

“We finally have the talent to do some damage, but it will come down to the young pitching.”
- Ryan Gallagher,
Junior,
page 10

“Rest, rest, rest! A virus that wouldn’t have bothered you a month ago, could now affect you if you haven’t gotten enough rest.”
- Patty Pasky McMahon,
Health and Wellness Center Director,
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The Behrend Beacon

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Students assist with TOPS

By Jess Carlson
contributing writer

The Junker Center at Penn State Behrend has been full of activity recently. Although the weather is finally beginning to look and feel like spring, training for baseball, softball, men’s and women’s soccer, track, as well as the many intramural sports are mostly taking place inside. One more activity to squeeze into the busy schedule of the Junker Center gym is The Outreach Program for Soccer, (TOPS), which began Wed. March 21.

TOPS is a program that reaches out to disabled children and gives them the opportunity to participate in a recreational activity. U.S. Youth Soccer, whose mission statement is “to foster the physical, mental and emotional growth and development of America’s youth through the sport of soccer at all levels of age and competition,” designed the nationwide program. The program is geared more towards the development of a child as opposed to the actual competition of the game.

Dan Perritano, head coach of the men’s soccer team, brought the program to Behrend in 2000. The first year started off with 12 children and has since grown close to 60. The point of the program is for the child to have fun and be active. “The program is about fun and getting kids to work towards their physical potential, whatever that is,” said Perritano, who has a daughter, Emma, that participates in the program each year.

The program is comprised of children with varying disabilities and range from age three to young adult. Disabilities amongst the participants may include autism, down syndrome, muscular dystrophy and cerebral palsy. The program takes place once a week on Wednesday evenings in the Junker Center gym.

Children are paired with a Behrend student volunteer who becomes their “buddy” for the entire eight-week program. Volunteers for the program vary from student-athletes (not just soccer players), to non-athletic students. “The volunteers are what make this go and they have always committed and done a great job connecting with the player they are working with,” said Perritano.

The objective of the program is not necessarily to teach the child how to play soccer, but to give them the opportunity to be active. Each child receives a t-shirt and their own soccer ball the first day, but more importantly, there is hope that each child will form a close bond with the student volunteer they are paired with. Tim Campbell, a junior management major, is volunteering for the first time this year with a child named Brian. “I saw and knew a few people doing (TOPS) last year but I wasn’t able

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Niagara fire wakes students and sparks investigation

By Lenny Smith
assistant news editor

Niagara Hall residents were rudely awakened last Thursday night when a fire alarm blared throughout the residence hall. According to Police and Safety Services, someone lit a small cardboard box on fire on the second floor of the building.

Officer Charles Geer arrived on the scene within two minutes of getting the call. Upon arrival, Geer found that several students from the second floor had extinguished the fire with water. According to an e-mail residents received from Residence Life Coordinator Keith Cerroni, the fire alarm rang at 3:17 a.m. Residents slowly exited the building which concerned Cerroni. He said that some students took up to ten minutes to evacuate the building. “The absolute worst result of someone not leaving quickly could be more damaging than we care to think about,” Cerroni said.

Matt Waronker explained the situation, “Matt Edwards, Mike Pearse, and I put out the fire before they evacuated the building.” “I feel strongly that if these students had not chosen to (put out the fire), the fire would have spread quickly throughout the hall,” Cerroni said. “Matt Waronker used water bottles and Mike Pearse and I used garbage cans that we filled in the shower and sink. I wondered if I should grab my computer, then I wondered if I should go in the direction of the fire to see if anyone needed help or was trapped in a room,” Edwards said.

As students from other floors exited the building thinking that it was another false alarm, residents on the second floor quickly realized that this was no drill. “When I saw the fire, I was kind of in disbelief. We just stared at it for a second and then I guess I real-



Mike Sharkey/THE BEHREND BEACON

Areas damaged by the fire will need to be replaced. Students living in Niagara Hall were evacuated when a fire was started on the second floor of the building.

ly didn’t think about it, it was more impulsive, I just ran and got some water from the refrigerator,” Waronker said.

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Task force works towards a greener Behrend

By Jessica Samol
copy editor

Penn State Behrend’s campus is ecologically committed to protecting and conserving the environment. In 2001, The Greener Behrend Task Force formed to address sustainability issues on campus. The purpose of the Greener Behrend Task Force is to promote a campus community at Behrend that is educated and involved in maintaining a responsible relationship with the natural resources of the earth.

Members of the Greener Behrend Task Force are committed to building respect for the environment and are developing and implementing strategies for campus practice and policies. In addition, the task force is addressing seven main issues

at Behrend, which include reducing energy use and promoting cleaner fuels, using water in a conservative and respectable manner, minimizing solid and liquid waste, increasing the healthfulness of food and reducing its waste, protecting natural areas, incorporating “green” practices into the construction and renovation of facilities, and promoting ecological stewardship within the college community.

