

THE DAILY Collegian

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Letters

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

- E-mail: collegianletters@psu.edu
- Online: www.psu.collegian.com
- Postal mail/In person: 123 S. Burrows St. University Park, PA 16801

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.

# Town losing last true bookstore

This week, State College said goodbye to a part of itself.

Webster's Bookstore and Café is closing after 13 years of business. But to call Webster's simply a "business" would be a stark understatement.

The 128 S. Allen St. store is one of the only locally owned bookstores in State College. While some may contend that the Student Bookstore or Got Used Bookstore fit into that same category, the literature those stores sell is largely for the classroom. Webster's offers something more.

Among the shelves upon shelves of books are

dozens of literary genres from English-to-Spanish dictionaries to the J.R.R. Tolkien saga "The Lord of the Rings." Literally hundreds of books call Webster's home.

But there were more than just books. The entire store functioned as a hub of activity. Among a strip of franchises like Abercrombie & Fitch and Chili's, there stood a kernel of local personality — personality the town is now losing.

On top of the occasional customer, the store maintains a large following, a factor made evident by the hundreds of supporters who have petitioned to

keep the business from closing. And even though the borough often attracts the attention of national franchises, there are still community leaders publicly coming to Webster's aid.

For all those involved in the public support of this local and independent business, it shows a high degree of solidarity and dedication among the State College community. And this town needs to continue to support independent businesses.

Hopefully, for our community, Webster's unfortunate closing will not be permanent and the store will find a new home.

# James critics being unjust

By Matt Fortuna

By the time you read this, LeBron James will have won over a new city and become Public Enemy No. 1 in five others. That much I think I know.

And yet, the optimist in me can't help but think this is for charity.

Shouldn't that be what we're talking about, instead of labeling him a villain and a narcissist and tons of other terrible things when there are plenty of worse human beings in this world, this country?

James is a 25-year-old kid who reached the heights after coming from nothing, and he did it in large part because of us. Now the same group that helped build him into "The King" is tearing him down before he even begins his eighth year in the NBA.

He doesn't need any more money or any more attention. But he knows exactly how we think. He knows no matter how much complaining we do about his decision to announce his next team live on ESPN, every damn one of us will be tuning in. And he knows the Twittersphere will explode, and we will one day tell our grandkids about the time we made new plans to watch the most physically talented basketball player alive broadcast his decision.

Perhaps most of the critics are fans of Kobe Bryant, the best player today. It was just six years ago Bryant, a free agent, was staring at a much different court over allegations of something that may or may not have happened in a Colorado hotel.

Fans and teams still fawned over him, though. He stuck with the Lakers, settled out of court and accomplished little to nothing for the next three seasons, trashing teammates, throwing away a Game 7 and demanding to be traded along the way.

Now, two titles later, Bryant's comeback is complete, and he is the gold standard. You don't think James' camp noticed this?

This was from Ryan Jones, a Collegian alum who was on the James trail from the start, penning a book on him, "Believe the Hype," before James played in the NBA.

"It's easy to forget how that went a few years ago," Jones said. "LeBron and his people are definitely aware of that. Kobe's the guy he's compared to, because they're the two best players on the planet. If Kobe can do it, certainly LeBron can, so I think they said, 'Hey, all of this will go by the way-side if we win.'"

Winning isn't guaranteed in sports. Look no further than Dan Marino and Ted Williams to know that. But what is guaranteed in today's society is short-term memory loss, because America loves nothing more than a good comeback story.

And yet, I can't help but think what is he coming back from? Another season without a championship? A two-month reign of swimming in all the attention we — the people who have spent the past week ripping him — have endlessly given him?

"I understand why people are criticizing him but it's probably those who don't already like him, so it's easy to say," Jones said.

