Nittany 9 to 5 delivers VDT petition

By JEANETTE KREBS
Collegian Staff Writer

A red rose and a petition signed by 835 clerical workers asking that health and safety policies be implemented for video display terminals were delivered to University President Bryce Jordan's office yesterday by members of Nittany 9 to 5.

Kay Gohn, president of Nittany 9 to 5 — the local chapter of the National Association for Working Women — said the petition and the rose were given to Jordan in recognition of National Secretaries Day.

In the petition, Nittany 9 to 5 asked the University to implement guidelines for purchasing VDTs and to provide eye examinations for workers using VDTs.

Janie Music, chairwoman of the VDT task force, said University clerical workers are concerned about the short- and long-term effects on workers of VDT usage.

Although Ray Fortunato, University vice president of personnel, could not be reached for comment, he told Nittany 9 to 5 members that the University is researching VDTs but does not know of any current problems, Music said.

"No clerical workers that I know of have ever been asked for their response about using VDTs," she said.

Music said although the University said a VDT study is being done, other universities and optometric associations have completed studies and have published findings on the effects of VDTs.

Gohn said 2,200 people signed a petition about a general VDT policy and submitted it to the president's office last year. The petition received negative response from the administration, she said.

The petition given to the administration yesterday had four stipulations:

- VDT users should have regularly scheduled breaks.
- Glare screens should be used on all VDTs.
- Eye exams should be given before a worker begins using a VDT and then every year following that.
- Everyone using VDTs, including students, faculty and technical service people, should have an equal say in the VDT issue.

Nittany 9 to 5 is trying to educate both workers and administrators about VDTs, Music said.

Gohn said clerical workers are using the AIS system, which holds all student information, and a computer system called LANIER. Neither has any guidelines about health concerns.

Many clerical workers did not know about health hazards associated with VDTs until Nittany 9 to 5 hosted an occupational safety and health program coordinator from the University's Berks Campus to speak, Gohn said.

Collegian Photo / Paul Chiland

Kay Gohn (left), president of Nittany 9 to 5, and Janie Music, chairwoman of the organization's VDT task force, pause in front of Old Main after delivering a petition to University President Bryce Jordan's office.

Vegetarian meal plan suggested

By SHERYL WEINERMAN
Collegian Staff Writer

Food for thought — or thoughts for vegetarian food — was recently brought to the attention of the University's food services program by the Krishna Yoga Society.

The society's petition, which proposed an alternative meal plan offering vegetarian foods — meatless and natural, unprocessed foods such as legumes and beans — was presented to Tom Gibson, director of the food services program, said Braja Banesvari, a Krishna member.

Pointing out that about 12,000 students get their meals on campus, Gibson explained that the University is obliged to satisfy the majority. He said the plan will be considered after further research has been completed, although he did not indicate when that would be.

Babesvari said the society would like the University to offer vegetarian foods to on-campus students through the residence dining halls and Hetzel Union Building food services. Currently, the only foods available for vegetarians are salads and vegetable platters that do not provide enough protein necessary for good nutrition, she added.

A vegetarian diet can make students healthy and wise by helping them concentrate and aiding them with their studies, Banesvari said.

In addition, vegetarian students would not have to move from University residence halls to off-campus housing if the meals were provided, she said.

Although the number of vegetarians in residence halls is not known, there are 50 full-time and 350 part-time students and 10 non-students in the Krishna Society.

To help students confronted with this problem, the society manages its own farm and teaches a vegetarian cooking class through the Free University.

She said David Volk (senior-health planning and administration), president of the society, Jeff Rosenberg (freshman-science) and Joe Gardiner presented a petition to Gibson signed by 218 people. A survey of those who opted to move from University residences will be organized for orientation week in the fall, she added.

Banesvari said two feasible solutions were proposed: offer a third choice to the two meal choices already available or have an interest house for vegetarians.

Banesvari said 60 percent of the University of California's students eat vegetarian foods and this figure is increasing.

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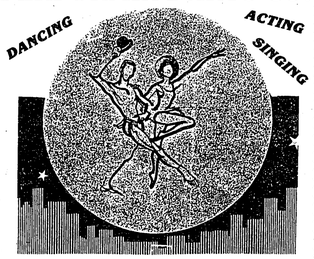

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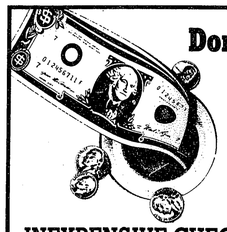

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The Penn State Internationale Dancers partake in Yachad's celebration of Israel's 37th birthday.

Yachad celebrates Israel's 37th

By SUSAN GRAFFIUS
Collegian Staff Writer

More than 100 people joined Yachad — a campus Jewish cultural group — to celebrate the 37th anniversary of Israel's independence with skits, Israeli folk songs and dances last night.

"The turnout was great," said newly-appointed Yachad President Karen Drescher (sophomore-geography).

She said it shows that there is a lot of support for Yachad and for Israel.

"Yachad has an important role on campus as part of the Jewish community to discuss Israeli issues," Drescher said.

