

NEWS IN BRIEF

Blood drive challenge begins

The 17th annual Penn State-Michigan State blood donor challenge began Monday, Nov. 1 and will continue through Nov. 18.

Penn State has beat Michigan State four years in a row and eleven times in total. The goal is to receive 2,000 units of blood in the next three weeks, Red Cross club member Jordan Thomas (junior-meteorology) said.

Every blood donor receives a free T-shirt and is entered into a raffle to win a prize, such as a flat screen TV or \$200 shopping spree.

Blood donor Steve Koller said he donated blood because some of his family members have needed blood in the past.

"I just know that some people need it more than I do," Koller (junior-sociology) said. "I've seen first hand what my blood can do to help other people."

All blood drive locations for the contest can be found online at <http://psuredcross.org>.

Jerzy Lewandowski, of the University of Warsaw (Poland), will talk about "The Possible Partition Functions for the Engle-Pereira-Rovelli-Livine (EPRL) Model," today at 10 a.m. in 320 Whitmore Laboratory.

Penn State professor Gregory Larsen will talk about "Simulated Adsorption and Characterization of Novel Nanoporous Polymers," today at 10:00 a.m. in 301 Steidle Building.

Mark Dykman, of Michigan State University, will speak about "Fluctuation-Induced Switching and Power Spectra of Modulated Quantum Oscillators," today at 3:30 p.m. in 339 Davey Laboratory.

LUNCH

Findlay, Pollock, Redifer and Warnock: Minestrone soup, tortilla and corn soup, bbq chicken bacon pizza, cheese pizza, chicken and broccoli stir fry, jamaican jerk chicken pizza, potato and cheese pierogies, sauteed onions, sour cream, sticky rice, kyoto blend, peas, shoestring fries

Simmons: Fresh fish cajun style, chicken polo a la vino, garden quesadilla, grilled chicken breast, linguini, roasted tomato sauce, baked sweet potato, broccoli florettes, green beans and sunflower seeds, israeli cous cous and mushroom pilaf, jasmine rice with edamame, primavera vegetables, roasted roma tomatoes

Warning: Chili con carne, lunch roll basket, broccoli florettes, buttered corn, chicken and biscuits, chicken cosmo not, feature burger, feature grilled chicken sandwich, grilled chicken breast, quarter pound hamburger, shoestring fries, teriyaki beef stir fry, baked potato, broccoli florettes, brown rice and grain pilaf, cheese sauce, tortilla and corn soup, vegetarian burger

DINNER

Findlay, Pollock, Redifer and Warnock: Minestrone soup, tortilla and corn soup, alfredo sauce, chicken alfredo fettuccini, grilled chicken breast, miso glazed white fish, sour cream, zucchini corn quesadilla, Italian green beans, kyoto blend, orzo risotto

Simmons: Fresh fish cajun style, chicken polo a la vino, garden quesadilla, grilled chicken breast, linguini, roasted tomato sauce, baked sweet potato, broccoli florettes, green beans and sunflower seeds, israeli cous cous and mushroom pilaf, jasmine rice with edamame, primavera vegetables

Warning: Chili con carne, lunch roll basket, broccoli florettes, buttered corn, chicken and biscuits, chicken cosmo not, feature burger, feature grilled chicken sandwich, grilled chicken breast, quarter pound hamburger, shoestring fries, teriyaki beef stir fry, baked potato, broccoli florettes, brown rice and grain pilaf, cheese sauce, tortilla and corn soup, vegetarian burger, kentucky bbq turkey sandwich, texas style baked beans

Corrections:

An extracted quote with an article "PSU bans logo from shot glasses" on page 1 of Monday's Daily Collegian incorrectly identified an individual.

The person quoted was student Hunter Smith.



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Brain energy crisis may spark Parkinson's

Lauren Neergaard ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — Parkinson's disease may stem from an energy crisis in the brain, years before symptoms appear.

If the research pans out, it points to a possible new approach for Parkinson's: Giving a boost to a key power switch inside brain cells in hopes of slowing the disease's inevitable march instead of just treating symptoms.

