

Shaver's Creek: Nature wonderland and laboratory

By MERRYL LENTZ
Daily Collegian Staff Writer
"It's like a wonderland."
That is how James Pingry, a naturalist who works at Shaver's Creek Environmental Center, describes the facility. For nature enthusiasts, the center is indeed a wonderland, with its abundant nature exhibits and environmental awareness programs.

"A great variety of programs have been offered, and there is generally a fairly good public response," Pingry said.

Located in the Stone Valley recreation area, the center is administered through the recreation and parks department of the University.

The center provides a laboratory experience for University students, said Pamela A. Kavanaugh, the center's program director and naturalist. In the past, this service has been utilized mainly by recreation and parks majors.

"The rec. parks department sends students out to learn such things as how to do an interpretive walk, which is simply a walk in which students learn to interpret some aspect of nature for visitors," Kavanaugh said. "It might be an owl, a hawk, or a raven, which help visitors learn to listen for owls and find out about owls."

"First, the students will follow on an interpretive walk. Then we'll follow on an interpretive walk and critique them, evaluate them."

Shaver's Creek is not just for recreation parks students — all other University departments are encouraged to use the center as a laboratory, Kavanaugh said.

"If someone in the journalism department or English department, for example, would like to come out and work at writing scripts and materials to go with

our slide programs, they can do that," she said. "They can do that either as independent study or as part of their course work, or just because they want that experience. We welcome that kind of input."

Two years ago, however, programs were limited because the center lacked facilities. "It was just the rec. parks students working on going into the schools and doing programs there, without any facilities," Kavanaugh says. "Then it became a sort of one small room with exhibits over at the public use area."

"The use of people just grew and grew and grew until we were limited by not having a big enough facility for them. So eventually we got the lodge that we're in now. It's been around in its present form for about two years."

The lodge also contains a nature center, designed for children and adults, that serves as an exhibit room.

"It's different from a more formal museum concept in that it's very touch-oriented," Kavanaugh said. "There are parts to fit in and puzzles and things to turn. It involves touching and interacting with the displays, instead of just looking at them," she said. "It's a place where people can handle materials that they usually see behind glass."

"It has a selection of the type of books that you can't usually find in State College," Pingry said. "It's a good place to get books and reference materials for gifts or personal use."

Other activities conducted by the center take place either in its Stone Valley lodge or in the surrounding communities. Depending on the program, either groups or individuals can attend.

"We run programs for groups like Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, garden clubs, Kiwanis Club, church groups, schools, day camps — any kind of group," Kavanaugh said. "We also run open-to-the-public programs for individuals and families. Both types of programs are either free or involve a fee."

"Many of the activities are seasonally oriented," Pingry said. "The winter programming deals with cross-country skiing, ice fishing, winter ecology walks, and indoor things like basket-making, chair-caning and candle-making," he said. "As we get into spring-time, the first big thing is maple sugaring. It's a very big event for the nature center. People like the idea of starting off the spring by making maple syrup."

The fall Pioneer Crafts Festival is another one of the center's seasonal activities, and the main fundraising event of the year. The festival involves demonstrations and sales of articles made by more than 25 craftspeople. Proceeds from the festival help support the center and its programs.

Special children's programs are also sponsored by the center, Kavanaugh said. "We do fairs, like the Children's Day at the Central Pennsylvania Festival of the Arts," she said. "We also will go into a classroom and do, for example, a reptile and amphibian program for a third-grade class. Sometimes we'll go to a school and we'll do the entire school in a day."

In addition to working with preschool and elementary school children, the center works with senior citizens, handicapped persons and convalescents. During the winter, Pingry said public participation declines.

"The biggest problem we have in winter is that there's a month between us and people in State College who are used to being in State College see that mountain as a much bigger obstacle than it is. We get frustrated and wonder, 'What can we do to get people to come over the mountain?'"

Another problem is the lack of public transportation to the environmental center. "It's just too bad that we're so far from everybody," Pingry said. "We just want to get the people in this area and the University to know that it's there. It would be good if they visited the center. I know they would like it."

For those who want to care a deer's antler or massage a pincorne, the place to go is the leech and foot table at Shaver's Creek Environmental Center in Stone Valley, at left. Visitors at the center can also observe a variety of forest dwellers like the snake pictured below.

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Student joins housing committee

By SUZANNE M. CASSIDY
Daily Collegian Staff Writer
The Centre Region Office of Government's Rental Housing Advisory Committee approved the appointment of a new student representative to its committee last night.

Steven Fischetti (9th finance), a student counselor at the University, was chosen to fill the position left vacant by the former RHAC student representative, Ray Boyle, who graduated from the University Spring Term.

Charles Harrison, RHAC chairman, said Fischetti was screened by a subcommittee of RHAC members, including Boyle.

Fischetti said because he has lived off-campus for the past three years, he thinks he will be able to contribute a great deal to the committee on student matters.

"As a student counselor, I also feel that I'll be able to get a lot of feedback from students on rental problems and issues," Fischetti said.

In other business, the RHAC members decided to continue their efforts to formulate a model rental lease. The purpose of a model lease would be to provide both tenants and landlords with a standard lease that would be fair to both parties and that would be written in an easily understandable way, with a minimum of technical legal jargon, Harrison said.

RHAC began discussing the possibilities of composing such a lease last summer and appointed a subcommittee in August to study the feasibility of the project.

At the November meeting of RHAC, the subcommittee submitted the first draft for a model lease to the RHAC members. Another subcommittee was formed at that time to revise the model lease draft and that subcommittee gave a report of its progress last night.

Pauline Goldstein, the RHAC representative and member of the subcommittee to review the model lease, said that one of the key goals of the subcommittee was to compose a lease that could be easily understood by both tenant and landlord.