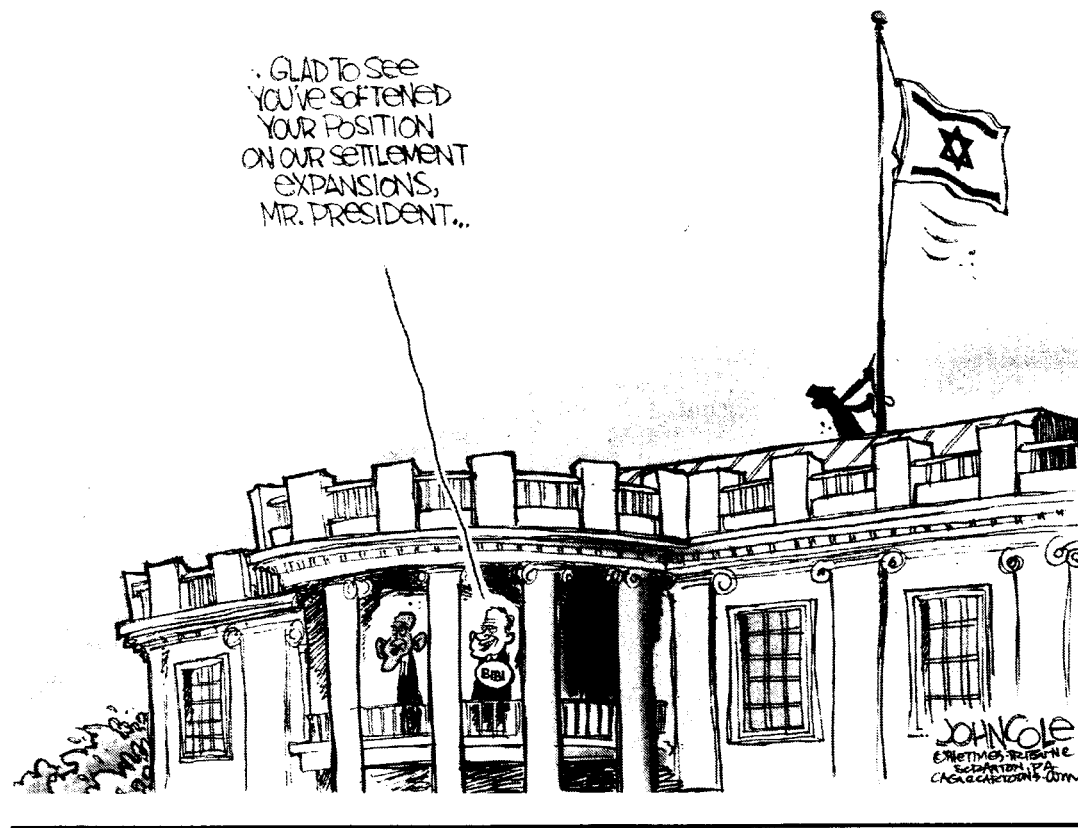
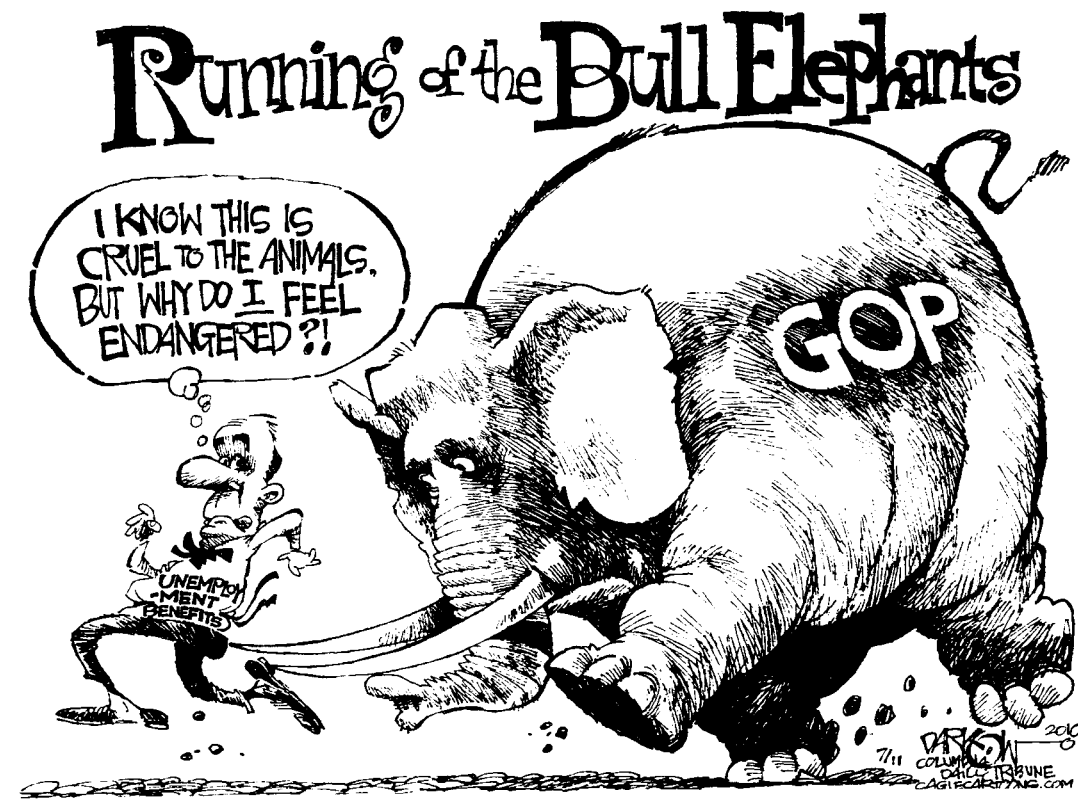
James is not Tiger Woods and he's not what Bryant was accused of being. He is simply feeding the monster, acting like a kid who has the world by the you-know-what. And he's helping out the Boys and Girls Clubs of America while he's at it.

