editorial opinion

Altruism, tradition and fun

It's that time of year again.

Early tomorrow afternoon, just as others have for the last 17 years, nearly 1,800 people will race through the streets of State College. Some will be dressed in outrageous garb. Some will be struggling against the grip of inebriation. Most importantly, though, all will be running for charity.

It's Phi Psi 500 weekend.

And, since its first running in 1969, this weekend has been a special part of the Penn State tradition.

For some, the weekend represents a chance to meet with old friends. For others, it's an important period of release, celebrating the end of midterm exams and anticipating the inevitable pressure of finals week. Most people, competitors and spectators alike, will talk about how much fun the race is.

The bottom line, however, is that the Phi Psi is a philantrophy — a big one. Last year's race raised $5,000 for the Mount Nittany Conservatory and another $20,000 for the State College chapter of the Easter Seals Society. This year's race is expected to raise nearly $30,000 for Counseling Services, Inc.

Last year's race was important for another reason, as well. As you may remember, the 17th running of the Phi Psi 500 was very nearly the last.

The problems with previous races are well-documented — beer cans and bottles being thrown at people, vandalism and people urinating in the streets top the list of past indiscretions.

Thanks, however, to the efforts of Phi Kappa Psi fraternity, the State College police, the State College Borough Council and other organizations involved with the race — as well as the support and cooperation of the University community — concerns about damage downtown were successfully met in last year's albeit "mellow" running.

Bearing all of this in mind, it appears that we must go into this weekend remembering three things.

The first and most important function of this weekend is to raise money for charities. Individuals and teams will not be the only winners tomorrow. By organizing and participating in the Phi Psi, all of us will be part of a very special victory — the victory of altruism over selfish neglect of those in need.

The second is that the Phi Psi must be constructive without becoming destructive. Last year was a big test for the race, but it isn't out of the woods yet. Let's all work to make the positive aspects of last year's race a permanent part of a special tradition.

And the third?

Let's have some *fun*.

reader opinion

Keep the tradition

Spring is upon us and so is one of the biggest college philanthropies in the nation, the Phi Psi 500. April 12, 11:15 a.m. to 4 p.m. marks the eighteenth running of this strong Penn State tradition through the streets of State College.

Eighteen years ago, with 24 runners, the charity donation was $340. This year with a predicted crowd of 15,000 spectators and 1,800 runners, the philanthropy is expected to raise some $25-30,000.

These funds are earmarked for Counseling Service, Inc., which plans to build a therapy room for the diagnosis and treatment of children and adolescents with moderate to severe emotional and/or behavioral problems.

Besides being a very strong and worthwhile philanthropy which will break the $200,000 total donation mark this year, the Phi Psi is a lot of fun. But along with the race and the fun, comes much responsibility.

Each year the 500 is run, it is watched with a very critical eye. For the race to continue everyone must do their part. On race day, please remind your friends and others that their conduct *will* determine the future of the Phi Psi 500.

Acts of vandalism will not only reflect badly on the race, but on our University as well. Please be on your best behavior and help us to continue this fantastic Penn State tradition. Also remember the open-container ordinance which states:

1) It shall be unlawful for any person to possess an open container of alcoholic beverage on or in any public parking lot or public parking garage with the Borough of State College whether in a moving or stationary vehicle.

2) It shall be unlawful for any person to possess an open container of alcoholic beverage on any public street, sidewalk, alley or park within the Borough of State College.

Please be aware that the State College police, state police and University police in uniform and undercover will be enforcing these and all borough regulations on race day.

Through the cooperative effor of Phi Kappa Psi fraternity, the State College borough and its residents, and the University and its students, the Phi Psi 500 is in its eighteenth year. Please let the tradition continue and be presented the way it was intended — as a philanthropic event to benefit the Counseling Service, Inc. Please be responsible on race day and show pride in the race that you all make possible.

Eric S. Graves
overall chairman, Phi Psi 500

Concerts

Congratulations go out to the College Democrats! On Wednesday, April 2, 1986, they brought us Rock Against Hunger, featuring four great local bands: As Is, Pagan Rite, The Big Thing and The Seen. The bands successfully raised $600 for the State College Food Bank which benefits many people in the area.

I find it very unfortunate that University Concert Committee is unable to do things like this. Other organizations seem to be doing UCC's job better than it can. Maybe the UCC can benefit from the concert, also.