One skit remembered the more than 11,000 lives lost in the Israelis' struggle to reclaim their country. Another skit outlined Jewish culture and stressed Israel's unity, its independence and its wish for peace.

Afterwards, the audience joined in the dances and shared Israel's independence day birthday cake.

Alcohol may bring out extreme behavior, recent study says

By PETE BARATTA
Collegian Staff Writer

It's late Saturday night and you and some friends at a local bar are under the heavy influence of a couple of marguaritas. Looking around the room, you notice a beautiful woman in a heated argument with her boyfriend.

Suddenly, the man pulls the woman off the dance floor despite her loud objections. You want to "rescue" the woman from her predicament, but you are hesitant — after all, the guy is 6-foot-5 and about 300 pounds.

Noticing your apprehension, your friends pressure you to aid the woman. But you are still reluctant and leave the situation alone.

According to a University of Washington psychologist, however, if you had been more intoxicated and your friends had exerted enough pressure, you might have come to save the day.

After a three-year study, Claude Steele and his colleagues found that alcohol makes people behave in a more extreme manner in pressure situations.

The purpose of the study, Steele said, was to identify conditions under which alcohol makes people act strangely. According to the results of the study, behavioral changes may not be solely because of alcohol's pharmacological properties. Instead people may act differently because of alcohol's influence on what Steele called the "inhibitory conflict" phenomenon.

In a recent article in the Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, Steele defined the phenomenon as the pressure of "strong and more or less equal instigation and inhibiting stimuli."

In other words, the individual wants to help the woman, but realizes the consequences — landing in the hospital.

When conflict is high — for example, when friends pressure you to help the woman — a person is more likely to exhibit extreme behavior, regardless of the possible negative consequences, Steele said.

When people are in the midst of a conflict, alcohol tends to lessen inhibitions by blocking out thoughts of possible negative outcomes, he said. This allows people to take action —both prosocial and antisocial — that they might not otherwise have taken, he said.

"Alcohol doesn't always make people more extreme," he said. "It depends on the circumstances."

In one study, Steele said he tested alcohol's effect on the "inhibitory conflict" phenomenon by giving subjects alcohol and then asking them to perform a tedious and boring proofreading task.

In the second experiment, the subjects received larger doses of alcohol and were heavily pressured to complete the proofreading task, he said.

When studying the experiment's results, the researchers found the subjects were more likely to help out if they had consumed larger amounts of alcohol and were pressured by the researcher, he said.

The inhibitions against helping the researcher — the task was tedious and boring — were blocked by both the alcohol and the pressure to participate, he said.

Steele said he is continuing research on alcohol's effect on inhibitions by performing an experiment with alcohol and restaurant tipping.

According to Steele, current research suggests that customers under the influence of alcohol are more inclined to leave a bigger tip.

Sam Monismith, director of the University's Total Alcohol Awareness Program, said he agrees that when someone is under the influence of alcohol, inhibitions are lessened.

"We've known for a long time that inhibitions are the first human functions impaired by alcohol," he said. "The drinking environment (and) the drinking contacts play a very important role."

Also, a person's mood will greatly affect behavior when intoxicated, he added.

Monismith said it only takes a blood alcohol level of about 0.05 percent to cause behavioral changes.

Still, he said, "behavior comes out that normally doesn't come out."

Elsie Shore, an assistant professor of psychology at Witchita State University who has researched drinking among college students, said peer pressure is a main reason people drink, even if they do not wish to.

The pressure from peers plays an important role in why people drink and how they act when intoxicated, she said.

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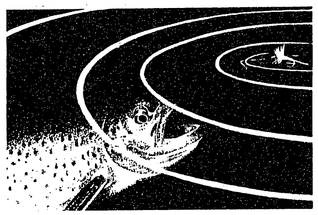

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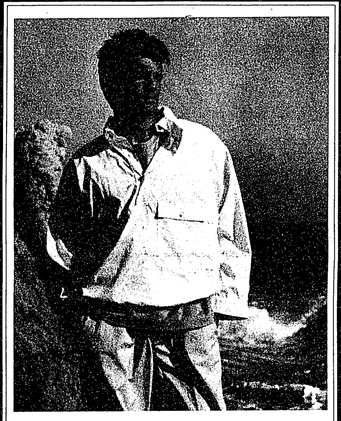

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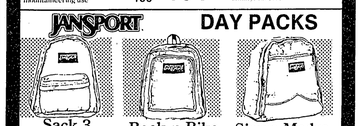

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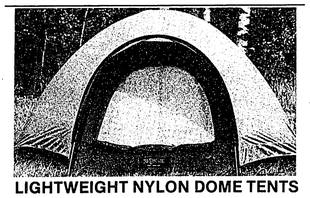

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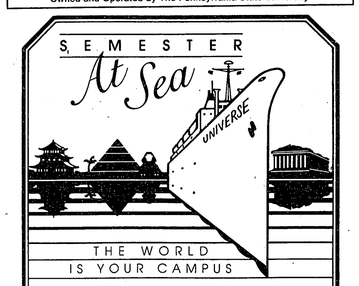

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