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Students fall prey to pyramid game

By MARYANN LIDDY
Collegian Staff Writer

Students hoping to win eight times their original investment have been paying from \$10 to \$100 to play one of several illegal pyramid football games running on campus and in town during the past few months.

Although various versions of the game are circulating, the basic structure of the pyramid is similar to the concept of a chain letter.

Since involvement in a chain letter operation is a felony under federal law, the postal inspector's office in Harrisburg said those caught would face a possible five-year

prison sentence and fines from \$10,000 to \$250,000 for each count, said postal fraud team leader Roy Miller.

One illegal pyramid scheme called the "airplane game" has been under investigation in New York state since early last month and 17 people were arrested March 13. Promoters of a pyramid game face a \$500 fine and a year in prison under New York state law.

The local version of a football pyramid begins with a "quarterback" positioned at the top. Two "running backs" are in the position underneath him, each with two "linebackers" beneath them.

Beneath the four "linemen" at the bottom of the ladder are eight "substitute" positions that must be filled by

investors. When the eight substitutes are filled, the quarterback wins and collects the money paid by the substitutes.

"(The quarterbacks) make out on the deal because they never have to invest," said University student "Susan," whose name, like those of the other students in this article, has been changed.

"The uninvolved entrepreneur, the one who starts the game, is the real winner," she said.

"The object is to fill the eight sub spots," said "Sally," a University student who invested in a \$10 game. "You all work as a team to fill the spots in order to move up the ladder."

"(The quarterback) is then out of the game and the original pyramid splits into two separate games. The existing running backs each move up to become quarterbacks, with the linemen filling the running back positions on the new teams.

"After winning once, the quarterback is out of the game but can reinvest as many times as he wants by coming back in at the bottom as a substitute," Sally said.

"June" is a University student who managed to win twice in a \$10 game organized in her residence hall.

When she reinvested for a third time, however, her luck ran out.

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American was killed in firefight

TEGUCIGALPA, Honduras (AP) — An American engineer killed in northern Nicaragua was caught in a firefight between Contra rebels and Sandinista militia forces, the largest U.S.-supported Contra group said yesterday.

The account contradicted Nicaraguan statements that 27-year-old Benjamin Ernest Linder, of Portland, Ore., was singled out by the Contras and slain.

The Nicaraguan Democratic Force, or FDN, said it held Nicaragua's leftist government responsible for the death of the first American to be killed in that country's civil war. Nicaragua said the U.S. government was to blame for supporting the Contras.

"The death of Linder was produced in the midst of a firefight between one of our patrols and a group of militia of the Sandinista army, which accompanied the U.S. citizen," the FDN said in a statement released in Tegucigalpa.

Linder's body yesterday was taken to the office of the central government representative in Matagalpa, a provincial capital in northern Nicaragua, where a ceremony was held in his honor.

In Managua, Nicaragua's capital, about 150 Americans including volunteer workers demonstrated outside the U.S. Embassy, carrying signs that blamed the Reagan administration for Linder's death.



The body of Benjamin Ernest Linder, the first American killed in Nicaragua, is carried aboard a Soviet-made helicopter by Nicaraguan government soldiers.

S. African conditions worry SHARE officials

By CHRISTINE NICHOLAS
Collegian Staff Writer

Officials who implement the University's aid plan for black South Africans are divided about whether its effects could be watered down by heightening political protests, news censorship and police takeovers of universities in South Africa.

The five-point plan, SHARE, was developed in January 1986 by the President's Advisory Committee on Responses to Apartheid. While focusing on scholarship and academic exchanges, SHARE is based on the concept that the University is not a political tool but should try to provide education and scholarships to qualified students and educate the University community about world events.

"An effort to establish linkages... can't be done outside of the context of what's happening in the country as a whole," said James Stewart, director of the University's black studies program. "A lot of us that are associated with the SHARE program are very concerned about the extent to which conditions seem to be worsening."

Other University officials, including the chairman of the advisory committee, could not say how political uprising in South Africa may affect the University's plan.

"I just can't tell," Donald Rung said. "It depends upon whether the various black educational organizations can still function."

One institution — South Africa's University of the North, in the black homeland of Lebowa — has been

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Goetz wanted to kill youths on N.Y. subway, tape reveals

NEW YORK (AP) — Bernhard Goetz intended "to murder" the four youths he shot on a subway car — "to make them suffer as much as possible," he told police in a recorded statement played yesterday at his trial.

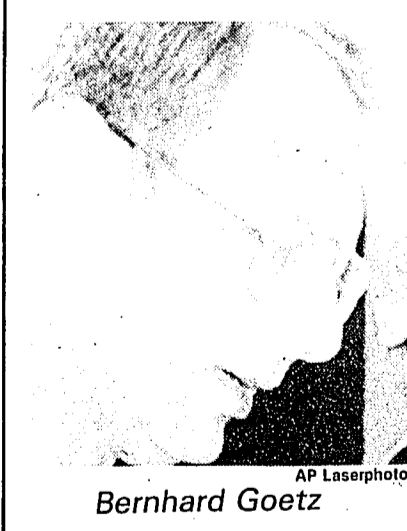
"I admit, for those guys, all this time, I wanted to do the worst possible that a human being could do," Goetz, sounding nervous and at times emotional, told police in Concord, N.H., where he surrendered Dec. 31, 1984.

Nine days earlier, Goetz drew a gun and shot four young men he claimed were trying to rob him on the

subway. His trial on attempted murder charges began Monday in state Supreme Court, the trial-level court in New York.

Goetz described his own actions as "disgusting" and "monstrous" in the two-hour audio tape, interspersing descriptions of the subway encounter with digressions on his background and explanations of his fear of being victimized.

"You have to think in a cold-blooded way in New York," said Goetz, 39, an electronics specialist. He had carried a gun since he was mugged in 1981, he said; in



Bernhard Goetz

Ronnie dies while awaiting 4th liver

PITTSBURGH (AP) — Ronnie DeSillers, the 7-year-old Florida boy who received three liver transplants and Americans' support, died yesterday awaiting a fourth transplant at Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh, according to his mother.

Ronnie died at 8:15 p.m. EDT in the hospital's intensive care unit, said his mother, Maria DeSillers.

"He kept on fighting. He went like a champion. Doctors and the nurses in the ICU couldn't believe it really. It was like he was going into battle," a

tearful Ms. DeSillers said at a hospital news conference.

"I guess it got to the point where he couldn't fight anymore," she said.

Ms. DeSillers, seated at a table next to her fiancé, Jose Castillo, and her brother, Osvaldo Marchante, told reporters that her heavily sedated son suffered a cardiac arrest.

"We kept talking to him and tears would come out of his eyes," she said. "I miss him already."

Ms. DeSillers said she would continue her fight to increase organ

donor awareness, despite her only child's death.

Ronnie's condition took a drastic turn for the worse Sunday night, a day after he was placed back on the waiting list for a fourth liver transplant. The third liver, which he received Thursday, never began to function properly.

Ronnie first made national headlines in February when President Reagan sent him a letter and later contributed \$1,000 to his operation after some of his medical money was stolen.



Ronnie DeSillers

thursday

weather

This afternoon partly sunny but breezy high 60. Tonight mostly clear and colder low 34. Friday mostly sunny and milder high 67.....Ross Dickman