

Oil platform explodes off La. coast

NEW ORLEANS - An oil platform exploded and burned off the Louisiana coast Thursday, the second such disaster in the Gulf of Mexico in less than five months. This time, the Coast Guard said there was no leak, and no one was killed.

The Coast Guard initially reported that an oil sheen a mile long and 100 feet wide had begun to spread from the site of the blast, about 200 miles west of the source of BP's massive spill. But hours later, Coast Guard Cmdr. Cheri Ben-Iesau said crews were unable to find any spill.

The company that owns the platform, Houston-based Mariner Energy, did not know what caused the explosion.

Penn State professors Gaue Ducher and Caroline Smith will host "How to Run a Journal Club" today at 11:15 a.m. today in 127 Noll Laboratory. For details call 814-865-3453.

Penn State professor Tracy Langkilde will speak on "Stress and Invasion: Factors Influencing the Escape Behavior of Native Fence Lizards in Response to Introduced Fire Ants" today at 11:15 a.m. in 107 Forest Resources Building. Call 814-865-1895 for information.

Penn State professor Charles White will speak at "Tillage Radishes and Cover-Crop Cocktails: Notes on a Journey from Maryland to Pennsylvania" today at 12:20 p.m. in 101 Agricultural Sciences and Industries Building. For information call 814-865-6541.

Penn State professor Jacobo Diaz Polo will speak on "Unitary Structure of Loop Quantum-Gravity Intertwiners and Simple Model Applications" today at 1:15 p.m. in 320 Whitmore Laboratory. For details call 814-863-9605.

Lunch:

Findlay, Pollock, Redifer and Warnock: Cream of Tomato Soup, Vegetarian Bean Chili, Fish Sandwich, Grilled Cheese Sandwich, Grilled Cheese Sandwich on WW, Grilled Turkey and Cheese Sandwich, Italian Hoagie, Pecan Cranberry Grain Salad, Coleslaw, Mixed Vegetables, Old Bay Steak Fries

Simmons: Golden Lentil Soup, Hearty Vegetarian Chili, 6' Turkey Hoagie, Sub Toppings, Buffalo Chicken Flatbread Pizza Whole Wheat Rustica Flatbread Pizza, Thai Shrimp and Vegetable Stir, Vegan Pot Pie, Green Beans Almondine, Harvest Blend, Roasted Vegetables, Spinach, Sweet Potato Wedges, Vegetarian Baked Beans

Warning: Watermelon Wedge, Beef Barley Soup, Cream of Tomato Soup, Pecan Cranberry Grain Salad, Battered Fish, Chicken Cosmo Not, Feature Grilled Cheese Sandwich, Feature Grilled Chicken Sandwich, Grilled Chicken Breast Mixed Vegetables, Quarter Pound Cheeseburger, Quarter Pound Hamburger, Shoestring Fries, Steak Fries

DINNER:

Findlay, Pollock, Redifer and Warnock: Cream of Tomato Soup, Vegetarian Bean Chili, Bleu Cheese Dressing, Boneless Teriyaki Chicken Wings, Boneless Buffalo Chicken Wings, Celery Sticks, Crab Cakes, Grilled Chicken Breast, Ranch Dressing, Roasted Vegetable Whole Wheat Flat Bread Pizza, Mixed Vegetables, Steamed Asparagus Spears, Sweet Potato Fries

Simmons: Fish Taco, Baked Tofu Stir Fry, Bowtie Pasta with Shrimp, Ricotta and Grape Tomatoes, Grilled Chicken Breast, Turkey Burger, Green Beans Almondine, Harvest Blend, Roasted Vegetables, Spinach, Sweet Potato Wedges, Vegetarian Baked Beans

Warning: Beef Barley Soup, Boneless Buffalo Chicken Wings, Mixed Vegetables, Philly Cheese Steak Sandwich, Shoestring Fries, Steamed Asparagus Spears, Cocktail Sauce, Crab Cakes, Tartar Sauce, BLT Pizza, Breadsticks, Cheese Pizza, Hoagie Roll, Marinara Sauce, Meat Sauce, Meatballs in Sauce, Pasta Bar, Penne Pasta Plus, Pepperoni Pizza, Baked Potato, Broccoli Florettes, Cheddar Cheese Sauce, Roasted Vegetable Whole Wheat Flat Bread Pizza, Tortilla and Corn Soup, Vegetarian Bean Chili, Vegetarian Burger

Corrections

A photo caption connected to an article "Freshmen could redshirt" on page 11 of Thursday's Daily Collegian incorrectly identified the name of an athlete.

The Penn State Women's Volleyball player is Deja McClendon.

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James Building, 123 S. Burrows St., University Park, PA 16801-3882
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Council

From Page 1.

Though Ragland said he would love to run for council, he is not able to because he would not be able to serve the four-year term required of all council members.

