

# Valuables stolen from dorms rarely ever return

Continued from page 1.  
 in. Sometimes the police aren't called until days after the theft has occurred. By then the thief could be halfway across the country," Smith said.  
 Although these theories seem to point heavily toward strangers, students also figure in dormitory thefts. Often they take advantage of the weekends and evenings, using heavy visitor flows as a ploy to make themselves look less suspicious.  
 Rideout said that thefts committed by students often are not reported because the victim knows the thief, but is reluctant to turn him in because the victim "has to live with him." Other times, student thieves rationalize that

they "wanted to teach a friend a lesson" about unlocked doors.  
 When caught, however, it is the student thief who is taught a lesson. Besides being charged in municipal or county court, the student is referred to the University Discipline System, where he must face any charges the University chooses to bring against him.  
 The charged student is given a pre-hearing interview where he is informed of his rights and given the opportunity to accept or contest the charges made against him, Dr. Donald T. Suit, director of conduct standards, said.  
 If the charges are not contested, the student meets only with Suit. If the charges are contested, the student ap-

pears before the Student Hearing Commission, an all-student board dealing with residence hall matters. In both cases, it is up to Suit to impose sanctions against the student.  
 Whether committed by student or stranger, Police Services follows a series of procedures to investigate the theft. Sue said when she reported her camera missing, two police officers were dispatched to her residence hall where they questioned her and others who might have seen the suspect.  
 At this point, Residential Life becomes involved with the process. Anne Lawing, East Halls assistant coordinator, said many times a residence hall coordinator will go with the victim when he talks to

the police, acting as an objective counselor and information source between the student and the police.  
 Police Services' next step in Sue's case was to provide local camera outlets with a description of the camera, due to its high resale value. Also, a description of the camera was given to the National Crime Information Center for dispatch across the country.  
 Sue said the police contacted her about a week after the theft to see if the camera had been returned or if any more clues had been found. Rideout said this is done in all theft cases.  
 "We want students to know we are doing everything possible to get their property back and to keep them involved

in the process," Rideout said.  
 While recognizing the importance of student involvement after the fact, Police Services is striving for more student understanding of preventive measures toward crime.  
 Informing students about campus thefts is a primary phase of Police Services' Crime Control Unit, which was recently approved by the Department of University Safety. Police officers participate in Residential Life programs and distribute literature about student roles in crime prevention.  
 Insurance is another option open to students. It won't get their property back in case of theft, but it can help soften the blow of monetary loss.

An insurance policy that offers full coverage of student possessions is available through the Association of Residence Hall Students.  
 The New York-based firm offers \$1,000 coverage for \$24 a year; the \$25 deductible policy boasts "world-wide coverage," protecting student property not only at school but at home and during vacations.  
 Students can take precautions with their other belongings by taking advantage of Operation Identification. Electric engravers are available through Police Services and can be used to etch the student's name or social security number on metal surfaces.

## Petition drive starts despite no funding

By LORI MALAGARI and LISA GREENBERG  
 Daily Collegian Staff Writers  
 Students for PennPIRG plan to begin their petition drive with a press conference at 1 p.m. today in 227 HUB, Jeff Goldsmith, coordinator of Students for PennPIRG said last night.  
 "We will be petitioning all full time students, but will allow part time students to sign the petition also, since we don't want to turn anyone off to a PIRG," Goldsmith said.  
 Part-time students signatures won't be added up in the final totals, however, he said.  
 The petition, to be presented to students, states that PennPIRG's purpose will be to "articulate and pursue the concerns of students on issues of

general interest."  
 PennPIRG will be a "nonpartisan, nonprofit, and student controlled corporation" that will investigate issues such as "Human rights, consumer protection, and the role of corporation and government agencies in the lives of the average citizen," the petition says.  
 The petition also states that PennPIRG would be financed under the refundable-refundable plan, in which a deductible \$2 contribution to PennPIRG would be included on University tuition bills.  
 Goldsmith said the organization's goal is to get 1000 signatures by Friday of next week and to reach 30,000 signatures by March. "We want more than 30,000 but that's what we need," he said.  
 Mike Tingue, coordinator of the last

