

*Behrend Nightlife:*

# The Beef with Bruno's

*Jell-O wrestling, rock bands and a lot of empty seats...***by Robb Frederick**  
*The Collegian*

If the people at *American Gladiators* got together with the people at *Double Dare*, they'd probably come up with something like this...

Contestant number one, deltoids rippling in the glory of a blinding spotlight, dives into the makeshift ring, fakes to the right, and -- *Slam!* -- drops his opponent with a lightning-bolt swipe at the legs. The meaty arm locks around the thin neck, the straining face is ground into four-inches of cold, orange Jell-O. His opponent's back exposed, the crowd starts to chant . . . he knows what they want, and his challenger does too. And with a devilish grin and a slight tug at the shorts -- *r-r-rip!* -- they get it.

Sound like another stab at late-night syndication? Not quite. Welcome to Bruno's, the only Erie night spot that accepts Penn State meal card points.

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As a handful of Student Programming Council (SPC) volunteers hustled, poured and mopped up more than 400 gallons of Jell-O, the crowd grew, at one point jamming the Wintergreen Cafe with more than 200 shoulder-to-shoulder students. They craned their necks, stood on chairs and, for a while at least, forgot about their watches and the other parties they would soon leave for.

For a few short hours, the beleaguered night club was a genuine success.

"The ultimate goal of Bruno's is to provide entertainment that gives students a place to go on a Friday or Saturday night," explains SPC President Mark Johnson, fourth semester M.I.S., who coordinates Bruno's events.

"We've shown that we can make this work if we just have the money to work with," he says, "but we don't have enough



Greg Geibel/The Collegian

**In your face:** Nicole Komiarski, second semester psychology, locks up with her Jell-O slinging opponent, Gail Sinoski, second semester psychology, during a co-ed tag-team match Saturday.

money to get the acts students want to see."

Student Government Association (SGA) allocated approximately \$14,000 to SPC for this semester, an amount that

was supplemented with sales of activity cards and revenue from the SPC weekly film series.

But Johnson says those numbers should be higher.

"Each of the comics we bring in costs between \$1,100-\$1,200, and most of the bands we get charge between \$800-\$1,000," he says.

After a recent SPC budget evaluation, the organization was forced to drop several acts scheduled for later this semester,

including one comic.

According to Johnson, those budget woes have affected other student programming as well.

"Our film series hasn't been touched yet, but with only a few

frustrating obstacle for Bruno's organizers is the stigma that has enshrouded the club since it opened last year.

"I'll admit that I've had a decent time both times I've been

**"Bruno's has worked out well so far, but there's definitely a lot of room for improvement."**

**-Mark Johnson**  
SPC President

to Bruno's," says Mike Ronan, fourth semester international business, "but I don't normally go, because there are better things to do on the weekend.

exceptions, such as the Snowball, every other cent has gone into Bruno's," he explains.

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Not all of the night club's problems are related to finances, however. An even more

"The Jell-O wrestling was definitely a plus," he concedes. "That worked well because it was something different and it was something we could actually participate in."

Johnson says he is well aware of the problems associated with Bruno's.

"Bruno's has worked out well so far," he says, "but there's definitely a lot of room for improvement."

That improvement, he believes, may come through the purchase of a new sound and lighting system, which has already been funded by officials at University Park.

But Johnson also recognizes the need to schedule quality performers that will attract audiences.

"I'm slightly disappointed with the crowds so far," he says, "and I admit we need to work on that."

One group that has done well at Bruno's is the Butler Brothers, whose acoustic rock and local name recognition drew a sizable crowd when they performed here last month.

The crowd numbers were boosted that night by members of Kappa Delta Rho and Delta Phi Epsilon, who were serving "mocktails" as part of Drug Awareness Week.

Once that event ended, however, the crowd thinned noticeably, and the Butlers found themselves playing to a sparse Wintergreen crowd.

"Hey, where are you guys going?" guitarist Ric Butler asked as a string of tables cleared. "The party's not starting 'till later."

"Trust me, we went by earlier, and all the lights were off," he continued, forcing a nervous smile.

The door swung open again, spilling yet another group into the Reed lobby and on to other evening plans.

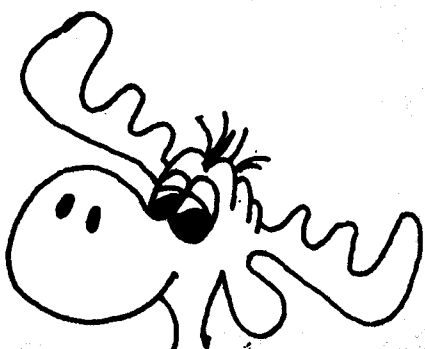
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Johnson leans back in his chair and tosses out ideas for improving Bruno's. Bigger-name acts. Student-initiated band choices. More novelty acts. In essence, improvements that cost money, money the organization doesn't have.

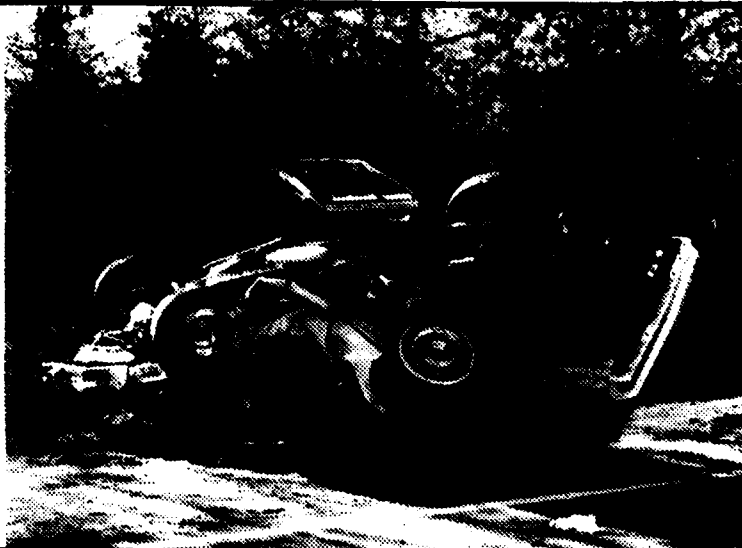
"I don't know," he sighs, looking up at the performance calender. "There's so much we could do with that place."

**Why is Craig Campbell obsessed with this moose?**

**We're not sure, but he's at it again on page 8...**



**Ever Get Somebody Totally Wasted?**



**TAKE THE KEYS. TAKE A STAND.**