"That's why I'm pushing for the non-voting student member — [we'll] still have student representation," he said. Bard said the other issue council has with the proposition is that the council thinks it would give students preference over

other groups because the council categorizes the student body as a special interest group.

But Bard said the student body is a demographic, not a special interest group.

At the meeting, members also discussed what the role would be if the council passed the idea of having a non-voting student member.

The committee is also working on establishing a stronger relationship between the council and UPUA by inviting council members to UPUA assembly meetings and various events and creating a presentation

about UPUA for council members, Bard said. He added that at the assembly's meeting next Wednesday, Mayor Elizabeth Goreham plans to make an appearance along with two council members. "I truly believe that [the council members] do want to improve relationships between the student body and them," he said. "The last thing I want it to be is against them. We're not entitled to [a non-voting council member] in any way, shape or form."

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Tailgates

From Page 1.

these behaviors," Sims said. "The police and others have been frustrated by the ineffectiveness of the many efforts to mitigate the problem."

And one area — Lots 12 and 13, stationed north of Park Avenue and east of the Lewis Katz Building — will be watched especially closely, Sims said. More law enforcement officials will be on hand in these areas on game days, he said, after the lots' tailgaters have previously posed significant problems.

State College Police Department Lt. Chris Fishel, who assists in law enforcement efforts on game days, said Lots 12 and 13 tend to be challenging locations. Fishel said the new strategies implemented by

Penn State Police should be helpful in addressing the issues there.

But to Bryan Stone, a student who's spent plenty of Saturdays tailgating in Lots 12 and 13, the activity there isn't anything out of the ordinary.

Stone (senior-agricultural business) said the lots are usually packed with students carrying plastic red cups filled with drinks while playing beer pong and other drinking games.

"Sometimes there's crazy stuff like jousting," he said. "It's where there's a person on top of another person's shoulders, each of you has a beer in hand and you just run at each other and smash beers."

Though some might think it's chaotic, Stone said the environment is still controlled because everyone there is with groups of friends who are looking out for each other.

Sims said the goal of the new policies isn't to do away with tailgating altogether, but to combat the excessive drinking, rowdiness and dangerous behavior that often result when celebrations get out of hand.

"Tailgating, in the usual sense, is not a problem for anyone," Sims said. "We hope those attending choose instead to abide [by] all laws and regulations in place and that the football season will be marked by both wins and good fun that is safe and legal in every sense."

Stone, however, said he thinks these statements sound a little empty. "I feel like it's just the university looking out for themselves," he said. "They went from party school to everyone getting arrested all the time... So I understand they'd want to make themselves look better."

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Welch

From Page 1.

put it in the most simple language."

It was this approachability, State College Borough Council members said, that made Welch a valuable member of State College's governing body.

Council member Jim Rosenberger, who served with Welch for about a year and a half, said Welch was a wonderful mayor with a great perspective on the inner workings of the borough.

"He was witty, and it was always fun to debate issues with him," Rosenberger said. "He kept the interest of the town at the forefront in all his decisions."

Before his election to the mayor's office, Welch was employed as an editor at the Centre Daily Times for

more than 20 years. Kofman described her husband as a wordsmith who always had something clever to say.

Welch made an annual appearance at Penn State's Freshman Convocation, and welcomed the new students to the community with open arms. Though students are typically short-term residents, university spokeswoman Lisa Powers said Welch often kept student priorities in his mind throughout the school year.

Penn State President Graham Spanier echoed that sentiment, and said Mayor Welch was a great friend to Penn State.

"He participated in every town-gown event that existed, and he did so with great affection and spirit," Spanier wrote in an e-mail.

And some borough members are hoping to keep the memory of for-

mer Mayor Welch fresh for a long time — but a decision has yet to be made.

Early last March, the State College Borough Council members voted against a proposition to commemorate the late Mayor Bill Welch by renaming the State College Municipal Building in his honor.

Now, as the one-year anniversary of Welch's death approaches, council members say they haven't completely dismissed the idea of naming a borough landmark after the man who served as mayor for 16 years.

"I expect it to come back on the table," said council member Jim Rosenberger. "There is a lot of sentiment for identifying some place or plaza or park or something with him." Rosenberger said the discussion will continue this fall.

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Beverages

From Page 1.

Signorelli (senior-agricultural business) said the drink "smells like a blue Iced tea tastes terrible," so he usually chugs them, which leaves his adrenaline pumping and his heart racing. It's that drinking strategy combined with the potency of alcohol and caffeine that's leading some law enforcement officials to caution against Four Loko and similar drinks. "In the past, when there have been changes in substances people are using, there would all of a sudden have an immediate impact on acts," State College Police Department Lt. Chris Fishel said. "It's not unusual for someone to drink an energy drink or drink a beer, but when you combine them it has a different impact on your body and on your ability to function."