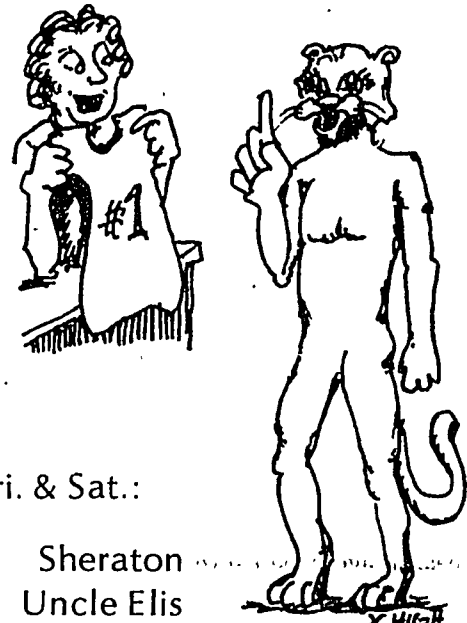
PIRG effort, said he has grown cynical about the drive.  
 "The only reason we got the majority of signatures in our petition drive was because we had Ralph Nader. Nader got the people out and made it work. The present effort has disassociated itself from Nader, which was a blatantly political move to get a better response from the administration," he said.  
 Consumer activist Nader sharply criticized University President John W. Oswald and the administration last March, calling him a "classic authoritarian." Nader blamed the administration for PIRG's failure in 1975,

and said it "behaved outrageously. They treat Penn State students like adolescent peons."  
 Tingue said he believes the administration would establish PennPIRG only under a positive check-off system of funding. "But that wouldn't bring in enough money," he said. "Plus the group would be misrepresenting its goals to the students."  
 Goldsmith said he believes the administration does see educational merit in PennPIRG. He noted some misconceptions the administration has about funding mechanisms which Students for PennPIRG plans to clear up.

### PennPIRG asks fund rehearing

Students for a Pennsylvania Public Interest Research Group have sent a formal letter to Associated Student Activities requesting reconsideration of its funding request, PennPIRG coordinator Jeff Goldsmith said last night.  
 Goldsmith said he sent the letter because he did not agree with ASA's statement that PennPIRG wouldn't serve an educational purpose.  
 "They said we did not fit into an educational category because our materials would be biased," Goldsmith said. "We don't agree, even if you believe they are biased. It has nothing to do with whether you're educational or not," he said.  
 Besides re-petitioning ASA for funds, Goldsmith said his group had organized its own fundraising committee. He said this committee will meet in the next few days to begin planning fundraising events.  
 Goldsmith also said 2,000 PIRG fact sheets were printed free of charge by New York PIRG.  
 —by Lisa Greenberg

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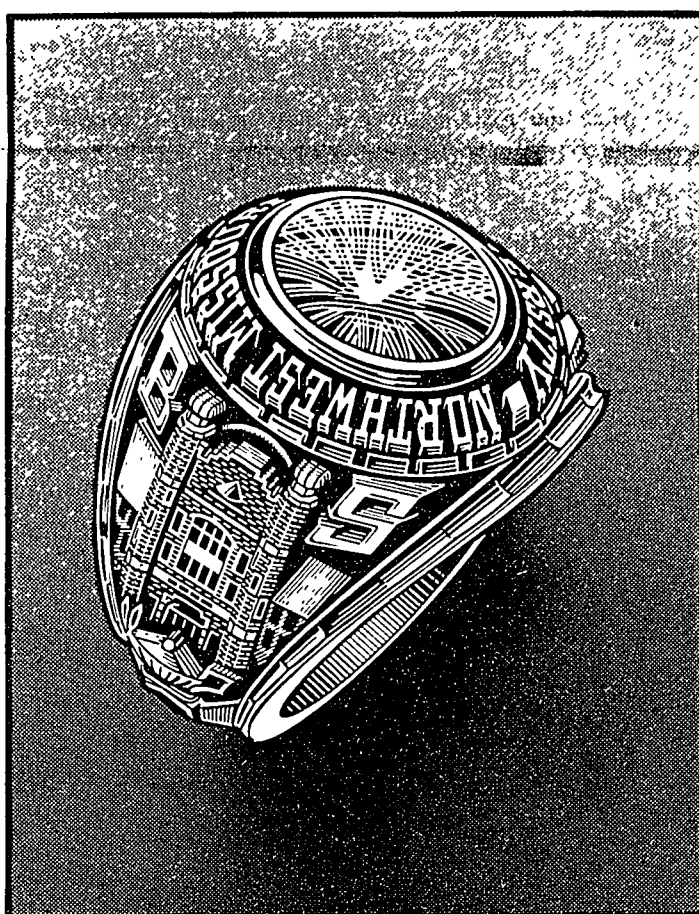

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