

THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

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About the Collegian: The Daily Collegian and The Weekly Collegian are published by Collegian Inc., an independent, nonprofit corporation with a board of directors composed of students, faculty and professionals. Pennsylvania State University students write and edit both papers and solicit advertising for them. During the fall and spring semesters as well as the second six-week

summer session, The Daily Collegian publishes Monday through Friday. Issues are distributed by mail to other Penn State campuses, alumni, sports fans, parents and other subscribers. **Complaints:** News and editorial complaints should be presented to the editor. Business and advertising complaints should be presented to the business manager.

EDITORIAL

Campaign should not lead to enrollment increase

More and more and more. Despite enrollment exceeding 80,000 students statewide and classrooms filled with more than 300 students on a regular basis, Penn State officials are embarking on a new marketing campaign to bring more — mainly in-state — high school students to the university.

On the surface, officials say the marketing pitch is intended to polish the luster of the Penn State name and to influence prospective students to apply to Commonwealth Campuses that are closer in vicinity to their homes. Penn State should be given kudos for its efforts to keep the name of the university among the elite of the nation's colleges. And by placing importance on the maturation of the Commonwealth Campuses, Penn State will only make its overall institution that much stronger. But at what cost do we have to achieve such means?

The campaign calls for placing 30-second commercials on cable networks such as MTV, Comedy Central and ESPN2 — channels that are likely to attract a large number high school viewers. Billboards, posters and radio advertisements are also being employed.

However, how much money, time and manpower will such a large-scale public relations operation entail?

When class sizes are growing at an alarming rate and available housing continues to become an issue, the need for more applicants becomes less desirable at University Park. Penn State would be better served to continue to improve on the institutions it has in place, such as faculty and classrooms, rather than dishing out money to an attractive marketing campaign. That way, a prestigious, valuable education will become a drawing point all to itself.

Should a university that prides itself on being a top-notch public institution have to drum up so much enthusiasm, especially when nearly 86,000 prospective students are applying to Penn State each year?

Also, the university should consider that the more students it tries to attract, the higher the enrollment could rise. If enrollment rises, and state appropriations continue to plummet, the amount of money given by the state per student will fall even further. Penn State already ranks dead last in the Big Ten in state funding per student.

While it is admirable that the university is concerned with keeping Penn State a sought-after commodity for high school students, the focus should be shifted toward improving current institutions.

Who we are

The Daily Collegian's editorial opinion is determined by its Board of Opinion, with the editor holding final responsibility. The letters and columns expressed on the editorial pages are not necessarily those of The Daily Collegian, Collegian Inc. or The Pennsylvania State University. Collegian Inc., publishers of The Daily Collegian and related publications, is a separate corporate institution from Penn State. Editorials are written by The Daily Collegian Board of Opinion. Members of the Board of Opinion are Pat Abdalla, Steve Bien-Aimé, Lindsay Bosslett, Brent Burkey, Reid Coploff, Lynne Funk, Alison Herget, Laura Michalski, Sarah Rothman, Caleb Sheaffer, Mike Walbert, James S. Young and Erica Zarra.

Write a letter

We want to hear your comments on our coverage, our editorial decisions and the Penn State community in general.

■ E-mail: collegianletters@psu.edu

■ Postal mail/in person:

The Daily Collegian
James Building
123 S. Burrowes St.
University Park, PA 16801-3882

Letters must be no longer than 250 words. Student letters should include class year, major and campus. Letters from alumni should include major and year of graduation.

All writers should provide their address and phone number for verification. Letters should be signed by no more than two people. Members of organizations must include their titles if the topic they write about is connected with the aim of their groups.

The Collegian reserves the right to edit letters. The Collegian cannot guarantee publication of all letters it receives.

Letters chosen also run online at The Digital Collegian and may be selected for publication in The Weekly Collegian. All letters received become the property of Collegian Inc.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Athletes' bad decisions do not affect students

The First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution was established to protect our freedoms of speech, press, assembly and petition. Freedom of the press does not exist to justify inflammatory and sensationalist fluff, such as the front-page article in Tuesday's Daily Collegian ("Johnson to face alcohol charges," Oct. 21). In the true American entertainment-news fashion, the Collegian chose to relegate more significant issues, such as local zoning debates and national Supreme Court cases to the inside pages to make way for what was essentially a glorified police bulletin with a public name attached to it. Apparently, an individual's involvement in athletic activities makes a poor decision into front-page news. I sympathize with this person, whose name and photograph appear next to descriptions of illegal actions — even though he is considered innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

The unfortunate over-celebration of intercollegiate athletics is no excuse to throw journalistic integrity to the wind for the sake of a catchy headline, especially at the expense of an individual's public image. It should be the goal of the Collegian to transcend entertainment-news sensationalism and present issues that actually affect our lives.

