

OPINION

THE DAILY
Collegian

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Letters

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

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EDITORIAL: G.I. BILL

Expansion on G.I. should pass

A bill furthering the educational rights of veterans of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq is currently heading to the Senate.

The bill would grant more scholarship money to veterans and include tuition to vocational and professional schools.

Given the previous success of the G.I. Bill, further expansion of benefits for veterans is a step in the right direction.

After devoting years of their lives to protecting this country, the least Congress and taxpayers can do is fund veterans in their pursuit of a career after their time in the service.

Expansion shows that

Congress understands that veterans take a more difficult path to higher education than most students.

Including vocational schools in the bill allows veterans more options once they return from war.

The bill would also allow veterans to transfer their benefits to other family members.

This key aspect characterizes education as a social right and a possession that can be distributed, if the veteran so chooses.

Universities such as Penn State could even see added benefits if the bill passes — it could

increase the diversity of the student body.

The additional scholarship money would enable more adult learners to be in classrooms and offer their real-life experience into the educational process.

Veterans could also potentially benefit local economies in college towns. During their time in college, they could move their families and build houses in the area.

Though the bill would only apply to veterans who served three years of active duty after 9/11, it represents positive movement in the quest to fully compensate veterans for their service.



COLUMNIST

Pirates, PSU pride never falters

By Jessica Uzar

THE Pittsburgh Pirates are depressingly close to adding another consecutive losing season to their résumé. This is not just any losing season, but is predicted to be the worst one in half a century.

Their résumé is already 17 losing seasons long, more than any other professional team. Ever. That's a very depressing fact for anyone from the Pirates' hometown, for both supporters and non-supporters alike.

Yet, the team still manages to fill PNC Park every opening day and sells out a surprising number of weekend games during the season. Who the heck wants to go watch their home team lose?

I do. Well, I don't want to see them lose but I do like to go to games. I went to at least seven games this summer.

Guess how many they won?

One. Single. Game. But I'm obviously not the only one attending. The Pirates made \$29.4 million in profit in 2007 and 2008, according to financial documents the Associated Press recently acquired. Why would anyone want to go to these games?

Well, one, because it's always a give-away night. Whether it's a free Pirate umbrella, Pirate T-shirt or Andrew McCutchen bobble head, there's a good

chance you'll be handed something when you walk through the gates.

But people go mostly because Pittsburgh loves Pittsburgh. And Pittsburgh loves sports. During the summer, there are no football or hockey games. But we have to watch something.

So we go to the baseball games. We get a Primanti Bros. sandwich. We cheer for our favorite Mrs. T's Pierogi characters who race around the field because — let's be honest — most people are more concerned with Cheese Chester's record than the Pirates' record.

I've experienced this amazing sense of pride in the only other place I've ever lived — right here in State College. It's a large part of why I choose to come to school here. I've heard Penn State called a "cult" before by more than one person.

And you know what?

I don't disagree. We're the No. 1 student section in the country. We have the biggest student-run philanthropy in the world. Our alumni flood the bars and stadium on Homecoming weekend. Our tailgating is like no other school's. And students will buy anything with that Nittany Lion on it — from T-shirts to shaving razors.

I went to a University of Pittsburgh football game last fall. And it was just a sad experience. Tailgating, forget it. And they can't even fill the 60,000 person stadium that they share with the Steelers. We fill 110,000 every game. And their student section? Half the size of our underclassmen section.

Students wait in line for hours for amazing seats to watch the football team play. Oh wait, they sometimes even wait in line for days. In 32 degree weather.

I believe that if — knock on wood — Penn State would ever have a losing streak, that students and alumni would not decrease their support in any way. I know, deep down in my blue-and-white heart, that people would still flock to Beaver Stadium and the Bryce Jordan Center.

I know we'll have plenty of representation at our upcoming Alabama football game even though it's far away, expensive and chance of success is probably low.

And the sports fanatics are certainly not the only ones who deserve kudos. We can't forget the amazing student volunteers that participate in THON and helped to raise \$7.8 million to help children with cancer.

Our pride is special because after the game is over and the dancers finally get to sit down, we will always have the Nittany Lion to hold us together.