"This is an extremely important and interesting observation that opens up new therapeutic targets," says Dr. Flint Beal of New York's Weill Cornell Medical College, who wasn't involved with the new study.

Beal said scientists already are planning first-stage tests to see if a drug now used for diabetes might help Parkinson's, too, by targeting one of the implicated energy genes.

At issue are little power factories inside cells, called mitochondria. Increasingly, scientists suspect that malfunctioning mitochondria play some role in a list of degenerative brain diseases.

After all, brain cells are energy hogs, making up about 2 percent of body weight yet consuming about 20 percent of the body's energy. So a power drain could trigger some serious long-term consequences.

"It could be a root cause" of Parkinson's, says Dr. Clemens Scherzer of Boston's Brigham and Women's Hospital and Harvard University.

About 5 million people worldwide, and 1.5 million in the U.S., have Parkinson's, characterized by increasingly severe tremors and periodically stiff or frozen limbs. Patients gradually lose brain cells that produce dopamine, a chemical key to the circuitry that controls muscle movement.

There is no cure, although

"This is an extremely important and interesting observation that opens up new therapeutic targets."

Dr. Flint Beal

New York's Weill Cornell Medical College

dopamine-boosting medication and an implanted device called deep brain stimulation can help some symptoms.

No one knows what causes Parkinson's. To find genetic clues, Scherzer gathered an international team of researchers to comb studies of more than 300 samples of brain tissue — from diagnosed Parkinson's patients, from symptom-free people whose brains showed early Parkinson's damage was brewing, and from people whose brains appeared normal. They even used a laser beam to cut out individual dopamine-producing neurons in the most ravaged brain region, the substantia nigra, and examine gene activity.

The team found 10 sets of genes that work at abnormally low levels in Parkinson's patients, genes that turned out to play various roles in the mitochondria's energy production. Scherzer recently reported in the journal Science Translational Medicine.

Especially compelling, the genes also were sluggish in people with presymptomatic, simmering Parkinson's.

And all the gene sets are controlled by what Scherzer calls a master regulator gene named PGC-1alpha — responsible for activating many other genes that maintain and repair those mitochondrial power factories.

So might revving up PGC-1alpha in turn boost underperforming mitochondrial genes and protect the brain? To see, the researchers

tested dopamine-producing neurons from rats that were treated in ways known to cause Parkinson's-like damage. Sure enough, boosting the power switch prevented that damage.

This genetic evidence supports years of tantalizing hints that mitochondria are culprits in Parkinson's, says Dr. Timothy Greenamyre of the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center.

He ticks off the clues: A rare, inherited form of Parkinson's is caused by a mutated gene involved with mitochondrial function. A pesticide named rotenone that can kill dopamine cells and trigger Parkinson's symptoms in animals also is toxic to mitochondria. So is another Parkinson's-triggering chemical named MPTP.

Now with Scherzer's study, "it's going to be harder and harder for people to think that mitochondria are just a late player or an incidental player in Parkinson's disease," Greenamyre says.

The crux of all that complicated neurogenetics: A diabetes drug named Actos is among the compounds known to activate part of that PGC-1alpha pathway, and Weill Cornell's Beal says it's poised for an initial small trial in Parkinson's.

Separately, a nutrient named Coenzyme Q10 is believed important in mitochondrial energy production, and Beal is leading a study to see if high doses might help Parkinson's. Results are due in 2012.

First lady rallies Pa. Democrats on election's eve

By Marc Levy ASSOCIATED PRESS

PHILADELPHIA — More than a thousand people packed into a chilly University of Pennsylvania quadrangle Monday night to hear first lady Michelle Obama tell them that sitting out this midterm election could stop progress for people struggling to stay in the middle class, afford college or get health care.

Obama spoke on the eve of today's election, in which Pennsylvanians will select among candidates for U.S. senator, governor and the state's 19 congressional seats.

With Pennsylvania's Democratic candidates trailing in polls for governor and U.S. Senate, Obama said digging out of the recession's depths is difficult and President Barack Obama needs strong lead-

ers by him through the fear, cynicism and doubt.

