

# Student pleads guilty, agrees to aid police

By JEFF BARKER  
Associated Press Writer

A former Penn State University student accused of leading a band of students on an \$18,000 burglary spree has pleaded guilty and agreed to aid police in their continuing investigation, attorneys said yesterday.

Under the plea agreement, authorities will recommend that David Schmidt of Acton, Mass., be sentenced and made eligible for parole after two years, said Dennis Pfannenschmidt, Centre County assistant district attorney.

Schmidt quietly entered his guilty plea on July 19 in 19 counts of burglary and one count of receiving stolen property, Pfannenschmidt said. No sentencing date has been set.

Under the agreement, Schmidt said he would give a statement to police about the alleged student burglary ring, and would testify if needed in future proceedings involving the campus crimes, Pfannenschmidt said.

Fourteen other students have been charged in the ring, which stole more than \$18,000 worth of everything from exams, computer parts and a microwave oven to cheese and wine glasses, said Thomas Harmon of University Police Services.

More arrests are expected, Harmon said.

Police said the crimes began when Schmidt jumped a fence and stole 70 master keys from a campus maintenance truck in August 1982. The keys allowed access to virtually every building on campus, police said.

Schmidt, a nuclear engineering major before he withdrew from school as a senior earlier this year, was described by his attorney, James Bryant, as "very bright but withdrawn."

The crimes "strike me as a Dungeons and Dragons type of game. It was just for the thrill of it. It's like employee theft — it just didn't seem wrong," Bryant said.

Police alleged Schmidt used other students as middlemen and lookouts during crimes. A search of his dormitory room in April turned up lock picks

and about 60 grams of marijuana, police said. A charge of unlawful possession of a controlled substance against Schmidt was later dropped.

Bryant maintained that the ring was "a very loose association" and that Schmidt never exercised much control. "It was like a high school beer party where everybody knew somebody had the beer," he said.

Schmidt was being held at Centre County Prison in lieu of \$100,000 bail. The other defendants were free on bail, according to Harmon.

Authorities began to make inroads in cracking down the ring early this year, when the defendants began to deal in stolen exams, according to Harmon. A police informant gathered evidence against students by volunteering to purchase a stolen exam, Harmon said.

Stolen exams commonly sold for \$20 or \$30, according to criminal complaints.

Under the plea agreement, Schmidt must pay restitution, amounting "to many thousands of dollars," Pfannenschmidt said.

# Tow truck, 'on a roll,' is unwelcome guest

BELLEFONTE (AP) — A vacant butler's pantry in a Centre County woman's home was the resting place for a runaway tow truck that mysteriously rolled out of its parked position early yesterday.

First, the 1971 Ford tow truck knocked down a mailbox. It then hit the corner of a house and rolled down a hill before careening through a backyard and into the pantry of Nancy Noll, causing more than \$10,000 in damage, police said.

Noll said one wheel of the truck ended up in a toilet in a pantry, which is used for storage.

"It's just so preposterous I have to laugh," Noll said.

Two years ago a runaway car destroyed a crab apple tree in her front yard, and a year ago a black bear was found rummaging through her back yard, she said.

"This place is a circus!" Noll said she felt a slight lightheadedness when the truck struck the house shortly after midnight, but did not call the police. Police were summoned instead by a neighbor who said he had heard a loud noise.

Police said they don't know why the parked truck began rolling.

It took about an hour for another tow truck to remove the vehicle from the pantry.

# Former Collegian editor retires from PSU post

A. William Engel Jr., recently retired director of the Office of University Development, said experience in journalism was his key to dealing with people in the area of public relations.

A 1940 University graduate, Engel received his bachelor of arts degree in journalism and was editor of *The Daily Collegian* in 1939-40. His experience with the Collegian led to jobs with the *Evening News* in Harrisburg and the *Pittsburgh Press*, and later to a career in public relations, he said.

"If I had not had background (in journalism) I would have never gone into public relations. You have to know how to communicate with people and know how to deal with people," Engel said.