In the future, maybe it could have several smaller successful concerts instead of attempting larger ones. Thereby, Penn State students can see a wider variety of musical performances instead of one large "Top 40" music concert each year.

Dan Meyers
senior-industrial engineering

Shantytown

Over the past several months, I have been hearing and reading opinions about divestment and more recently the shantytown. In particular, I would like to comment on a letter in the April 8 edition of *The Daily Collegian* in which Mark Wolper called for shantytown to be taken down because it wasn't what he wanted to show his visiting friend.

While I may disagree with the manner in which the pro-divestment people are seeking to end apartheid, I feel that the shantytown is something that should remain up because of our right to freedom of speech.

Three little shacks hardly mess up the beauty of the campus for me. In fact, if I were showing someone from out of town this campus next March, for example, the shantytown would be something I would point out in the following fashion: "Over to the left is Pattee Library and, oh, on the right is our shantytown, or day 365 — Penn State held hostage."

Jim Teske, junior-meteorology

the daily Collegian

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The *Collegian* reserves the right to edit letters for length and to reject letters if they are libelous or do not conform to standards of good taste. Because of the number of letters received, the *Collegian* cannot guarantee publication of all the letters it receives. All letters received become the property of Collegian Inc.
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State of the Union:

Laying down a krush-groove address to all the hip-shaking mommas and soul cats

Bill Repsher

Between having sexual thoughts every fifteen seconds, being the average male that I am, I often wonder what it would be like to be the president and to give the State of the Union Address.

• • •

Good evening, ladies and gentlemen of the press. I am here tonight . . .

Good God Almighty . . .

Hip-shaking mommas and soul cats . . .

I. I-I-I-I-I. Am here. Am here. T-T-T-T-Tonight. Night-Night. Uh. Uh. Uh. Uh. Uh.

Forgive me. I've been listening to rap music far too frequently. I am here tonight to give my State of the Union Address — to America, land of the free toasters with every new savings account. America, where, as Chuck Berry, noted philosopher and hep cat said, "hamburgers sizzle on the grill all day." America, where we teach our young to salivate at the ring of a cash register. God bless us one and all.

I will begin tonight by discussing *Foreign Affairs*. This has nothing to do with politics. I am referring to the new movie starring Harry Reems, Moammar Khadafy and Benji. It's a tender story of a boy and his dog who venture past the "line of passion" with a Middle East power sheik wearing funky head gear.

Roger Ebert called the film "a romance on the level of *Gone With the Wind*." Gene Siskel exchanged fisticuffs with Mr. Ebert over this statement and eventually pummeled him about the head and shoulders with a gravel-filled whiffleball bat on syndicated television.

And now, the Presidential Seal will play "Ladies of Spain" on his honking horns.

It has come to my attention that "shantytowns" are being built on many college campuses to protest South African investments. I applaud this gesture, but I must warn the participants that they are leaving themselves open to senseless acts of retaliation.

Just last week at Podunk University, vandals drove up to a shantytown and put floral-design drapes on the windows.

At Dartmouth, university officials kicked students out of their shanty while wearing really big shoes: they cited the Ed Sullivan Principles in their action.

At Syracuse University, disgruntled fast-food employees erected a Seafood Shantytown to protest old ladies who use their hands rather than the provided utensils at salad bars. They sang "We Shall Overcome" for the 10,000th time and distributed shrimp and chips to pedestrians.

I have seriously considered passing a law banning the aforemented Joan Baez song from any protest and substituting "Subterranean Homesick Blues" in its place. Then again, you don't need a Dylan song to know which way the wind blows.

The New Patriotism. Let's make that The New and Improved Patriotism with 30 percent Less Cholesterol. I wouldn't want to test the New Patriotism on laboratory rats. America, I have a question.

But first, show me your Underalls.

Now, the question. What have we done to make us feel so good about ourselves? Usually when a country blows on about patriotism the way we have, there are certain things one can point to which show the cause of this pride.

Let's see. The new Hulk Hogan video. Cheap gas prices . . . hmm. I'm thinking. The advent of Cherry Coke which was prophesized in the Bible. Ed Meese's intellect. Microwave popcorn.

Aside from those, I'm at a loss. I guess it's just a good time to have pride. Me, I'd rather have self respect and no pride whatsoever, but I've never been big enough to beat the hell out of anyone. So pride is justified when you're raised to give wedgies and belly burns to third-world nations.

