

OPINION

THE DAILY
Collegian

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Letters

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PSU's status with state troubling

During election season, politicians from Pennsylvania make it a point to tell students that education is a top priority.

And maybe that's true for some of them, but judging by how state legislators are handling appropriations for state-related universities — Penn State included — one should question whether or not education is very high of a priority.

In fact, those state-related schools are specifically designated as "non-preferred" when it comes to priority in receiving state appropriations.

It's embarrassing and shameful that appropriations for Penn State and the other three "non-preferred" state-related schools being affected — Pitt, Temple and Lincoln — are being put on the back burner because of our legislators' inefficiency at balancing the budget.

University officials have said that if Penn State doesn't receive appropriations money in time for the spring semester billing cycle, starting Nov. 13, tuition will have to make up for what appropriations money can't cover.

Penn State's appropriations are contingent on the legalization of table games, an issue that will take an indefinite amount of time to resolve.

Legislators seem to be forgetting something. By leaving students in the dark without funding, they are forcing students — the future of the state's economy — to be left with an even higher debt after school.

Not to boast, but how can anyone think of placing Penn State into a "non-preferred" category? With about 94,000 students alone spread out across 24 campuses statewide, one would be foolish to think our university deserves

funding less than, say, a state system school with 7,000 undergraduates.

That's not to say small state system schools are undeserving of appropriations, but the point remains that 94,000 Penn State students may be under a lot more financial stress after graduation because our legislators are behind on balancing the budget.

And keep in mind that number is just a fraction of the combined 158,000 students who attend the state's three other state-related schools.

The simple fact is that if tuition keeps rising and appropriations keep lacking, students unfairly suffer.

If education were truly a high priority, you would think our legislators would make sure to quickly and adequately fund Penn State, one of the highest enrolled universities in the country.

Enthusiasm for sports draws commentary from community

I was reading Stephanie Goga's Nov. 5 column "Overreaction plagues sport culture" and couldn't help but chuckle at what she saw. As a way of making money and a hobby, I have been a football official for six years.

When I am on the field, I can't help but look around and listen to the parents and coaches. What Stephanie mentioned is only the tip of the iceberg in terms of what goes on with youth sports.

They expect perfection out of their children and the officials. It's the Super Bowl every week to them, in the most literal sense possible.

The parents and coaches are extremely hard on the kids, not to mention the officials.

I, personally, have had verbal threats made against me for making calls against a team. The players were not even 10 years old!

The parents claimed that I had "robbed" their kids as if that game were the difference between winning the Lombardi trophy or not. When I was a kid, playing was about having fun.

Now, it's about becoming the next Peyton Manning, Adrian Peterson or Justin Tuck — not to mention the money.

Joe Maccarlo
sophomore-mechanical engineering

In response to the Nov. 5 column about the current sports culture, I advise the writer to try playing (and winning) a competitive sport before she complains about how people respond to them.

Sports, obviously, are one of the most competitive aspects of life. While some people play for fun, the overwhelming majority play to win (if they didn't, why keep score?). It is not "just a game"; Monopoly and checkers are just games.

Rather, sports are a way of life for an abundance of people of all ages, and many people take them very seriously.

Athletic competition is a natural and healthy thing for people to partake in, and many times the people who are physically unable to play in sports show their enthusiasm and competitiveness by supporting and celebrating their teams' victories.

If I can't go nuts for my team winning a huge game, then what C. N I go nuts for?

Max Young
junior-psychology

PSU should seize opportunity to schedule non-Big 10 team

There's a little university tucked in the mountains of Idaho with a student population a fraction of Penn State's. Despite being a BCS-ranked team in recent years, the Boise State Broncos don't get the respect they deserve, nor will they have a legitimate shot for a national championship because of the conference in which they play.

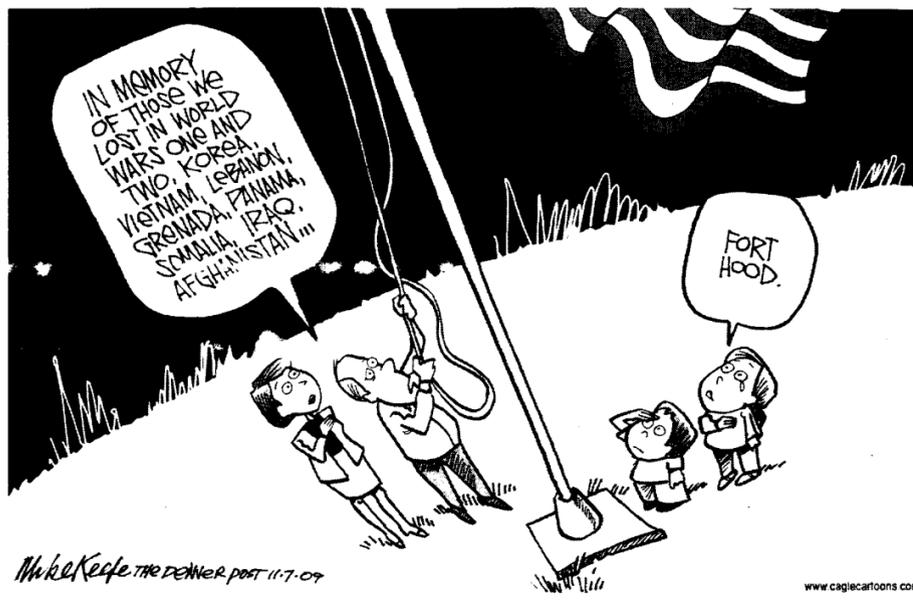
Penn State has a similar problem, although somewhat self-inflicted. We aren't taken seriously in the BCS standings because of our non-conference schedule. In the past, we've played "cupcake" teams. All of that can change in the upcoming years.