Brian A. Morrison
junior - film and video production

Leaf blowing expensive, pollutes environment

Yes, the ritual of collecting leaves has begun ("Leaf removal provides compost," Oct. 21). What a noisy racket! Leaf blowers are among the most annoying of modern conveniences. They generate unwanted noise and air pollution from their inefficient motors. They blow up dust and fungal particles that may contribute to fall allergies. Most importantly in these budget-crunching times, they cost money to maintain and operate.

A simple solution exists that will create compost and reduce the need for leaf blowers: return the leaves to the soil with a lawn mower. Simply chopping up the leaves with the final clippings of the year will return them to the soil where they will decompose among the grass. This will reduce the need for leaf blowers, which will reduce expenses and unnecessary pollution. This practice improves lawns by increasing soil organic matter and structure and providing needed nitrogen. Therefore, less fertilizer would need to be applied

to lawns the following year, thus saving the university and borough more money. Eliminating leaf blowers on campus is a measure that should be considered for the health and quiet of the community.

Loren Byrne
graduate - ecology

Balanced diet possible through vegetarianism

In all the years I've read the Collegian, I've never found a letter as fraught with misinformation as Chris Kovalchick's ("Eating meat natural; essential part of diet," Oct. 21) on vegetarianism. As an individual who has chosen vegetarianism primarily for health reasons, I feel an obligation to clear up a few things. Although we are in fact omnivores, whether humans are carnivorous by nature is irrelevant. Even if eating meat is natural doesn't mean it's good. Rape and murder are naturally occurring phenomena, yet we abhor such activities.

Kovalchick has his facts wrong. He claims that humans cannot fulfill their nutritional requirements without meat, but this is simply not true. While no vegetable by itself is a complete protein, defined by providing all 20 necessary amino acids, eating enough different vegetable sources is as good as eating meat. In fact, it's better, because vegetables usually contain far less fat.

He further wrongly states that vegetarians will have health problems in old age. Quite the contrary: according to numerous medical studies, a proper vegetarian lifestyle significantly decreases the risk of heart disease, stroke, many cancers, obesity, diabetes and other diseases. Vegetarianism is not only more environmentally friendly and more ethical, but it is indeed healthier for you.

M. Dominic Eggert
senior - philosophy

Gay marriage provides no benefits to society

This is in response to Mary Ann Zimmerman's column ("Acceptance of various sexual orientations and lifestyles will lead to a more just America," Oct. 21). The main point you made which I take contention with is the legalization of gay marriages. Before a law is passed, one should ask what would be the effect if every citizen of this country followed through on the opportunity offered by this law.

An answer to this question regarding homosexual unions is that the human population would cease to exist. This is

the major setback of gay unions. It provides no benefit to the human society as a whole. If every person were to join in a gay union, the world would stop with that generation. That theory alone should lead you to believe that there is something fundamentally wrong with gay unions.

Greg Schuster
Class of 2003

Cho's reaction to letter offers insight, laughs

Everyone who attended the Distinguished Speakers Series lecture by Margaret Cho on Monday night had a good laugh when the absurdities mentioned in James Bascom's letter ("Coming Out Day rally does not belong at PSU," Oct. 20) were read aloud. All who were not able to attend the lecture but read Bascom's letter to the editor should hear what she had to say in response to it. First, Cho pointed out that there is no homosexual agenda, and that homosexuals are simply trying to live their lives and love whoever they choose. Secondly, she noted that nature in itself is abnormality, with many changes and unique differences in all creatures. Lastly, Cho noted that bestiality, child abuse and terrorism are not alternative lifestyles — they're crimes. Perhaps Bascom should have attended Cho's lecture and been enlightened of his close-minded attitude.

Kara Cummings
junior - biology

'Normality' standard impossible to define

This is in response to James Bascom's letter ("Coming Out Day does not belong at PSU," Oct. 20). You claim that homosexuality is an abnormality. What exactly is normal, Mr. Bascom? Perhaps heterosexual relationships are normal, maybe eating three square meals a day and getting eight hours of sleep every night is normal. Or perhaps having blond hair and blue eyes is normal, yes mein freund? It is my belief however, that there is no "normal." Humanity is a vast and diverse species. We are of different colors, languages, beliefs and behaviors, and we define ourselves by our own combination of these attributes. How dare any of us be so arrogant as to say that our own set is more normal than any others. I am who I am. I do not claim it is normal, or the right way to be. But it is my way to be, and that is what truly matters.