I couldn't be more proud of my school and my hometown. I know I will be that mom who dresses her daughter in a Penn State cheerleading uniform and her son in a Steeler jersey.

I wouldn't have it any other way.

Jessica Uzar is a junior majoring in journalism and political science and The Daily Collegian's Wednesday columnist. Her e-mail is ju125@psu.edu.

THON should provide answers

In response to Monday's article "Leaders question THON structure," I do not believe that revealing fundraising totals would negatively affect the kids. Friendly competition is vital to many fundraising efforts. Why is the overall committee rejecting the input of the population that the liaisons are meant to represent? How could letting greeks assist in the selection of greek liaisons go against the mission of THON?

I suggest that the THON overalls stop hiding behind their cause (which is certainly wonderful and deserving) and start providing the community they are composed of with answers. As a beloved part of our Penn State community, the overall committee needs to be held accountable for its decisions.

Kate Patton
Class of 2010

Shutting out greeks not FTK

Greeks 4 Kids was created after the Interfraternity Council (IFC) and Panhellenic Council's (PHC) removal from the THON Overall Committee. The IFC, PHC and 2010 Overall Committee collaborated on the best way to show the removal of the AVP as a positive and to sustain, if not increase, greek involvement. The solution was to create a new organization within the greek community. The 2010 THON Overall Committee agreed that Greeks 4 Kids was a viable solution. Two Communications Captains would serve as the greek liaisons who were selected by the Communications Overall in conjunction with the IFC/PHC executive boards to ensure each organization's best interests.

Now, Overall Kirsten Kelly has said, "At this point, [Greeks 4 Kids] doesn't have a clear enough direction to warrant having input on our communication captains." What happened to the previous year's agreement? How does shutting the greek community out of helping to choose our own captains suppose to be "beneficial for the kids?" THON has no bylaws, no governance and no checks and balances. In reality, THON as an organization hides behind its red tape by continuing to think that all of its efforts to isolate and alienate a large group of fundraisers is for the kids.

Stephanie Dell'osa and Erik Lawler
2009 PHC and IFC Executive Board members
Class of 2010

No real need for White House

In response to Tuesday's letter "No White House home game is bad administrative choice," Mr. Korsak's argument that "White House games have become a great tradition" is, unfortunately, countered by the fact that scheduling soft non-conference opponents seems to have become just as pervasive a tradition.

No offense Temple, but I hardly think a stadium full of white shirts (and a half-full student section) is going to draw as much attention as previous stadium-wide White House games. Alleged "printing error" or otherwise, I echo the Collegian's support for the athletic department's decision to about-face and reserve this tradition for big games that will draw attention to Penn State as one of the best venues in college sports, not simply as a marketing gimmick.

Mark A. Poblete
Class of 2007

Islam still threat post-9/11

I was surprised when reading Monday's column, "Mosque opponents are misguided," to discover that the columnist is such a strong supporter of George W. Bush. The columnist praised Bush for his "wise words" on Islam. But where have those "wise words" gotten us? Almost a decade after the Sept. 11 attacks, Islamic terrorism is still rampant. From Major Hasan choosing to slaughter his own men to Minnesota teenagers running off to fight for Al-Shabaab in Somalia, Islam continues to threaten all non-Muslims. Why are we surprised by this? Doesn't the Quran (Sura 9:5) command "Fight and kill the disbelievers wherever you find them?" Meanwhile, the non-Muslims have been so cowed by the constant — and invariably baseless — claims of intolerance that our own State Department refuses to use the word "jihad" to describe Islamic terror attacks.

The columnist claims that the rights of Muslims will be breached if the Ground Zero Mosque is not constructed. This is, of course, incorrect — the public has every right to protest this repugnant project, and I've yet to see a "right to construction" in the Constitution. But more importantly, we need to ask this question: "When did Islam become the victim?" Pundits everywhere demand that we respect Islam, but I see no evidence that Islam respects us.

Samuel Settle
junior - history and political science

blog lines

FOOTBLOG

Two Lions earn nominations

Just got off a conference call with ESPN analysts and former players Desmond Howard and Jesse Palmer as well as ESPN vice president of programming, Dave Brown. Here's what was discussed...

Andrew J. Cassavell
Football reporter

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