In 2010, Penn State will begin a home and home series with the Alabama Crimson Tide, beginning in the second week of the season at 'Bama. The following year, the Crimson Tide will visit Happy Valley. That season, we have an opening the very first week of the season, typically reserved for non-conference opponents.

Boise State, in hopes of being taken seriously as a BCS contender, has made an offer to any BCS conference: They will come to your stadium in 2011 and play your team. That team will not be expected to come to Boise State to play on the Smurf Turf. ESPN has even gotten into the mix, saying that they will undoubtedly televise the game nationally.

In my opinion, Penn State has a golden opportunity here. We have the chance to have two nationally televised non-conference games to prove that we are worthy to be in the national spotlight. We will have two huge non-conference home games. Even if we come out of those games 1-1, our strength of schedule will be able to give us a push in the BCS standing for the rest of the season and perhaps a shot at the national title.

Shane McBurney
Class of 2007



Integrity matters in pet purchasing

By Julie Wolf

It's a general agreement among many, no matter if they enjoy the adult-sized creatures or not.

Puppies are cute.

I'll admit that I often venture to pet stores to play with the newborn dogs. I can't have a dog in my current apartment, but I can just drive to a local store to be around some.

But I would likely never buy a dog from one of these stores because sadly, many of them are raised in puppy mills.

Puppy mills are breeding facilities that produce purebred puppies in large numbers, and they have long concerned the Humane Society of the United States.

The problems documented in these mills include overbreeding, inbreeding, minimal veterinary care, poor quality of food and shelter, lack of human socialization, overcrowded cages and the killing of unwanted animals.

The emphasis at these facilities is on profit above animal welfare. Mother dogs are forced to have litters at an early age and

are kept continually pregnant.

They're often killed when they're no longer able to produce a profitable litter size, according to animal advocacy organization Friends of Animals.

The puppies are typically sold when they're about seven weeks old. They are packed in crates and shipped to pet stores, a journey that lacks adequate food, water or ventilation. And not all of them survive the trip.

Those that do survive can be infected by contagious viruses and parasites.

It's a shame I can't include images in this small space, because photographs show the real horror of these locales.

I have had dogs all my life, and all three were rescue mixes. Goliath was 5 years old when we adopted him from a shelter. He was turned in by a family who didn't have time for him. Jeter was about 5 weeks old and had been found in the snow. And Belle was raised by an elderly man in a trailer park. When we put her leash on for the first time, she barked — we realized that she had never been walked.

These mixed breed rescues were a vital addition to our family. They were grateful to have been rescued, and it was obvious in their love for us and loyalty to our family.

Unfortunately, many people instead choose to buy purebred

dogs born in puppy mills for hundreds of dollars.

You may think that dogs in pet stores are healthier or somehow "cleaner" than dogs in animal shelters, but that's not always true. Dogs who are born in puppy mills often contract illnesses from the sites.

When buyers purchase their dogs from these pet stores, the money goes into funding the continuation of puppy mills, causing a never-ending cycle of abuse. But there are much better options for those looking to add dogs to their families.

Hundreds of hopeful dogs are waiting to be adopted at animal shelters throughout the country. Just here in State College, we have Centre County PAWS.

We have the Pennsylvania Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, with six branches across the state. But while sheltered dogs are waiting to be rescued, many people continue to buy pets solely from stores.

By rescuing a dog from a shelter, you're not only saving yourself money; you're saving an animal in need. And you very well might be bringing home the best friend you ever had.

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MY OPINION

blog lines

Between the Pipes

The third regular season rankings have been released, and although a lot of teams moved around in the rankings, all 25 teams in the ranking remained the same from the last set of rankings. And not only did all the teams that made the rankings last time around find their way into the top 25 again, but the top-10 teams were all ranked somewhere amongst the nation's 10 best again.

The top two teams, No. 1 Lindenwood and No. 2 Illinois, remained the same yet again, and Lindenwood regained its unanimous No. 1 ranking this time around. Liberty took over sole possession of the No. 3 spot, breaking a tie with Ohio, who fell to No. 4. Other than that, there were no other changes in the top 7, including Penn State staying at No. 6.

Three teams remain undefeated in the ACHA — No. 1 Lindenwood, No. 3 Liberty and No. 12 Arizona State.

Read more from **Between the Pipes** and the rest of The Daily Collegian's blogs at psu.collegian.com.