Maybe if he wins a title someday that will be worth something.

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MY OPINION



# African vuvuzela at center of World Cup criticisms

## Vuvuzelas are humming in Africa and Penn State

By Jared Shanker

For those who have been watching ESPN's World Cup coverage over the last month, it's been tough getting up as early as 4 a.m. for the day's first game.

Conveniently, though, ESPN had a built-in alarm clock for three weeks to alert soccer fans it was time to wake up and wrap themselves in their country's flag.

It's called the vuvuzela, nothing more than a long piece of metal or plastic that projects a loud buzzing noise when you blow into it.

From the opening kickoff on June 11 until the last whistle during Sunday's final (and even after), fans across South Africa have been blowing the vuvuzela nonstop.

And I couldn't be happier. The constant buzzing doesn't bother me like so many other critics have proclaimed. It provides a soothing background tone to the action, which much of the time can hardly be considered as such. For those who don't like it, it's really not that hard to tune out.

And by the way, you have, because if it was that bad, you wouldn't have made it through 30

days of World Cup soccer. The vuvuzela is more than just an "annoying" buzzing sound coming through your TV screen. It's a symbol of South African heritage, which should be especially important considering this year's tournament is supposed to celebrate Africa's hosting of the World Cup, the first time in the continent's history.

Regardless, the vuvuzela is just fun to blow into. Trust me. I've been the proud owner of a single vuvuzela for a little less than a week, and I can say it's been the best week of my life.

What better way to celebrate one of the just 20 goals in the World Cup this year than to yell into a giant horn, blowing out eardrums indiscriminately?

The best part, though, is that the vuvuzela isn't just designated for soccer use. Time to convene for a board meeting? The vuvuzela has got you covered.

Want to punish your roommate for perpetually waking you up as he stumbles into your dorm at 4 a.m.? Grab the vuvuzela.

Following Sunday, the vuvuzela will once again be obsolete in America. That is unless pro-vuvuzelers can do something about it. And you can count on me to be leading the charge.

But duty calls for now. It's time for a board meeting. Bzzzzzzzzzz!

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## Vuvuzelas need to stay in South Africa, not U.S.

By Jake Kaplan

I have been looking forward to Sunday afternoon's 2010 FIFA World Cup Final for several weeks now — and it is not in anticipation of seeing who will be crowned champion.

Rather, it is so I no longer have to endure the almost daily headaches of hearing the vuvuzelas. It's not that I haven't enjoyed the games, but the need to keep my TV on mute is getting old.

I understand they are part of South African culture, and I am fine with the use of them there, even if it has caused me to increase my Advil consumption.

But the vuvuzela phenomenon has already, in less than a month since the start of the World Cup, spread to the United States and even to State College.

Unfortunately, that includes the Daily Collegian office (to see the culprit of that crime, merely look at the mug left of this).

These horns, with the annoying sound similar to a swarm of bees, need to stay where they belong: in South Africa.

I have already heard them on the streets of downtown State College on Saturday nights this summer,

and this worries me that their use, as well as their annoyance, will continue to spread.

A couple of weeks ago, the Florida Marlins gave out 15,000 vuvuzelas at one of their games. This was a terrible idea, as evidenced by a ninth-inning miscommunication between then-Marlins manager Fredi Gonzalez and the home plate umpire, costing Florida a leadoff baserunner.

The postgame reactions of both the Marlins players and the visiting Tampa Bay Rays showed the noise-makers to be an outright annoyance, and I hope that other sports teams do not follow suit with similar promotions.

Here is another example that may drive home my anti-vuvuzela stand. A recent Facebook group created by Ohio State students attempted to organize a crowd full of these horns for when the Buckeyes host your Nittany Lions on Nov. 13.

Can you imagine playing in a visiting stadium with that awful noise buzzing in your ears? It probably wouldn't bode well for the Penn State football team.

Kudos to the Big Ten for quelling this idea right away, reinforcing their rule banning "irritants" in arenas.

Irritants are exactly what vuvuzelas are, and they do not belong at sporting events outside of South Africa.

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MY OPINION