Fishel said police will try to be alert to students consuming these drinks in an effort to curb alcohol-related incidents that could occur as a result of their consumption.

Jenna Grula said the drinks definitely seem to be catching on in State College. Grula (senior-public relations) said she first heard about Four Loko in the spring and thought the drink would be recalled because of the can's design — which she described as similar to an energy drink in color and style.

"It's definitely a health risk," Grula said. "You shouldn't be mixing alcohol with energy drinks."

Four Loko contains caffeine, guarana and taurine, according to its label, but the exact quantities aren't specified. Company officials from Phusion Projects — the makers of Four Loko — would not disclose the quantities of the additives, but wrote in an e-mail that the ingre-

redient mix is approved by the Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau (TTB) and the state alcohol regulatory agencies in the 47 states where the drink is sold. TTB officials could not be reached for comment as of press time Thursday.

Jaisen Freeman, managing partner of Phusion Projects, wrote that a "Generally Recognized As Safe" (GRAS) study was submitted to the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) this year, following a 2009 FDA investigation into 30 companies that manufacture caffeinated alcoholic beverages, including Phusion Projects. The investigation is still under review, according to the FDA website, and states that there are no food additive regulations that permit the addition of caffeine, at any level, in alcoholic beverages.

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Idol

From Page 1.

including "Sunshine and Alcohol" and "Sugar Cane," before the show's headliner came to the stage.

State College resident Nicole Benincasa, 16, said this was going to be her third time seeing Allen's live performance, but that she still couldn't wait. "I might just pass out," Benincasa said.

Fortunately, Shannon Lachman, 16, of State College, came along with her. "I'll probably have to pick her up," Lachman said.

Wearing a leather jacket and well-fitted jeans, Allen said he was impressed by the fun-loving Happy

Valley crowd and the surprising girl-to-guy ratio, which was rather equal. "Usually it's like eight or nine to one," he said, laughing.

Allen's set included many songs from his new self-titled album. He got the audience to sing along during "Alright with Me" and also with his current radio hit "Live Like We're Dying."

Allen, who is also well-known for his cover songs, also played Kanye West's "Heartless" and Michael Jackson's "Man in the Mirror."

Many audience members showed true appreciation by telling him, multiple times, that they loved him — and he said it back. Allen even took the time to go into the audience to give high fives and hugs.

Allen said that he was happy to be headlining the State College show.

"I could play all night, I don't care," Allen said, sympathizing with audience members who may have had homework.

As part of his encore, Allen went back into the audience during a performance of The Beatles' "Come Together." During the performance, Allen took time to discuss what he considered an important matter: football. He presented Penn State students with a pep talk regarding the Sept. 11 game against the University of Alabama.

"Beat their tail," he said. The crowd went wild.

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Alumnus

From Page 1.

independent, low-budget film, which Hackett said he enjoyed working on.

"We replaced expensive lighting and cameras with heart," he said. "You only need talented actors — there's no green screen with a dinosaur chasing behind."

"Homecoming" producer Tim Larson, Class of 1987, said the film will launch an even brighter future for Hackett.

"I think it's going to put him on the map," Larson said. "We've done step one — created the movie, so now we have a new process ahead. We need to make sure people get a chance to see it."

"Homecoming" — which Hackett calls witty and heartfelt, with a somber feel — chronicles a female soldier's last day in her Floridian hometown before returning to duty.

The film makes the conflict of leaving for military service more

relatable to a college audience, Hackett said.

"Homecoming" is my love letter to those young men and women in the military who missed out on their college experience because of their enlistment," he said.

Exposition

Associate Professor Dorn Hetzel, film-video and media studies department head, said Penn State's program prepares prospective filmmakers.

Hetzel said Penn State has a strong internship program that sends students to Los Angeles to get a feel for the industry and create a network.

When Hackett first stepped into the industry, he worked on the film "Zodiac." Though he said he had a "crazy perception" that his career wouldn't go further, he then worked on "Little Miss Sunshine."

"You develop confidence in the studio and agency world," Hackett said. "The fear that your movies will

never be made is washed away."

But Hackett said he would be no where without tenacity. "A lot of people expect a fairy godmother to recognize their talent, but you really have to get out there," Hackett said.

Resolution

While revising the script and filming "Homecoming" day-to-day, Hackett said encouraging the cast and crew was imperative. "Being a director, you're busy, but if someone's working for you and they get that pat on the back, that can make their day," Hackett said. "If you empower people to be part of the creative process then they'll feel like it's their film as much as yours."

Grant said she appreciated how Hackett led the team. "Sean is the kind of guy who gives a thought-out toast at dinner. He'll prepare notes for it and everything," she said. "He's not like anyone you'll ever meet."

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