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Even though Pennsylvania's drought began this spring and officially ended this fall, the effects will likely be felt for the rest of the year.

## Drought coming to slow end

Most of Pennsylvania remains under drought warnings

By ALLISON KESSLER  
Collegian Staff Writer

A long, hot bath may be just what the doctor ordered after a long, stressful day of classes. However, the environment may not appreciate this therapeutic nerve relaxer. The drought emergency is officially over, but all of Pennsylvania remains under at least a drought watch or a drought warning, according to a press release from the Penn State Ag Sciences Newline. The public is suggested to voluntarily conserve about 10 percent of their water because of the watch or warning. In the fall, groundwater levels are usually at their lowest, said Bryan Swistock, extension associ-

ate in the school of forest resources. "When the leaves fall, the trees are not actively growing so water can actually get past the roots (of the trees)," Swistock said. "The system goes through a natural seasonal cycle. We have a reduction of groundwater in the summertime and reach a low in October. Once we start getting snow the soil freezes and it levels off." Susan Rickens, associate press secretary for the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, said the slow melting trickle of snow in the spring is the key to recharging groundwater levels. "Think of a giant underground tank that is low in October and

fills up in the spring. It gets you through the summer," Rickens said. "This year, the tank didn't get filled up in the spring. The wells literally went dry." Underground water wells go down in the summer because both people and vegetation are tapping the groundwater supply. Competition for water is high between people and nature, Rickens said. The solution to the low groundwater level is not entirely up to the natural cycle. There are measures citizens can take to help out. "We need to do the common sense things to conserve," Rickens said. "Don't let the water run while you're brushing your teeth." Garrett Fitzgerald, student

coordinator of the Penn State Indicators Report and member of Eco-Action, said the study done last year found that students on campus use 60 gallons of water per person per day. The figure includes water used during showers and toilet flushings. "We are pulling water out at a rate faster than it is being replenished," Fitzgerald said. The Penn State Indicators Report was conducted by a team of 30 students and several faculty mentors. The report, however, is not commissioned by Penn State. Penn State has taken measures toward conserving its water. In the dorms, there are restrictions on supply lines feeding into the showerheads behind the walls to conserve water on campus.

## Board allows observers at vote count

By STEPHENIE STEITZER  
Collegian Staff Writer

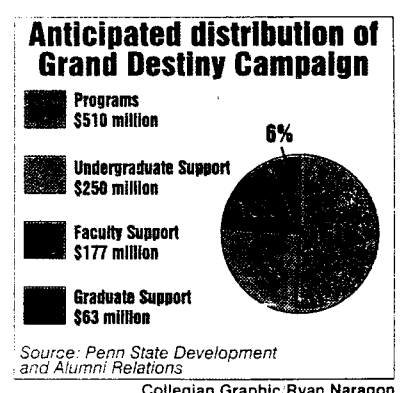
It was unofficially announced yesterday that the Centre County Board of Elections will allow the Libertarian Party to watch the vote count on Election Day. Until now, only vote counters — usually Republicans or Democrats — were allowed to be present as the votes were tallied. Julian Heicklen, Libertarian party candidate for county commissioner and Patton Township supervisor, said the reason he is pushing this issue is because he is afraid of voter fraud. "They are never going to let us win this election fairly," he said. After the board denied a request of the party to have watchers present for the vote count several months ago, the Libertarians filed a petition with the Centre County Court of Common Pleas. A public hearing for the case is set for 1:30 p.m. Oct. 28 at the Centre County Courthouse. County Solicitor James Rayback said the board recently decided to permit one representative from each party — Democratic, Republican and Libertarian — to be present when all of the final votes are

received, sorted and counted. "Nothing has been finalized yet because we have to go in front of the judge," Rayback said. "The election board wants the process to be as open as possible. We will contact the court and have them issue an order that parties will be allowed to have a representative in the room." Heicklen, when contacted, was unaware of the decision to allow a party member to be present during the vote count, but said he was very delighted to hear the news. "This is a big first step," he said. "That's terrific." Rayback said in the past it has been policy that candidates and representatives were not allowed to watch the count simply because of the lack of space available in the counting rooms. However, because Heicklen has raised the issue, the Board of Elections will change its policy. "He simply pushed the issue and he is correct," Rayback said. To cut down on confusion and to save space, Rayback said three chairs will be put in the room and representatives will be asked to sit, watch, listen and "stay out of the way." Please see BOARD, Page 2.