My attention has been drawn to the recent "Frankie and Annette meet Dionysius" weekend blow-out at Palm Springs where randy collegiates tore the clothes off saucy strumpets and brazenly crossed streets against the light. The country seems to have adopted a "boys will be boys" attitude to the ordeal. That's a nicer way of saying "all men are assholes," which has truth in it.

Women must understand that any assemblY of men and alcohol will erupt into libidonal limbo. We men spend our lives trying to retain that certain atmosphere of a high school locker room. We have no problem retaining that certain smell.

On the other side are the television preachers who have become far less prominent since the media darlings have decided to exploit and distort some new topic, which they will label with a cute catch phrase to sell papers. What will happen to the sting of the social more eels? Will they flicker into dying cathode-ray dots, or simply be tossed into the old-news bin with yuppies and the Me Generation?

Is it time for the Springsteen quotation? Which is used more —a disposable razor or a line from a Bruce song? Which will get me more votes?

"*One, two, three, four. The highway's jammed with broken heroes on a last-chance power drive.*"

It's time to propose solutions. An old man pumping my cheap gas gave me what may be the most sage advice ever.

"Hey, old man pumping my cheap gas," I said, "what's the answer?"

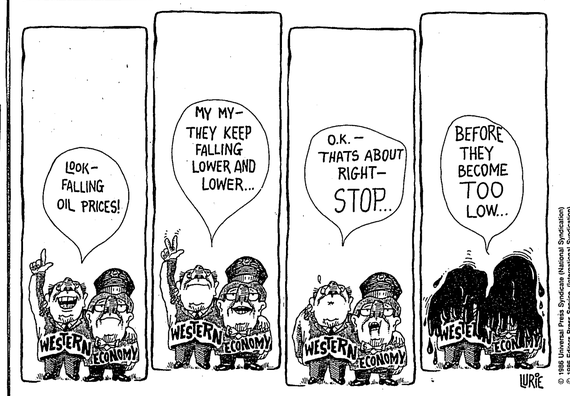
"Bomb the hell out of everything."

Jackpot! Starving children? Bomb the hell out of them! Soviet Union? Ace it! Mary Lou Retton? Sizz-boom-bah, it's all over now, baby blue!

Why can't life be like *Jeopardy*, where we know all the answers and Wink Martindale gives us luxurious parting gifts? So many questions, America. Why ask questions when you're strong enough to make up your own right answers? That's us.

And now, fellow Americans, time for a commercial break, and here's Jimmy Hoffa for Rad trashbags . . .

William S. Repsher is a senior majoring in English and a columnist for The Daily Collegian. His column appears every Friday.



Listen

Natalie Nichols, where were you Wednesday night? While you were witnessing this massive bloodbath and "carnage," we were enjoying the music provided by the bands at the Rock Against Hunger benefit.

Your coverage of As Is and The Seen reflected you musical preferences, while the comments on Pagan Rite and The Big Thing were more of an attack than a musical review. The coverage of the two hardcore bands were factless and confused.

Although technical problems plauged both bands, Pagan Rite and The Big Thing played enthusiastic sets to a crowd that did not seem to mind the disruptions. Anyone who is familiar with live hardcore understands the importance of audience participation.

Thrashing, or "slam-dancing," while an intergal part of hardcore, is hardly the responsibility of the band members. Anyone involved in thrashing is there by choice and must accept full responsibility for his or her safety.

Accidents do happen just as with any physical activity, such as football or skateboarding. From talking to the people involved, we didn't get the feeling that havoc, chaos or disaster had settled upon the HUB Ballroom.

The review of Pagan Rite did not stress the music as much as it did the minor incidents which were blown up to make the evening resemble a bloody massacre. Pagan Rite is a tight group of creative and musically talented individuals. They deserve a critic who listens to their music and not just observes it with a biased eye.

And as for The Big Thing, the reporter took too much upon herself in stating that the band had no merit; The Big Thing and their audience have an exciting, personal rapport and that alone warrants merit. As well as that, they have an interesting and energetic musical style that appeals to many people. Lyrics are an individual expression and cannot be held up as one entire group's belief.

In conclusion, we feel havoc, chaos and disaster are rather strong words for an enjoyable, charitable event marred by two minor accidents. Your exaggerated and opinionated article wreaked more havoc in our minds than the event itself. Your irresponsible journalism has the power to attract potentially undersirable, truly violent people to future hardcore events.

