's Collegian is the latest in this paper's crusade to portray Jimmy Carter as having no or vague positions on issues. Unfortunately, these attacks do not say specifically on which issues Carter does not have positions. This technique of attack is similar to the "big lie" approach of McCarthyism. The late Senator refused to give specific names of Communists in the State Department as specific falsehoods could be refuted; instead, he kept to statements that there were many Communists (always unnamed) in the State Department, assertions impossible to disprove because of their generality.

On which issues do members of the Collegian staff feel Jimmy Carter does not have clear positions? I am willing to meet in the Collegian offices, my office or at home with any or all members of the Collegian staff to explain Carter's position on any issue. If I am unable to find Carter's position on any issue, I will write or call Atlanta immediately to find out his position.

Certainly it is legitimate for members of the Collegian or

anyone else to disagree with Carter's stand on any issue. Such disagreements are the essence of democratic politics. What is not legitimate, however, is to caricature any candidate who has hundreds of pages of position papers as lacking positions on issues. Again, this letter is an open invitation to anyone who feels that Carter is unclear on any issue to come to speak with me to discuss Carter's stand on that issue.

Robert E. O'Connor  
Assistant Professor

P.S.: It is indeed possible to have both a nice smile and good, clear positions on issues!

the Collegian  
daily

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