"As Americans, we have always pushed past the cynicism, we have always kept moving forward," Michelle Obama said. "And you know what? That is what we must do again today because there's too much at stake. There's too much at stake, and we have come too far to turn back now."

Pennsylvania's top elected Democrats, outgoing Gov. Ed Rendell and Sen. Bob Casey, also spoke, as did Democratic gubernatorial candidate Dan Onorato and the party's nominee for U.S. Senate, Joe Sestak.

Specifically, Obama talked about new laws signed by her husband that expand college tuition aid to students by diverting money that once went to banks to provide federal loans, prevent health insurers

from disqualifying sick people from coverage and cut taxes for the middle class.

In moderate Pennsylvania, which has 8.4 million registered voters, Democrats have a substantial registration advantage over Republicans of 1.2 million, thanks in part to a surge two years ago in support of Barack Obama's presidential candidacy from younger voters and minorities.

But Democrats are trying mightily to get those voters interested in the election and into voting booths to counter what pollsters say is widespread discontent with joblessness and a strong Republican reaction to the Obama administration's policies. On Monday morning, Republican U.S. Senate candidate Pat Toomey addressed a GOP rally in northeast Philadelphia, laying out his argument for GOP control of Congress.

Election

From Page 1.

Bard (sophomore-political science and economics) said. He said committee members would stick around after the polls close to watch the results in the HUB and hand out any leftover food from earlier in the day.

Members of the Penn State College Republicans will work the polling location in the Paul Robeson Cultural Center's Heritage Hall up until polls close at 8 p.m., Vice Chairman Anthony Christina said.

"I hope they realize that this election cycle is going to be key for the next couple of years."

TJ Bard

UPUA Governmental Affairs committee chairman

Christina (sophomore-political science and history) said he expects a big rush around noon and is optimistic about the overall turnout.

Bard said he hopes these efforts will encourage students to get involved and vote in the election. There is a chance to break the turnout record from the 2006 midterms, he said, and partici-

tion in the elections is the best way for students to have a direct impact in what happens in government.

"I think students are becoming more aware of issues that matter most," Bard said. "I hope they realize that this election cycle is going to be key for the next couple of years."

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Sales

From Page 1.

swoman. Many universities ban their logo not only on shot glasses, but also wine glasses, flasks and other alcohol containers, she said.

Some universities have restrictions on incendiary devices as well, like firearms and lighters, Powers said.

Penn State receives the ninth

highest royalty revenue in the nation's from the Collegiate Licensing Company, according to the company's rankings for the 2009-2010 fiscal year.

Purves said the company can't release how much revenue the university is projected to lose by opting to no longer license its name or logo on shot glasses.

University spokesman Geoff Rushton said the decision was made because having the name or

logo on a shot glass sends a message the university does not condone.

The decision has elicited a mixed reaction from students and community members.

Shot glasses will be phased out of stores, Rushton said — and the licensing company has been told to deny requests for the university's logo or names on shot glasses.

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Council

From Page 1.

Council member Peter Morris said he thought the developer's proposal was "quite reasonable," considering that many of the buildings in downtown State College have higher levels of stories.

However, the building would sit next to a neighborhood where many community members live. Ever since the issue was first introduced, many State College residents have attended borough council meetings to express their concern that another apartment building would bring too many students to an already unstable area of State College.

Lafar stressed the importance of listening to such community members.

"When people who live in the

"That kind of business draws people downtown," he said. People aren't hanging out in front of the Palmerton."

James Meashey State College resident

West End came to us last year, we listened," she said. "I think we have to take strongly into account that the neighbors do not want a building higher than four or five stories."

Council member Ron Filippelli pointed to student behavior problems, describing the image of drunken students outside of Canyon Pizza.

Ignoring the current problems in the Beaver Canyon area, including the cost of police services, he said, is not a solution.

"Because Beaver Canyon is a

mess anyway, so let's increase it — to me that's not a very good argument," he said.

State College resident James Meashey said that rezoning might solve some of these problems.

By removing businesses like Canyon Pizza, he said, there would be less of a cause for people to congregate downtown.

"That kind of business draws people downtown," he said. "People aren't hanging out in front of the Palmerton."

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