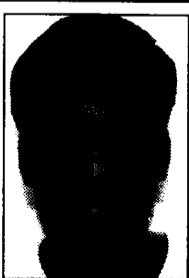
John North
sophomore - secondary education

COLUMN

Mother Teresa proved that hard work, not miracles, is needed to help society

By Jyothi Karthik Raja

Mother Teresa, who will now officially be known as Blessed Teresa of Calcutta, was beatified as a step in the process of canonization, by which the Catholic Church designates saints. People who are beatified can be venerated by their local church and their religious orders; people who are saints can be venerated by the universal church. Mother Teresa dedicated her life and work to the poor and the destitute. The process was hastened after the Vatican deemed that she had miraculously healed a woman.



MY OPINION

The woman was Monica Besra. She had a tumor in her stomach, and after her prayers to Mother Teresa, she claims her cancer disappeared and she was miraculously cured. Another miracle has to be attributed to Mother Teresa before she can become a saint.

When skeptics questioned Besra's doctors, they claimed that she had been under medical treatment, taking tubercular drugs for nine months. They claim that there is definitive medical evidence against this miracle.

Pope John Paul II celebrated his 25th year as Pontiff. Over the course of his pontificate, he has beatified 1,315 people and canonized 476, far more than his predecessors of the past 500 years combined. At one miracle per beatification and two for canonization, more than 2,200 miracles must have been performed. How many did we see? How has it changed our world?

In India, Sai Baba is a very popular miracle-worker. His miracles have gained much adulation and speculation throughout the world. He is known to have presented guests with gold and precious gems that he made appear from thin air. As always, there are skeptics with their claims of evidence against these miracles. There are videotapes that claim to have captured Sai Baba's sleight of hand. Many Web sites have sprung up to discuss these miracles. Few discuss his teachings and charities. Why do we need mira-

cles? What is the power that it yields on a human being? We live in such a strenuous world, constantly fighting the odds to stay afloat, that we would accept any help, the more miraculous and swifter the better. There are so many opposing faiths that to elevate one true one over the other; a great miracle needs to be performed.

It is always the unknown that frightens us the most, and the power of this unknown is the conscience that will make us do right. But a miracle is also personal belief. To a hungry child, finding a piece of bread is a miracle; to an unprepared exam taker, cancellation of school due to heavy snow is a miracle; to a sick person, a doctor curing him is a miracle.

A miracle yields such mind-control that people who stake claim over the creation of that miracle immediately rise to great power. Thousands of fake god-men and god-women have sprung up, claiming to be miracle workers. The focus is shifting from genuine kind-hearted people to these miracle workers. Even those that do real charity work have come to be criticized because of their miraculous stunts.

Caring for the poor is no longer enough. A miracle is imperative.

Mother Teresa founded the Missionaries of Charity in 1950 and over the years the charity has spread to over 130 countries and has over 700 houses. All over the world, the Missionaries of Charity devote their time to the poor, the ill and the aged. Mother Teresa opened orphanages, schools, homes for the needy and AIDS centers throughout the world. Thousands of homeless eat at her soup kitchens everyday. In 1982, at the height of the siege in Beirut, she rescued 37 children holed up in a front-line hospital by requesting a temporary cease-fire between the Israeli army and Palestinian guerrillas, and this was after she received her Nobel Peace Prize in 1979.

The Sri Sathya Sai Organisations carry out charitable activities for the continuous welfare of the needy. Polio, blood donation and eye screening camps are conducted regularly, schools and orphanages have been setup, village betterment programs have been started, and food and clothes are distributed daily. The Sri Sathya Sai Organisations Trust also helps in con-

struction of hospitals, culture halls, and helps to promote unity amongst all. The Trust facilitates the availability of drinking water to many drought-hit areas in India. This is real work. This is the work that requires focus and the work that needs to be rewarded. God-men and god-women should stop performing small miracles just to draw a tribe to them. Every precious gem presented to a rich man by Sai Baba could have been used to pay for the needy. The sooner people stop looking for divine intervention and realize that the power lies in doing real work, the better. Those in power should educate the people to this effect and should stop looking for miracles and miracle workers to spread their faith and should just reward the real work.

Mother Teresa didn't wait for a miracle to help. She went into the streets to help. She doesn't need a strange light behind her head, a miracle, to make her a saint. For most, she already is.

Jyothi Karthik Raja is a graduate student in industrial engineering and operations research and a Daily Collegian columnist. His e-mail address is kart@psu.edu.