

## Mark looks for meaning in tabloid journalism

by Mark Owens

A few weeks ago I wrote about the Soviet Union and their problem with pesky UFO's and space aliens that zap children and drink all their vodka.

So I was interested in last Friday's top story by a major supermarket tabloid, "Soviets Take UFO Captain Prisoner!" This tabloid, by the way, ranks right up there with the *National StarPeopleEnquirer*, the *Pulsar*, the *Evening Carnage* and *International Slime*. These are the paragons of journalism that constantly warn us about dandruff causing hair loss, bad breath, cancer, and its use in making Cheez Whiz. They also run informative stories about brain fuel and killer parrots.

I kid you not about the killer parrots. The afore-mentioned tabloid ran a story about this Charles Bronson-type bird that killed an elderly couple. Can you picture this?

You: Polly want a cracker?

Parrot: Polly want an important internal organ.  
\*Squawk\*

Anyway, I decided to check out the story by calling the *Evening Carnage* and talking to one of the staffers I know, Guck Gouger.

"Hey Mark, how's it going?"

Not bad. Say, any truth to this story about the UFO captain being kidnapped by the KGB?



Mark Owens

## The Missing Pieces

"Where did you hear that? Hold on a sec. Sammy! Did you get those photos of the pregnant lady who fell into a moat full of man-eating piranha, was chased by bloodthirsty headhunters and then gave unassisted birth to triplets while fending off a pack of hyenas? You did? Good!"

"Sorry about that. Now you heard this where? Really? That rag? They're a bunch of sensationalist slime."

So the story isn't true.

"Well sort of. Aliens landed, but it wasn't exactly the way we wrote it up."

Well, what did happen?

"Promise you won't tell? Cross your heart and hope to die, stick a large blunt object in your eye?"

When was the last time a promise held any weight at the *Carnage*?

"True. Well... we sort of, umm, exaggerated the story a bit."

Like?

"Well, the space ship wasn't a huge shimmering ball. It really looked like a green avocado with the mange, but who'd believe that?"

What about the photos of the aliens?

"Well, we took Andre the Giant and a couple of other weightlifters whose most sophisticated sentence is 'I don't do no steroids,' dressed them in some aluminum-foil fashions by renowned French designer Bonjour Pate and shot some pics of them strolling around Gorky Park, very drunk."

And the kid?

"Ha ha ha! That was the best! Guess who it was!"

Who was it?

"No. You gotta guess."

Mikhail Gorbachev?

"Unh unh."

Billy Joel?

"Wrong."

Who?

"Doug Henning with a crew cut. Who'd recognize him?"

Well what about all these 'eyewitness' accounts?

"Hey, have enough vodka and you can do anything. How do you think we put out a paper every week, anyway?"

So you're saying the whole thing was a hoax?

"Not really. Believe it or not, a UFO did land. Nothing came out except this shiny envelope, probably because they were afraid of Andre. He's a mean drunk. Belched in Raisa's face and called her a squid."

What about the envelope?

"Oh, well after we picked it up the UFO took off. We had a tough time getting it open. In the end we gave it to Andre and told him it was a Hershey's Kiss. No problem."

What did it say?

"Something about a construction project."

That sounds like Douglas Adam's *Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy*, where the earth is destroyed to make room for an intergalactic expressway.

"You actually read that trash? Who believes it? Say, I gotta go. We're doing this photo spread about the secret love nest of Loni Anderson, Rob Lowe and Jim Nabors. Bye."



## Ask Louanne

The Collegian Advice Column  
by Dr. Louanne Barton,  
Psychologist

### This week: Where to turn when you become pregnant

Dear Louanne,

I have a question you probably won't touch with a ten foot pole let alone print, and I'm not sure I blame you

Where does a girl go in this town to get help in dealing with pregnancy? I've looked in the yellow pages and there are three places listed, but I don't know anything about them.

Signed,  
Possibly Pregnant and Scared

Dear Possibly Pregnant,

I wouldn't be doing my job if I didn't try to answer your question. It certainly is a tricky one, not easily answered by looking in the yellow pages of the Erie Phone Directory. Before I answer your question, if you aren't sure whether or not you are pregnant, don't rely on home pregnancy testing. Go to our Behrend Health Center for a reliable test. It is recommended that you come in after a missed or late period, but don't delay. Your options become more limited after the first trimester (12 weeks).

Now for your question about where to go for help. As a professional counselor, I believe strongly that my job is to help you to look at options so that you can decide what is best for you. Ethically, I feel that I must remain objective. If a counselor can't do that, then he/she should refer you to a professional who can. Some agencies masquerade as counseling services but, in fact, take a strong anti-abortion stand such as the Pregnancy Aid Center and the Emergency Pregnancy Service listed in the yellow pages. One agency in Erie which offers unbiased information on all options is Family Services, a United Way agency.

Reliable information on abortion can be obtained from several resources in Pittsburgh and Buffalo. I can provide you with phone numbers. If abortion is your choice, The Behrend Health Center can also provide follow-up services.

Family Services can help with other options such as planning to keep the baby, temporary foster care, or placing the baby for adoption. They will welcome the father's involvement in the planning.

You need a supportive, accepting, objective, non-judgmental environment so that you can be sure that you are making the decision which is right for you, a decision that you can live with (and, if you are including the father, a decision that he can live with).

I would be happy to provide you with a confidential place where you can explore the options. Just call ext. 6164 to make an appointment.

Sincerely,  
Louanne

## Halloween Activities at Behrend Yesterday

by Deirdre J. Hamilton  
Collegian Staff Writer

This year, as in the past, Behrend sponsored a Halloween program for Diehl Elementary School called Wee People. Diehl students came here yesterday to go trick-or-treating. The activity was organized by JRC.

Other Halloween activities held around campus included Lolli-Grams, sponsored by the first floor girls of Lawrence Hall. Orders are being taken in the Reed Building starting today and ending this Friday. Deliveries will be made on Monday November 6th.

The Association of Black Collegians fundraising committee held a trick-or-treat fundraiser in front of the Wintergreen Cafe the Monday, Oct. 30th, from 9 to 5 and SPC had a special showing of Halloween films: *The Little Rascals* in "Shivering My Timbers," "Shivering 5 Spooks" and "Bored of Education," as well as "Creature from the Black Lagoon."