

OF EDUCATION DONATION

Donor's gift shows innovation

There is no question that Penn State has an incredible alumni network that is determined to make future generations' college experience better than its own.

Evidence of this is clear after 1982 alumna Paula Donson pledged \$2.4 million to the College of Education — the largest donation ever made to the college.

Often, donations are used to build new facilities or offer scholarships, but Donson's contribution is meant for something a little bit different. She

intends for the money to be used to help the college foster innovative ideas and methods to improve the quality of graduates and, as a result, the quality of teachers.

That is something a beautiful new building simply can't do, and Donson realized it.

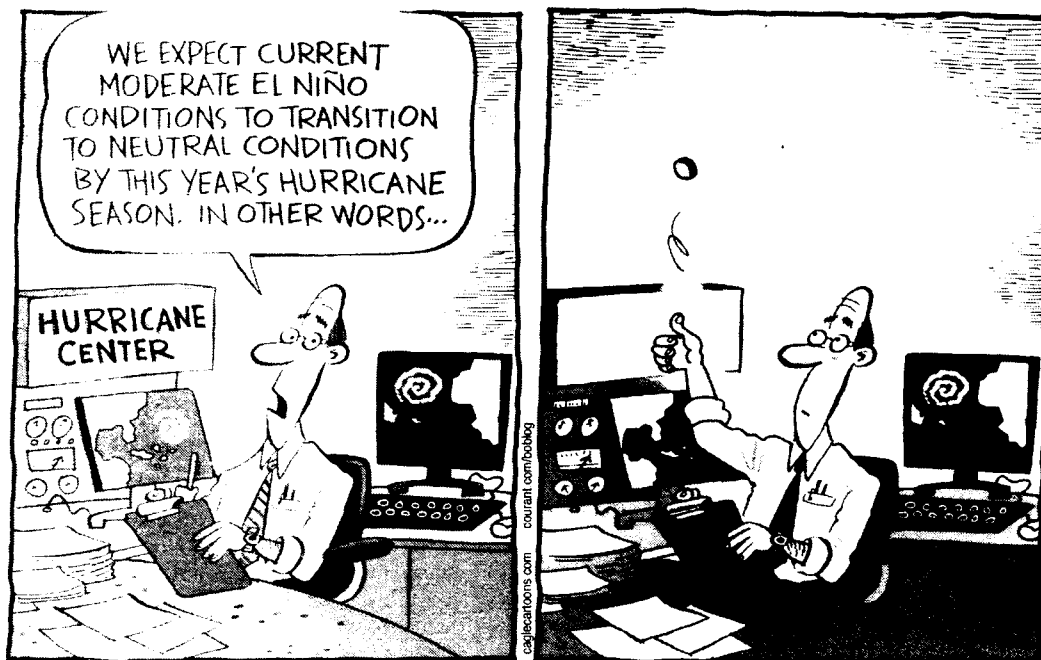
She hopes the money will give students more opportunities to excel and learn different delivery systems of education and approaches to engaging those in the community regarding education.

Donson's act deserves

hearty applause for finding a new way to make alumni relations help Penn State.

She is thinking outside the box in her monetary allotment, and hopefully other alumni will follow her lead to give students from all colleges at this university the opportunity to cultivate creative techniques in their respective fields.

With the gracious donation on its way, hopefully students and faculty step up to the plate with the innovative ideas she is encouraging.



Cut back on eating meat for environment, personal health

In response to the April 26 letter, "Cows, other livestock do not inflict harm on environment," I have to respectfully disagree. Cows, and most other animals, cannot be raised sustainably.

According to the Environmental Protection Agency, "In the U.S., cattle emit about 5.5 million metric tons of methane per year into the atmosphere, accounting for 20 percent of U.S. methane emissions." Methane is one of the most potent greenhouse gases, staying in our atmosphere for 100 years.

Although agriculture may not be the most significant source of greenhouse gases compared to transportation and industry, people have the most control over their impact when it comes to agriculture. It is not always easy to drive less, but it is easy to change your diet.

Furthermore, many studies show that a plant-based diet is healthier than a meat-based diet. Currently, Americans take in much more meat than is necessary or even healthy.

Still, the solution is not necessarily becoming vegetarian or vegan. For better health and environmental protection, the answer may be simply consuming less meat, even if that cut is substantial for some people.

Rose Monahan
sophomore-political science and English

Column incorrectly argues intolerance of U.S. Christians

I am a Christian, and I was extremely offended by the April 26 senior column, "Senior wonders why many look down on Christians." In my personal experience, America is exceedingly tolerant to Christians.

Most people are egalitarian and embrace people of all faiths. I cannot figure out what the writer meant by the statements that claim Christians are persecuted, as no evidence is given — just vague claims that it might happen.

The question of whether separation of church and state is in the Constitution was puzzling to me because the first words of the First Amendment say, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion."

As for the "evidence" that the "government has been accommodating other religions," the writer seems to not understand the difference between one's personal duty to his or her religion (i.e. praying at certain times or covering your head), and making other people acquiesce to your beliefs. The only time anger is directed at Christians in this country is when they try to use the Bible as a truncheon to force their beliefs on others.

People like Glenn Beck and the Westboro Baptist church make all Christians look like intolerant nimrods.

Bridget Esposito
sophomore-psychology



'South Park' wrong to back down

By Kevin Sullivan

All of my Collegian comrades seem to be writing nostalgic articles marking our upcoming departure from the place we've spent our last four years studying, gaining what we lovingly dub "life experiences" and honing our journalistic techniques. Always one for self-indulgence, I'd like to heed this opportunity shamelessly.