Engel returned to the University in 1965 as director of relations for the Penn State Foundation. He held the dual position of associate director of the foundation and director of the Penn State Alumni Fund from 1967 until his retirement, he said.

The Penn State Foundation underwent several name changes while he was in office, Engel said. Former University President John W. Oswald changed the foundation to the Office of Gifts and Endowments when he took office in 1970. The name was changed to the Office of University Development about one year ago, Engel said.

Engel said he decided to retire because he was 65 years old and it was time to "let the younger guys take over." He now plans to pursue freelance writing and "volunteer jobs people have been waiting to snag me on." This includes continued volunteer work for the United Way, he said.

He also plans to continue pursuing one of his favorite pastimes — sports. Engel said he is active in golf, racquetball, bowling and fishing.

—by Kristine Sorchilla

## notes

- The Pennsylvania Festival Theatre Company needs ushers for today and tomorrow at 8 p.m. and 7:30 Sunday night.
- The State College Friends School will sponsor a barbecue and square dance at 3 p.m. Sunday at the Kollen Vineyards in Bellefonte.
- The State College Cycling Club will hold a 60-mile Black Mohammon Ride at 8 a.m. Sunday at Central Parklet on South Fraser Street.
- The Krishna Yoga Society will hold a free vegetarian feast at 7 tonight and 5:30 Sunday night at 103 Hamilton Ave.
- The University Resident Theatre Company will perform the comedy play "What I Did Last Summer" at 8 tonight and tomorrow night and at 7:30 Sunday at the Pavilion Theatre.
- Interlandia Folkdancers will hold recreational folkdancing and teaching at 8:30 tonight in 196 White Building.

## police log

- An RD4 Bellefonte man has been charged with driving under the influence and driving at unsafe speeds, according to State College Police Department said.
- State College police reported a burglary and theft at the residence of Patricia Nolet, 1010 S. Pugh St. Several tapes and a tape player were missing, police said. Entry items were estimated at \$72.
- The State College police reported that unknown items were missing from a Salvation Army collection box at 300 W. Hamilton Ave., sometime after 11 p.m. Wednesday.
- Lyn Cecchini, 331 W. Fairmount Ave., reported to University Police Services Wednesday that his vehicle was struck in the rear while parked in parking lot Orange E sometime on July 14. Damage to Cecchini's vehicle was light.
- University police reported that two incidents of harassment occurred in parking lot 80 Wednesday night. In the first incident, Sharon Tinuochi, 102 Packer Hall, reported at 9:22 p.m. that the occupants of two cars in parking lot 80 were harassing the residents of Packer. One individual was cited and released.
- In the second incident, Sue Sheets, 3 Packer, reported at 10:25 p.m. four males in the parking lot were harassing residents of Packer. Police identified and released the individuals.
- University police did not comment if the incidents were related.

# state/nation/world

# Tower operator allowed 2 trains on same track

By ED McCULLOUGH  
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — Two passenger trains crashed head-on in New York City because a new signal tower operator mistakenly allowed them onto the same track, the head of Amtrak said yesterday. Traces of cocaine were found in the operator's urine, another federal official testified.

But because the traces were so small, there are "serious doubts" that drugs played any role in the accident Monday that killed one man and injured 115, John H. Riley, head of the Federal Railroad Administration, told a Senate subcommittee.

The test found evidence of cocaine and "a cannabis derivative," Riley said. Cannabis is another name for the marijuana plant.

W. Graham Clayton Jr., president and chairman of Amtrak, said the tower operator had been charged with violating Amtrak

rules and suspended pending the completion of an investigation.

"We simply do not have enough data yet to determine whether that cocaine usage occurred at a time near or contemporaneous with operation. It is very difficult to evaluate the potential impact of that test. I want to be very clear in saying that," Riley told the surface transportation subcommittee of the Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee.

