

Conference focuses on greener future

By Danielle Grote
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER | deg142@psu.edu

Scientists, architects, designers, artists and many others came together last weekend to share projects and discuss plans for the future at the eighth annual Green Design Conference.

David Riley, assistant professor of architectural engineering, won \$2,000 for his project on sustainable housing and five \$500 awards were given to other participants. The weekend also included a keynote address by ecological artist and designer Michael Singer, a performance by the Pennsylvania Dance Theater, and a fair for middle and high school students.

Barbara Anderson, director of the Center for Sustainability, said people of different specialties have to work together in today's

world, because there are no longer renaissance people who have many skills on many levels.

"Green design is a way of thinking which is often called system thinking," she said.

The goal of the projects presented during the weekend is to obtain sustainability, or the harmonious integration of human life with the natural world, Anderson said.

To do this, participants in five different categories — architecture, engineering, ecological innovations, landscapes, and gardens and art — worked to incorporate the guidelines for sustainable design outlined in The Hannover Principles into their projects.

"In every area, in every category, we're looking for projects that maintain these principles," Anderson said.

Gary Gyekis, a local residential designer and builder, won in the category of architec-

ture for his work on Anderson's home. Both residential and commercial clients are recently demanding more green design in their projects, he said.

"Resale value isn't the only thing driving the market anymore," Gyekis said.

The winner in the engineering category was Joshua Pearce (graduate-material science) for his design of porous sidewalks made from recycled tires. The loosely packed rubber would make it easier for the water to seep through. It would also create a better surface for runners like him, he said.

"I wanted to be able to run on campus on something soft," he said. In other categories, winners were Madhu Prakash for a dry toilet that decomposes waste efficiently, Jackie Bonomo for the design of a healing ground sanctuary and Suzanne Bruening for an artistic pillow made of used teabags.



The Pennsylvania Dance Theater performs "Plan Away" at the Zoller Gallery. The dance was one of three premieres that ran in conjunction with the Green Conference.

Upgrades to Pattee, Paterno to provide better access for disabled

By Corianne Iacovelli
FOR THE COLLEGIAN

Improvements to Pattee and Paterno Library may soon be underway to make the buildings easier for disabled students to access.

Penn State senior Danny Freund (human development and family studies) has been on a mission to ensure that university buildings are easy for disabled students to navigate. Freund believes Pattee and Paterno Library are key areas of concern and that there are simple solutions to make them accessible to disabled students.

Ever since he lost his leg to cancer, Freund has worked strenuously to make sure the

interests of disabled students are being represented. He is currently focusing his efforts on two main issues with the library.

The unavailability of general handicapped parking in the immediate vicinity of West Pattee is one area Freund is concerned about. Second is the lack of an easy entrance into the library from the allotted handicapped spots.

"My interest here is parking in the closest possible spot to a quiet study area and the handicapped spots they put in Paterno are not easily accessible," Freund said.

There are three handicapped spaces that Freund feels need modification. They border Parking Lot Green E, which is located next to Ihseng Cottage off of Fraser Road. Two of

these spots were reserved for Penn State employees with specific numbered permits.

The third spot is general, which means that anyone with a disability permit may use it. The general space is usually taken during daytime hours, Freund said, forcing him and other handicapped students to park elsewhere.

Freund appealed to Doug Holmes, Transportation Facilities Coordinator, to convert one of the two reserved spots to a general access space. His efforts paid off; the spot was converted last Wednesday, so that any disabled permit is now acceptable.

Currently, the closest entrance to the handicapped spots outside of West Pattee is at MacKinnon's Café on the ground floor of

Pattee, a walk with outdoor tables and chairs that those with a physical disability must navigate around. The doors at this entry are not equipped with handicapped opening buttons. Library authorities are aware that these doors need modification and plans are underway to make them accessible.

"These doors are too heavy. We've been lobbying for two years to improve this entrance and we're now going to change them," said Sally Kalin, Associate Dean for University Park Libraries.

Freund and Kalin walked the route disabled students take to enter the building, with Kalin carrying a heavy bag to simulate a student's dilemma.

Freund suggested the fire door in the

Extended Hours Reading Room as an alternative route from the Fraser Road handicap spots to the library.

Installing a ramp at the fire door, only a few steps from the handicapped spots, would solve Freund's problem.

Before any changes are made, fire code and security issues must be resolved, Kalin said. The Extended Hours Reading Room, a gift from the Class of 1994, is designated as a quiet study area and officials hesitate to install an entrance there because of possible noise. Freund says making the door exclusive to handicapped students would eliminate this problem.

"This is all wrapped up in codes and laws, but I will raise the question," Kalin said.

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