I've had no profound, spiritually awakening experiences, so I'd like to frame my reminiscence somewhat differently: I long for the days before "South Park" ran out of good ideas.

It seems that recently the show's creators are trying a little hard. The days of the cartoon's timely, thoughtful satire and clever narrative twists that it ironically presented through its pubescent potty mouth are all but gone. In its place we have an out of control shock factor and diluted use of reproductive organ puns that only occasionally offer the kind of social commentary that rises to the quality of the show's golden ages.

It's possible the show hasn't really gotten worse, and instead, I've just gotten older and more cynical. Maybe that cynicism was nurtured by "South Park" itself.

Two weeks ago, I watched the show go out of its way to make jokes out of workers at chocolate packaging factories and the term "sea man." Callin' it: 2011 early Peabody nomination for consistently great writing.

If the show's writers are reading this and didn't catch on, the preceding sentence involves what's known as "sarcasm" or

"satire." Remember that? I don't think the show ever used to be that desperate for jokes in its initial seasons. Maybe my nostalgia has been peppered with idealism, but I was kind of offended watching the episode force-feed me these jokes any random seventh grader could improvise.

When I went on the Internet afterward, I noticed I wasn't the only one offended. However, that criticism wasn't for the lazy jokes.

The episode in question features the Prophet Muhammad in a bear costume. It's pretty damning.

Of course, this isn't quite Salman Rushdie, but it sparked a miniature fatwa all its own that the network handled quite sophomorically.

The radical Islamic website revolutionmuslim.com made a statement that the "South Park" creators "will probably end up like Theo van Gogh for airing this episode." This reference was to Dutch filmmaker van Gogh, who was murdered in 2004 after a film he made criticizing the abuse of women in certain Islamic societies.

This isn't the first time the "South Park" creators dealt with the issue of the depiction of Muhammad. In 2006, after a cartoonized version of the prophet sparked controversy in Denmark, "South Park" satirized it.

This episode was different. After Comedy Central censored the 2006 episode's depiction of Muhammad, the recent episode rightfully criticized American culture's final, impenetrable and ridiculous taboo — the blasphemy, even in the West, to artfully depict Muhammad. After all of its over-the-top button-pushing, "South Park" finally found the one remaining line even it couldn't cross.

The episode aired in two

parts, and when the second part was shown, even the masked depictions of Muhammad were censored by the network. Sadly, within the span of one week, "South Park" has reassessed itself as a voice of reason — a lewd voice, obsessed with genitalia to a degree that would make even Freud blush, but a voice more reasonable than its corporate parenthood at Comedy Central.

Radical Islam is a terrifying thing. It is clearly important enough to start wars and obviously commands itself as something to be taken seriously. But it is seriously evil, and as something that can provoke violence in retaliation to mere words, it should be confronted and not masked.

Last week, Ayaan Hirsi Ali, the writer behind the film responsible for van Gogh's death, stated on "Anderson Cooper 360," "If the entertainment business were to take this on...there would be too many people to threaten" and there would be no reason to protect those utilizing their freedom of speech.

She's right. And if free speech is something we are going to value as a culture, we cannot turn away from it to please the ignorant and hateful.

The radical website in question incited a serious threat, but people can't just base their actions off comments posted on blogs and other websites. Have you ever read the comments on YouTube?

If that is how Comedy Central plans to run its business, it shouldn't even exist. I know a Nigerian prince e-mail scammer who can give it lucrative sums for much less work.

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THE DAILY Collegian

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Letters

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Letters should be about 200 words. Student letters should include class year, major and campus. Letters from alumni should include 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 on The Daily Collegian Online and may be selected for publication in The Weekly Collegian. All letters become property of Collegian Inc.

blog lines

Beam Me Up

Though senior Brandi Personett's career is over, the 2009 and 2010 Big Ten Gymnast of the Year still has a chance to win multiple awards.

After being named one of six finalists for the AAI Award in March, Personett was announced on Friday as one of four nominees for the 2009-10 Honda Sports Award to determine the top woman collegiate athlete in gymnastics.

One of the other three gymnasts nominated was LSU's Susan Jackson, Personett's childhood friend and 2010 individual national champion on the balance beam. Jackson competed at regionals on April 10 at Rec Hall, and tied for first in vault with Personett, scoring a 9.950 in that meet. Jackson won the title on the uneven bars that night as well with a 9.950.

Read more from the women's gymnastics blog **Beam Me Up** and the rest of The Daily Collegian's blogs at psu.collegian.com/blogs.

Footblog

Sophomore cornerback Stephon Morris had an interesting analysis of the quarterback situation.

It was a positive one, but, no, it wasn't simply that Kevin Newsome and Matt McGloin have made progress this spring. Morris described an encounter with Newsome that he said impressed him about the sophomore quarterback.

Morris and Newsome were hanging out, and Morris asked what Newsome would do if McGloin won the quarterback battle.

Newsome responded, Morris said, by casually saying, "As long as we win!" Team-first moments like those, Morris said, have made the Lions stronger because of the quarterback battle.

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

Back Points

Phil Davis was featured at a seminar for MMA fighting at Central PA Mixed Martial Arts. I was able to interview Davis about the event and the Penn State wrestling program.

Visit **Back Points** to see what the 2008 national champion had to say.

Read more from the wrestling blog **Back Points** and the rest of The Daily Collegian's blogs at psu.collegian.com/blogs.