In a written statement, Clayton told the subcommittee that "evidence has been developed that the tower operator in P lower failed to throw and lock the signal at Gate Interlocking in accordance with train orders and instructions."

This, he explained, "permitted train 168 (the eastbound Zip) to pass the (eastbound New England Zip) in the point at which it should have been held."

As a result, the Zip collided with the south-

bound Shoreliner, which had the right of way.

"This violation has been charged with violation of operational rules and instructions and has been taken out of service pending the formal investigation that is required by union contracts," Clayton said.

The operator is Rodney Rosemond, said Patricia Goldman, vice chairman of the National Transportation Safety Board.

She said Rosemond was a 10-year railroad veteran who had transferred to the signal job on July 2, and then had a week off.

He had "five or six hours" training on equipment new to him, and that might have been insufficient, she said.

"The operator told us he asked a supervisor for more training. We have to check that," she said.

According to a transcript released at the hearing of radio and telephone conversations among signal operators and the Penn

Station dispatcher, at 10:30 a.m. Monday the dispatcher told the signal operator to hold all eastbound trains. The signal operator responded confirming that a signal had been placed to halt westbound trains, and corrected it at the dispatcher's order.

At 10:48, the dispatcher called the operator, about the time the trains crashed:

Dispatcher: "Hey, uh, where's 168 (the eastbound Zip) at now? Has he arrived at Gate? Get him on the radio. Ask him what's up."

Tower: "He's by Gate, Ernie."

Dispatcher: "What do you mean, he's by Gate? Ah, Christ."

This was followed by word from an unknown point reporting that the train itself had reported a collision on the bridge approaches, and the dispatcher began to organize help.

At 10:51 he talked again to the signal operator:

Dispatcher: "You let 168 go (on track two)?"

Tower: "Yeah."

Dispatcher: "You have 19 order 17 in effect? Rod?"

Tower: "Yeah, let me find it."

Dispatcher: "Do you have 19 order 17 in front of you?"

Tower: "Yeah."

The dispatcher instructs the operator to read back the order, which he did, to hold all eastbound trains before the point known as Gate. Then came this discussion:

Dispatcher: "How did he get railroad at Gate?"

Tower: "I don't know, Ern."

Dispatcher: "Did you display the signal?"

Tower: "No, I didn't give him a signal."

Louis S. Thompson, associate administrator of the railroad agency, said the engineer of train 168 needed a signal to proceed.

# Senate OKs provision to protect 'Baby Doe'

By BILL McCLOSKEY  
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — The Senate unanimously passed legislation last night to set up a process allowing for what one member called "a decision that will make sense" on whether to feed or give medical treatment to seriously disabled newborn babies.

In a statement submitted for the Congressional Record explaining the provision, Sen. Orrin G. Hatch, R-Utah, said "we should not turn our heads and deprive necessary medical care ensuring life to children born seriously ill."

He said the legislation "requires states to establish procedures to protect seriously handicapped infants from illegal withholding of life-saving medical treatment."

The issue has sparked bitter conflicts among medical organizations and took months of negotiations to come up with wording that "records and facilities during investigations."

The Reagan administration issued orders in March 1983 requiring federally assisted hospitals to post notices that it was a violation of federal law to withhold treatment or food from babies.

The regulations also authorized the Department of Health and Human Services to conduct investigations and direct hospitals to provide 24-hour access to their records and facilities during investigations.

The rules were challenged and a federal court declared them invalid.

"We as Americans would never abandon a child injured in an accident. We aggressively protect children from adults who would abuse them. Why is it then that any of us would turn our backs on those children born seriously ill, but for whom medical care today offers the gift of life?" Hatch asked.

"Our legislation reassures that commitment," he said.

A House-Senate conference committee will resolve differences between the House and Senate versions.

Although hospital review committees have been set up in many places, some believed more protection was necessary.



Olympic sights  
Icelandic competitor Thor Jonsson wears Olympic goggles poolside in Los Angeles. Plastic lenses fill the bottom two rings of the Olympics logo.