Peter Lang, the RHAC apartment owners representative and office manager for Schlor Enterprises, 106 E. College Ave., said one of the major problems that the committee must address is how to convince landlords that it would be to their benefit to change from their own lease to a model lease.

Fred Kissinger, RHAC representative for the Centre County Housing Authority, suggested that RHAC study leases that landlords are presently using in order to come up with ideas for a model lease that could better serve the landlords' needs.

Demonstrating to apartment owners how a model lease will serve to educate tenants is also important, he said.

"The principal incentive for the landlord to use a model lease is that he is going to have better educated tenants knocking at his door," Kissinger said.

The committee voted in favor of sending RHAC representatives Harrison and Lang to a meeting of the Apartment Owners and Managers Committee on Thursday in order to gain insight into the potential benefits of a model lease from their perspective.

The committee also received a report on the computer that OTIS is now using to list available off-campus housing from OTIS representative Roy Phillips.

OTIS is in the process of trying to expand the number of their listings so that it can more effectively satisfy the housing needs of students who have specific rental criteria, Phillips said.

The computer, which became available to students this term, has great potential for future purposes, especially in terms of compiling information about the types of people OTIS can best serve, he said.

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Ag arena receives more funds.

The College of Agriculture's Ag Arena project will receive about \$125,000 from a benefit livestock sale held last week in Harrisburg, an administrator for the college said yesterday.

Milford Heddlson, coordinator of environmental quality affairs for the College of Agriculture, said the sale grossed about \$285,000. The project will probably receive an amount between \$100,000 and \$150,000, he said.

Each person who donated an animal to the livestock sale agreed to donate 50 percent of the sale to the project. About 200 animals were donated, he said.

In addition to other fund drives, the money raised from the livestock sale will set the total amount raised for the project at about \$360,000 — more than one-third of the expected construction cost of the arena.

Heddlson said the sale was a success, and we had a lot of student help, too.

"We're happy," Heddlson said. "It met our expectations, it was a success, and we had a lot of student help, too."

When built, the Ag Arena will be used to host student resident instructional activities, such as the annual horticulture show and various animal shows. The arena will also be available to the general agriculture community in Pennsylvania.

The project will also benefit from a phone-a-thon to be held by the College of Agriculture Student Council.

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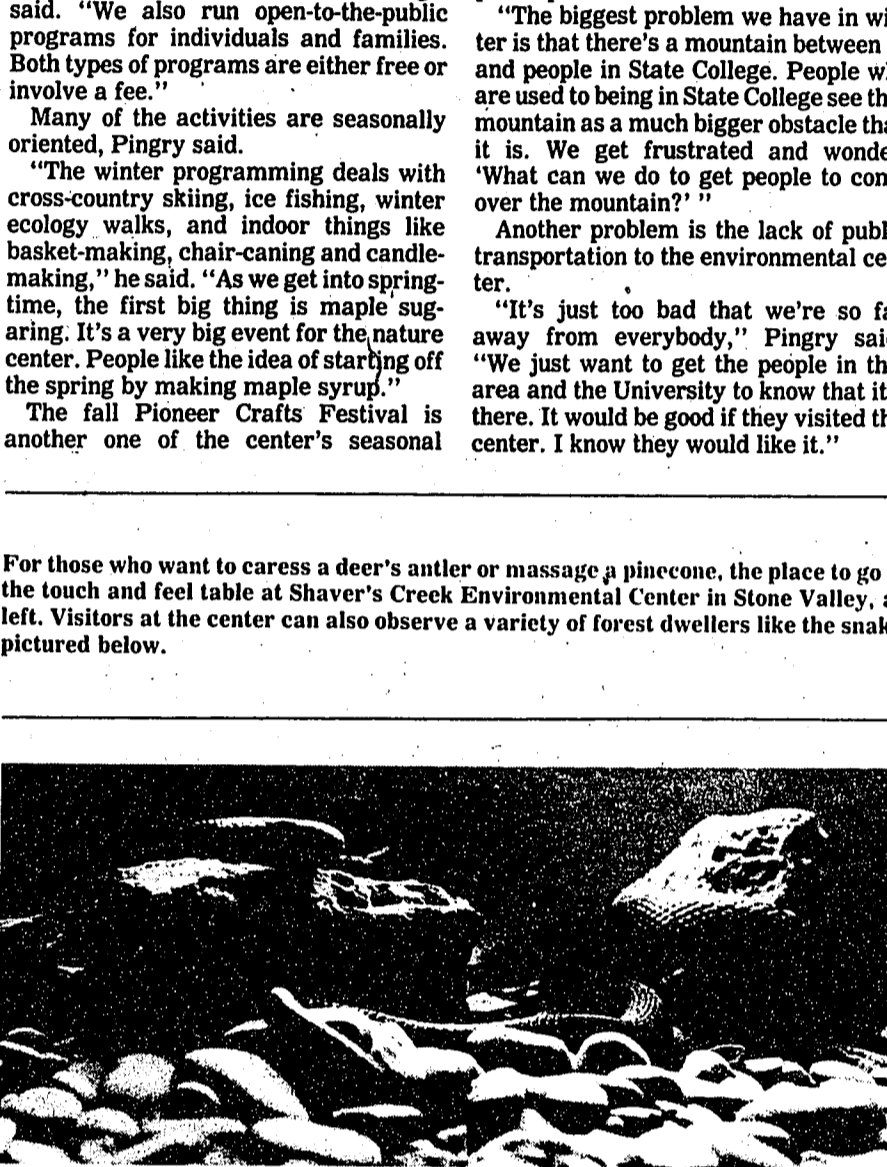
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