It's a shame that your biases have influenced your attempt at journalism to the extent that your article has infuriated a majority of music fans. Music is energy, emotion and action; next time we hope you listen as well as watch.

Susan Smith, senior-arts
Kathy Miller, junior-film production

Reality 101:

Facing the facts and responsibilities that come along with adulthood and each passing birthday

Cheri Monaghan

My nineteenth birthday was Sunday. Usually birthdays have been happy occasions filled with things like balloons, gifts and tons of calorie-laden food. This year though, I felt that something was different.

The birthday basics weren't missing. In fact, this year I received two cakes (both homemade!) and the presents from Mom and Dad were actually wrapped in boxes with gift wrap, bows and ribbons instead of the traditional custom of presents handed to me in department store bags.

There were the usual cards and parties, plus a few unexpected visitors and phone calls. I had more than my share of surprises and special someones singing "Happy Birthday." I was even treated to three birthday dinners, one every night of the weekend.

I had a great birthday, right? I had everything I could have asked for and more, yet in the midst of everything I knew something was different within me. Things had changed.

Late Sunday night, after the weekend's celebration had ended, I found myself alone with my thoughts. I thought back to last year's birthday.

I was a senior in high school then and I remembered how my friends and I had gone out for my birthday. Although I couldn't remember for sure, we probably went bowling because there's not much else to do in Wilkes-Barre if you didn't party.

We never partied. We had fun just being together. I realize now that things will probably never be that way again.

What has happened to us? Why are things so different now? Sud denly friends from school are scattered and it seems that everyone has gone their own way. People who grew up together as best friends are now miles apart and too busy doing their own thing to keep in touch.

Suddenly, people you thought you knew so well are changed. Best friends have become total strangers.

I remember our eighth grade health teacher told us that the friends we had then wouldn't be the friends we had later in life. We laughed at her — she obviously didn't know what she was talking about. We knew we'd be friends forever.

Was she right? It seems that old friends have gone their own ways and when we get together now, we part wondering if we ever had anything in common at all. I think we've all changed, but in different ways. Will these changes ruin our friendships?

Everyone is growing up too quickly. I hate it. It seems like only yesterday when we looked for snakes under rocks, made up nasty songs about our teachers and got in trouble for jumping out of the bathroom window.

Now, instead of spending our summer days swimming and playing Monopoly, we have to find jobs so we have the money for college in the fall. It's hard getting together anymore because someone always has to work. And we grow more distant.

I feel old. Not really older. Old.

Speaking of old, how old is my sister again? She's not going into high school already. There's all kinds of trouble she can get into in high school — drinking, drugs, sex — she's not old enough to go yet.

I always thought it was funny the way old people are always amazed over how fast kids grow up. "I've known you since you were a baby. I can't believe how big you are now!"

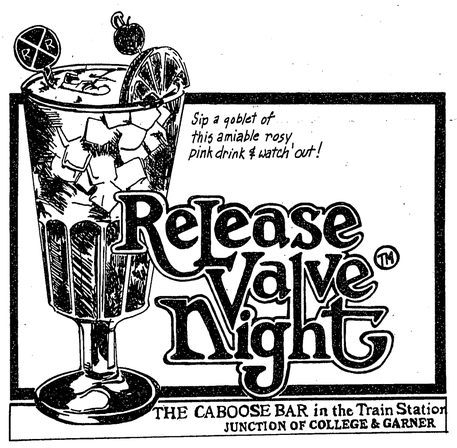
Am I that old already? I feel like I've aged 10 years in my second semester of college. Things have happened that I never would have dreamed of happening.

The biggest lesson I've learned in college wasn't in a classroom, but if it were advertised as a class, the class description might read:

Reality 101. No prerequisites. No lecture periods. Labs 24 hours a day. Course content — various lessons in life ranging from hangovers to having the flu with mo mother around to make soup.

It's not a fun class, in fact, I often wish I could skip it and just pretend that it didn't exist. But it's too late to drop it. I hate getting up in the morning knowing I have to face reality. It's a tough class.

Cheri Monaghan is a freshman majoring in secondary education and a columnist for The Daily Collegian. Her columns appear every other Friday.



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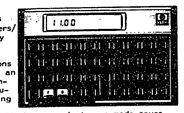

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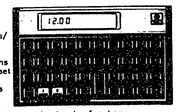

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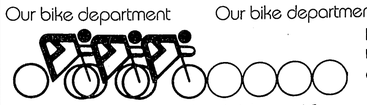
Our bike department



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