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# TMI managers able to operate

By JILL LAWRENCE  
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — Three Mile Island's management, despite improper behavior in the past, has the integrity to operate the undamaged TMI reactor, the staff of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission said yesterday.

In written comments to the commission, the staff said it believes the NRC can authorize the restart of TMI Unit 1 "without any undue threat to the public health and safety provided that operation is limited to approximately 25 percent of full power."

Operation beyond 25 percent capacity would depend on compliance with certain inspection conditions and the outcome of management investigations still in progress, the staff said.

The NRC ordered TMI's Unit 1 reactor shut down in 1979 shortly after the nation's worst commercial nuclear power accident crippled the adjacent Unit 2. General Public Utilities Corp., the plant owner, has been trying since then to win permission to reopen the undamaged unit.

The NRC staff supported GPU on Unit 1's restart during Atomic Safety and Licensing Board hearings in 1980.

But three years later, in a retreat from its earlier position, the staff said unresolved questions

# Soviet woman experiments in space

By NANCY TRAVER  
Associated Press Writer

MOSCOW — Cosmonaut Svetlana Savitskaya, the first woman to walk in space, carried out more than three hours of strenuous soldering and welding experiments outside the Soviet space station with her flight commander, the official news agency Tass said yesterday.

The agency said Savitskaya and her fellow cosmonauts ended their working day late Wednesday night and rested until noon Moscow time (4 a.m. EDT) yesterday aboard their orbiting Salyut 7 space station.

Flight Commander Vladimir Dzhanibekov accompanied Savitskaya on the 3 hour and 35 minute space walk, 198 miles above the Earth on Wednesday, Tass said.

Savitskaya is also the only woman to travel in space twice. A veteran test pilot, she spent nine days aboard the orbiting Salyut 7 in August 1982.

The United States plans to have astronaut Kathy Sullivan take a space walk during a space shuttle flight in August. That mission also will include Sally Ride, making her second trip into space.

Tass said Savitskaya and Dzhanibekov began their walk at 6:35 p.m. Moscow time Wednesday and returned safely to the orbiting capsule "after the successful accomplishment of the planned work."

Savitskaya, Dzhanibekov and Igor Volk blasted into space July 17 aboard the Soyuz T-12 space ship. The craft docked the next day with the Salyut 7, where three other

cosmonauts, Leonid Kizim, Vladimir Solovov and Oleg Atkov, have been working for nearly six months.

During the space walk, Savitskaya and Dzhanibekov tested a hand-operated tool for cutting, welding and soldering, Tass said.

Jim Oberg, an engineer, author and expert on the Soviet space program, said the spacewalk by cosmonaut Svetlana Savitskaya was "just an effort to upgrade American plans to have a female spacewalker in October."

"They have been upgrading us for 25 years," said Oberg. "They do it because it's a successful public relations effort."

Oberg said the Soviets began planning Savitskaya's spacewalk shortly after the National Aeronautics and Space Administration announced astronaut Kathy Sullivan would make a spacewalk on the space shuttle flight scheduled for October.

He said if NASA had scheduled the Sullivan walk earlier, the Soviets would merely have advanced theirs to beat the Americans.

"That's the disadvantage of having an open program," said Oberg. The announcement of American plans gives the Soviets a chance to "upstage" the U.S. effort, he said this week.

"I wouldn't be surprised to see her (Savitskaya) strenuous than on Earth.

He said that during several hours of work with the tool, a cosmonaut loses as much as 6.5 pounds.

Tass said the program yesterday included photographing the Caspian and Black seas and the use of a camera and spectrometer to study the atmosphere on Earth and outside the space station.

Oberg said Savitskaya became a cosmonaut because of her family connections, "which she has admitted."

Her father was the Soviet Air Force chief of staff during World War II and arranged for her to be admitted to previously all-male flight schools.

"She is very talented," Oberg said, but she did not become a cosmonaut in open competition as do American women astronauts.