## Grand Destiny plan accumulates funds

By TRACY WILSON  
Collegian Staff Writer

Scholarship relief is already on the way for an increased number of students as a result of Penn State's Grand Destiny Campaign, a seven-year fund-raising effort. Launched in July 1996, the campaign reaches the mid-point of its timeline this January. More than \$600 million in gifts has been raised toward the \$1 billion goal of the campaign, which has already created 628 new scholarship funds, said Michael Bezilla, University Relations spokesman. "We're not in the home stretch yet; it's sort of a given, or a maxim, that the earliest gifts are the easiest to get," Bezilla said. "It doesn't mean we're over the hump. We're in a phase where we really have to work hard to secure gifts." Before the campaign, \$427 million was available in student endowments. As of July 1999, that number jumped to \$725 million, Bezilla said. University investments are also responsible for the jump, he added. Depending on the amount, the funds can benefit multiple students. Recipients are already benefiting from the scholarships already activated, said Peter Weiler, associate vice president for development and alumni relations. "We're about right on track



where we thought we'd be with the money raised," Weiler said. "Decisions are being made quicker by donors. The economy has helped tremendously." Private individuals have made up more than 50 percent of the donors to the Grand Destiny cause, Weiler said. Corporations comprise another large portion of the donors and foundations account for the balance, he added. Seventy-five percent of the donations so far are in the form of cash, Weiler said. Future donations are accounted for through estate plans and wills. "It's not all cash-in-hand. There are pledges and multi-year commitments," Bezilla said. "It's not \$600 to take to the bank today. Some is not spendable for years to come."

## USG adds representative to conference list

By NICK FALSONE and CINDY KOONS  
Collegian Staff Writers

In last night's Undergraduate Student Government Senate meeting, senators debated allocating funds to send an additional representative to their tri-annual Big Ten student government conference. Although funding was approved last night, the Senate argued extensively about their financial responsibilities for the trip. The additional spot will allow Multicultural Affairs Director Melissa Young to attend the conference, USG President Desha Girod said.

Traditionally, USG sends four members on the trip, Girod said, this year six representatives will go. Two Commonwealth Campus Student Government leaders will also attend the conference. USG Vice President Garrett Fitzgerald, who attended the conference last summer, said the weekend will involve 12 different workshops dealing with issues such as recycling on campus and student safety. Along with the workshops, there is one special focus session at each conference that is mandatory for all representatives to attend. This conference's session will deal with diversity, Fitzgerald said.

Town Senator James Hornick said it is important for the Senate to send Young. "It would be wrong to say only senators could go, it's not our (Senate's) money, it's USG's money," Town Senator Matt Roan said. "I think it's despicable that USG isn't willing to fund another person to go." USG also debated postponing the bill to look into another way to fund the additional representative to the conference. However, not all senators agreed this was the appropriate course of action. "If this bill doesn't pass, the message USG is sending to its adviser

is that we aren't willing to pay for ourselves," Roan said. USG President Christian Jones, who is attending the conference, said it would reflect well on USG if its own money is used for the funding. East Halls Senator Brian McKinney opposed the funding because he said he thought six representatives from each branch of USG should attend the conference — two from each of the executive, judicial and legislative branches. "One of the problems of the USG would be the animosity towards other branches, there's no teamwork, I think this would help bring things together," McKinney said.



Collegian Photo/Tara Liddell

Cary Hughes, a visiting professor of management and information systems, holds a freshman seminar Monday afternoon. The seminar is designed to help incoming freshmen.

## First-year seminars facilitate freshman adjustment

By KATE DAVIS  
Collegian Staff Writer

Navigating a big campus and being surrounded by new faces can be a challenge for freshmen, especially since they also have to deal with choosing some sort of career path. To make the transition easier, Penn State has made first-year seminars a requirement this year. All freshmen are required to take at least one freshman seminar within their college or another college. Each seminar has only 20 students. The seminars vary in content from college to college, but most address basic study skills, campus resources available to students and different

"The seminars help the students to become acclimated to university life ..."  
— Clay Calvert  
assistant professor of communication and law

disciplines offered within the colleges. John Lowe, professor of chemistry, began teaching a freshman seminar before it became a university-wide requirement. As a result of the classes, Lowe said more students have become involved with undergraduate research and are more acquainted with faculty because

they have been working with them. "It is a motivational course," Lowe said. One of his assignments involved freshmen observing past upperclassmen's résumés and then creating their own. The College of Communications started offering a freshman seminar when it became a requirement.

"The seminars help the students to become acclimated to university life; it tries to expose students to the library, IAS system and academic advising," said Clay Calvert, assistant professor of communications and law and director of the first-year College of Communications seminar program. Barbara Welschofer, director of the undergraduate advising center in the College of the Liberal Arts, said the college has been offering a freshman seminar since 1994 and has found that many students either stay in the same discipline as their freshman seminar or minor in it. "We encourage students to take any

Please see SEMINAR, Page 2.