

# Feral cats threaten university, students

By Colleen Boyle  
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

A small population of feral cats has been spotted on Penn State's campus — and they're more dangerous than most people might think, university officials said Wednesday.

The pack of cats, which has been seen near the Penn Stater Conference Center Hotel, descended from domestic cats released into the wild generations ago, university spokeswoman Lisa Powers said.

"Feral cats have been born in

the wild, live in the wild and have never been domesticated," Powers said. "They can be aggressive, adverse to human contact and are much more likely to scratch and bite than domesticated cats."

Feral cats are easily confused with house cats but can be antagonistic when approached, potentially spreading diseases.

"They are a cause for concern for the health and safety of employees, visitors and the children at the daycare center in that area," Powers said.

Risks include the spread of Cat

Scratch Disease (CSD), a bacterial infection. Most people with CSD were recently scratched or bitten by a cat and develop a mild infection at the point of injury, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

But encounters can be more dangerous. Those who are bitten or scratched by the feral cats may be at risk for tetanus and rabies, and the feces of feral cats may carry parasites, including roundworms, hookworms and ringworm.

After receiving word of the cats, the university's Office of

Environmental Health and Safety and members of an Animal Response Team worked to solve the problem. They plan to relocate the pack with the help of the local Humane Society, dispatching a pest company to snare the feral felines.

The university is also removing food sources that may be attracting the cats.

"We discovered that some individuals may have been feeding these feral cats," Powers said. "We have now asked them to stop feeding them for the safety of our campus community."

Powers said those in State College should refrain from releasing pets into the wild because of the threat these animals may cause to the community in the future.

"Cats are able to breed when they are six months old, and a pair of breeding cats, which can have two or more litters per year, can exponentially produce 420,000 offspring over a seven-year period," Powers said. "People who have pets are not doing them any favors by 'freeing' them."

To e-mail reporter: [cab5356@psu.edu](mailto:cab5356@psu.edu)

## UP ON THE ROOFTOP



Office of Physical Plant workers remove snow from the light shelves on the Stuckeman Family Building on Wednesday morning. Workers said clearing snow from the shelves is a routine they prepare for annually to keep students safe around the building. Many residence halls around campus have doorways and walkways closed as a way to keep students safe from snow falling from the buildings.

## Hillel receives international recognition

By Leah Gillen  
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Penn State Hillel beat out more than 500 universities internationally to win Hillel's "Best Place to Work Award" last week, in part because of the efforts of the organization's four-person staff.

Every year, the national Hillel organization awards the Vision and Values Awards in four categories, and this year Penn State Hillel was singled out for its strong work atmosphere.

Penn State Hillel cultivates a close working environment, serving as a model in the field of outstanding work relationships, said Aaron Kaufman, executive director of Penn State Hillel. Penn State Hillel is a student-run organization and students organize the semester's events — but staff members do serve as mentors.

Kaufman said, motivating the student leaders to create opportunities for all Hillel members.

Other employers said they agreed. "The purpose is to create an environment for Jewish life on campus — we work for the students," said Lauren Schuchart, Penn State Hillel's director of engagement. "The staff is there to support the students. I try and create new opportunities for what would be a meaningful experience for them."

Penn State Hillel staff members work together to benefit the students and each other, Schuchart said — each member works to foster creativity and opportunity in the student body. Their dedication to each other and the students, she said, is evident in their willingness to collaborate for the greatest good.

"There is a big emphasis based in personal as well as professional

development. We're each recognized as individuals," Schuchart said. "We're a small staff and we're growing at such a pace that it's hard to keep up. We're all willing to cross over duties and help each other out."

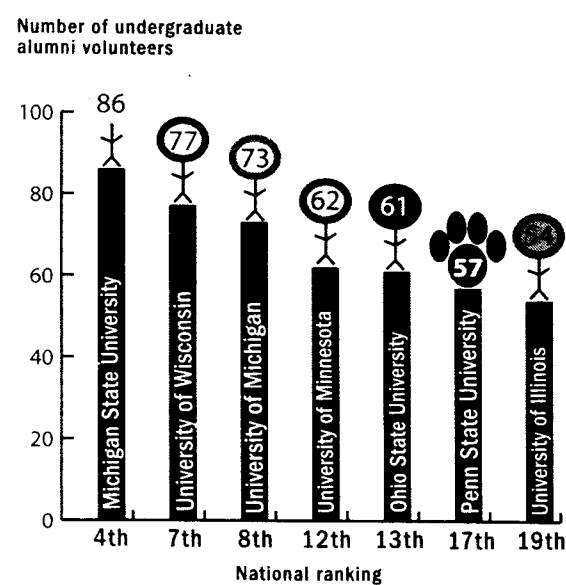
Staff members at Penn State Hillel work closely with the student body, especially Hillel's Student Board, serving either formally or informally as advisers to the students.

"The commitment that they have towards the students means a lot to us. We see that and we want to give back because of the dedication we see here," said Hillel President Michal Berns (sophomore-media studies). "I want to give back to the Jewish community because it's part of my beliefs, but the commitment of the staff makes me want to give back even more."

To e-mail reporter: [lag5257@psu.edu](mailto:lag5257@psu.edu)

## Peace corps rankings

Below are rankings of Big Ten undergraduate alumni volunteers, according to the Peace Corps list of top colleges.



Source: [www.peacecorps.gov](http://www.peacecorps.gov)

Tiffany Liaw/Collegian

## PSU alumni rank high in Peace Corps

By Nick Manella  
FOR THE COLLEGIAN

Penn State ranks 17th in the nation in the number of Peace Corps volunteers, according to a recent study — a four-place jump from last year.

Nearing its 50th anniversary, the international service organization released its ranking of colleges and universities with alumni volunteer involvement for 2009. To compile the data, current Peace Corps volunteers reported their alma mater. Penn State currently has 57 undergraduate alumni volunteers.

Penn State Director of Career Services Jack Rayman — who spent three years in Malaysia with the Peace Corps — said the university is pleased to be on the list, continuing a more than quarter-century tradition at Penn State.

The rankings were split into three groups: large universities with more than 15,000 undergraduates, medium colleges and universities with between 5,000 and 15,000 and small colleges with under 5,000. The University of Washington took the top spot for the fourth consecutive year with 101 current volunteers, according to the survey.

Other high-ranking universities included George Washington University, topping the medium section with 52, and St. Olaf College, as first in the small portion with 26.

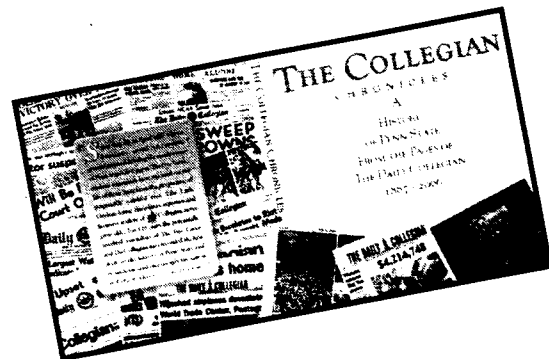
"I am proud of our historic relationship with over 3,000 colleges and universities in the United States and look forward to recruiting and training the next generation of Peace Corps volunteers," Peace Corps Director Aaron S. Williams said in a statement released with the rankings.

On the list, Penn State was joined by fellow Big Ten members Michigan State University, which checked in at No. 4 with 86 members, and University of Wisconsin-Madison, which was 7th with 77 volunteers.

The University of Michigan also cracked the top 10 with 73 volunteers in 8th place, and Ohio State University tied for 13th with University of California-Davis, boasting 61 undergraduate alumni volunteers, according to the study.

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