

Mt. Nittany:

Funds needed to preserve natural environment

By NAN CRYSTAL ARENS
Collegian Staff Writer

At a press conference Friday at the foot of the mountain, the director of the Mount Nittany Conservancy announced the kickoff of a drive to raise \$120,000 to save the landmark from development.

Ben Novak said the \$120,000 will be used to purchase a portion of the crown and cap of the mountain so it can be preserved as a natural area.

Novak said 89 acres was being donated by the owner, Bill Kogelmann of Oak Hall, with the stipulation that the Conservancy purchases the remaining 120 acres.

"Because development is growing... we really have to buy it to protect it," Novak said.

He added that the land would probably be clear-cut for timber if it was not preserved.

"We want to preserve it just like it was when the Indians were there," Novak said.

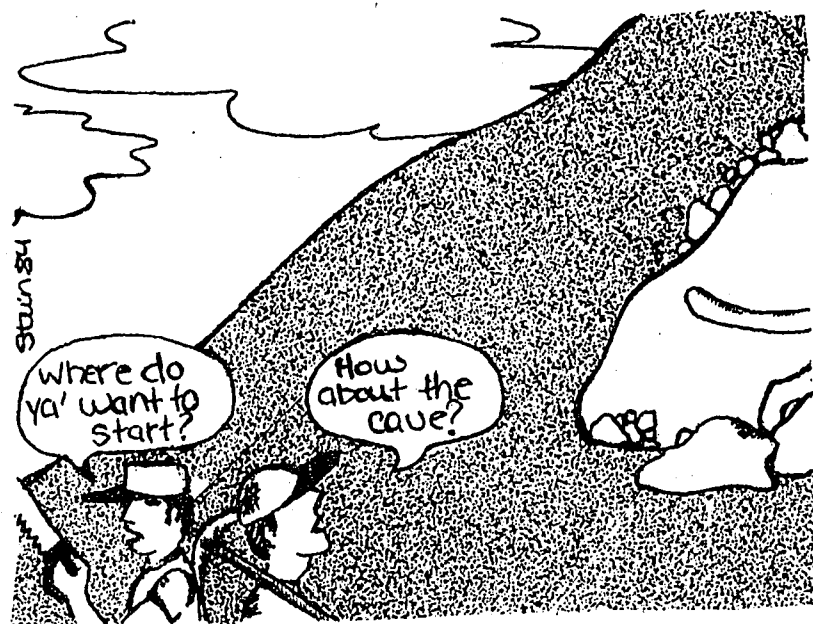
The Lion's Paw alumni association currently owns 537 acres of the mountain, said John A. Brutzman, a member and former director of Lion's Paw.

An additional 32.78 acres was purchased by the Conservancy in 1981, Novak said.

Novak said 650 letters were sent to Lion's Paw members this summer asking for contributions to the fund. The alumni responded with donations totaling \$7,500.

To date, the conservancy has raised \$20,000, he added.

"We're asking everyone to get involved," Novak said.



He said the fund-raising is aimed at students, faculty, local residents and businesses. The conservancy also hopes to conduct a fund-raising event in the future, but plans have not been finalized, he said.

"We're hoping the students will get involved," Novak said. "If every student would donate one dollar, we would have \$35,000 and be half way to our goal."

Novak added that any student who climbed the mountain can appreciate the need to preserve it.

Brutzman said, "We think it would be a shame if it was timbered or if it was ever developed for residences. We feel it should be preserved as a symbol of Penn State."

Kogelmann said, "It's a landmark

here. Once civilization encroaches, it will be lost forever."

Kogelmann, who completed his masters degree in mining engineering at the University in 1964, lives at the base of the mountain.

The Mount Nittany Conservancy was formed in the late 1970s in response to increasing threats to the mountain's natural beauty, Novak said.

According to legend, the mountain was the home of Indian princess Nita-Nee which means "windbreaker." The princess fell in love with a brave who was later killed in battle after the protective shield she had given him was stolen.

The maiden found her lover's body and built a burial mound over it.

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