

CATA improves buses' technology

By Katrina Wehr
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

CATA bus riders who might think they're heading to class shouldn't worry — it's just the bus talking.

What started with a single location information available online and through mobile phone applications, the stop announcement program is another piece of the technological puzzle at the State Area Transportation Authority (CATA) by putting together its expand to service.

In addition to the stop announcements, passengers can use fine location information on scrolling LED screens inside buses that match up with what they hear on the announcement.

Worked out of vehicle tracking technology installed about two years ago, the buses can now where they are at all times, what stop they are approaching and what route they are on, CATA Service Development Manager Eric Bernier said.

The stop announcements and location information are all a part of a plan that was laid out about three years ago to integrate the latest technology into CATA's system, Bernier said.

While the announcements are helpful to anyone who might be visually impaired, Bernier said the new technology will help those who are not. "If you're a state college student, you know you're going to be late to class," Bernier said.

Julie Wagner, a graduate student at Penn State, said she has used the system and

her and might be to others in her position.

"It was really nice because on my first day I had no idea where I was," Wagner (junior nutritional science) said. "I only knew where I wanted to go."

For Miranda George, a veteran CATA bus rider, the announcement can be helpful even for people who know their way around campus and State College.

"In the morning, when buses are crowded it's helpful to know where you are so you can't see out the windows," George (junior anthropology) said.

Another important technology Bernier said is an automatic passenger counter. Bernier said this system uses beams of light that can tell whether riders are getting on or off the bus, and it allows CATA to respond quickly to overcrowds on specific routes.

The volume of passengers, in both numbers and noise, has also been taken in a consideration, Bernier said. The announcement will not increase the level of background noise on the bus. So starting Monday or 9 p.m. Monday, riders will still be able to hear the information, he said.

"People want real time information immediately," Bernier said.

Bernier wants to know that the bus is right now and that it's expected to arrive at the stop and we've laid the ground work to help it.

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Kelsey Morris/Collegian

Incumbent congressional candidate Glenn Thompson spoke to students Monday night about national security in the years since 9/11. The Young Americans for Freedom sponsored the event.

Congressman talks security

By Nick Manella
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

A group of approximately 40 students and community members heard firsthand about the threats firsthand about the Young Americans for Freedom America and those still looming on the horizon, from Congressman Glenn Thompson on Monday night.

The congressman, who represents 17 counties including Centre county, spoke for 90 minutes and answered audience questions about national security threats the United States face in the wake of the September 11th terrorist attacks.

Thompson (R-Pennsylvania) described himself early when he said, "I commit myself to being dedicated to making the U.S. the safest, most prosperous nation in

the world."

He specifically mentioned five threats: food security, the national debt, border control, energy dependency and terrorism.

On the subject of terrorism, Thompson detailed the shift in danger from foreign attackers to domestic ones, quoting fellow congressman Peter King (R-New York) that, "more threats are currently from people living [in the United States] than overseas."

Thompson also addressed economic issues, including the growing national deficit. He said "my generation is providing yours with a legacy of debt."

The crowd was largely appreciative of Thompson's presentation, giving him a standing ovation at the end of the question and answer segment.

Will Begley (freshman-busi-

ness administration) thought Thompson responded well to intuitive questions by the audience and was eloquent.

Michael Stanowski (freshman-engineering) appreciated having a politician come in to speak to students in an intimate setting. "This is stuff we're gonna have to learn about someday," he said.

Sean Carr (freshman-liberal arts) agreed, and thought more discussions like Thompson's would help young people become active in politics.

"The fact is there's a big difference between seeing someone on TV and actually being able to see them in person," Carr said.

The Young Americans for Freedom club sponsored the discussion.

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Panhellenic gears up freshmen for recruitment

Recruitment for the Panhellenic Association is in full swing. The organization is looking for new members to join the group.

Alvira, a member of the organization, said she has found it to be a great experience. She has met many new people and has learned a lot about herself.

Alvira said she never thought she would be involved in a security-related activity. She said she has learned a lot about herself and has met many new people.

Alvira said she has found it to be a great experience. She has met many new people and has learned a lot about herself. She has also learned a lot about the different chapters of the organization.

One of the great things about joining greek life, Alvira said, is having the opportunity to be involved in important events on campus. In addition to THON, which Alvira described as one of the most exciting things a Penn State student can experience, sororities are a part of Greek Week, Greek Sing, Homecoming, and different philanthropies around campus.

opportunities for leadership," Alvira said. Though it's hard to think about jobs after college when you're an incoming freshman, Alvira said, being apart of. "I've found that I've used a lot of my experience from greek life in interviews," she said. Among the different facets of joining a sorority, Alvira said, ultimately, you are no longer representing just yourself to the cam-

pus, but instead an entire organization. Allison DiBarba (freshman-division of undergraduate studies) said getting involved socially with something like greek life great at a big school like Penn State. Once initiated, lifetime membership is guaranteed, which Alvira said is another positive aspect of joining a sorority.

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