The Greener Behrend Task Force is making great effort toward creating a more environmentally friendly and sustainable environment. In 2003, the creation of the Arboretum at Behrend brought a much greener scene to the campus. More than 200 species of trees are represented in the Arboretum, making it a haven by

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Lisa Ling brings international journalism perspective

By Ashley Bressler
news editor

It is a rare occasion to meet an individual who radiates such passion for her career that from the moment she speaks, a wave of chills runs through the audience, compelling admiration, respect and compassion. Lisa Ling, host of National Geographic Explorer and investigative reporter and special correspondent for the Oprah Winfrey Show, was able to do just that Monday night as she spoke to students, faculty and the public as part of the annual Speaker Series.

At Monday night’s speaker series event held in McGarvey Commons, Ling went through her life by explaining each step of her career, the experiences she has had as an international correspondent, and offered advice to students with big dreams. Ling was first introduced to journalism through Scratch, a Sacramento, CA, based teen show. She attributes the roots of her passion to Channel One, where she began working as an international correspondent at age 18. Over the seven years of working for Channel One, an international news show which is played in high schools and middle schools across the country, Ling said she was able to travel to more than two dozen countries, report on the social aspects and devastations each of the countries, and gain a love for bringing the suffering she saw to life.

Ling spoke of the story she said impacted her most,

the Civil War in Afghanistan in 1994. “I was 21-years-old and went with the Red Cross, so I felt a little more safe, but what bothered me the most was when I came back and told people about what I saw in Afghanistan. They were astounded. No one had any idea this war was happening and to make it even worse, they didn’t seem to care,” said Ling. It was



Mike Sharkey/THE BEHREND BEACON

Lisa Ling talks to the audience in McGarvey Commons about her life experiences and offers advice.

this reaction from the American public that made her want to continue covering international events as a way to bring light to happenings outside the United States. The audience responded well to Ling’s

descriptions from her time working with Channel One because most of the students remembered her from their high school and middle school years.

Ling said after seven years at Channel One, she was ready for a new challenge, so when a friend advised her to join the ABC daytime talk show, The View, she welcomed the change. “I never intended to be a daytime talk show host, but after covering the stories that I did on Channel One, I just wasn’t ready to go to a network, so I went to The View,” said Ling. For the next three years, Ling served as the young perspective on The View, where she said she tried to invoke questions and get the audience and home viewer to think. “I don’t like how so many news reporters tell you what to think and scream at you. And even though it was hard to get a word in sometimes, each episode I tried to say something that got people thinking,” said Ling.

After three years on The View, Ling was once again ready for a change and turned to National Geographic. Through the National Geographic Explorer series, Ling said she was able to cover the stories she had hoped to, like investigating the deadly drug war in Colombia, uncovering the controversial issues of China’s one-child policy, exploring the story behind the female suicide bombers in Chechnya and Israel’s occupied territories, and revealing the secret and highly dangerous culture of America’s prisons. “They empowered me and were very open,

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NEWS

National and world news in brief

By Patrick Webster

Honeybees dying off across the U.S. Waves of violence rock Baghdad

WASHINGTON: Commercial beekeepers have reported alarming news regarding the nation's honey industry and related businesses: the mysterious death of millions of honeybees en masse.

Several organizations met with the House Agricultural Subcommittee in Washington to discuss the impact the problem could have on the U.S. economy. Over the last six months, many beekeepers have had between 50 to 90 percent of their total bee populations die off for reasons yet to be determined.

A coalition of beekeepers, scientists and government officials have thus far been unable to determine a cause or solution for the problem, calling it CCD, or Colony Collapse Disorder. The current prevailing theory is that several factors including pesticides, parasites, pathogens and production stress have affected the bees' ability to adapt and survive.

"We believe that some form of stress may be suppressing immune systems of bees, ultimately contributing to CCD," said Agricultural Research Service spokesman Caird Rexroad.

Government officials contend that the decline in bee population, which has been happening at an increased rate since 1989, combined with CCD could pose some

very serious problems for the economy and agricultural production. Domestic honey prices have increased over 14 percent in the last year, and in 2005 the U.S. honey industry was forced to import foreign bees for the first time just to keep production steady. The sudden drop in domestic stock due to CCD could have far greater implications.

The loss of the domestic bee colonies would also have a severe impact on the production of local agricultural and flower crops. Many food and cash crops, especially fruit, depend almost entirely on the bee population to handle the pollination that makes production possible. Now that planting season has begun in many parts of the country, farmers are concerned that bee levels have dropped below that necessary for efficient production, which could drive up prices for all food products.

"Though economists differ in calculating the exact dollar value of honeybee pollination, virtually all estimates range in the billions of dollars," said entomologist Dr. May Berenbaum at the House committee hearing on Thursday.

In the last 20 years, the U.S. bee population has dropped an estimated 40 percent.

BAGHDAD, Iraq: Several suicide bombings, gun battles and mysterious shootings plagued the Baghdad area Thursday as security forces struggled to bring it under control.

At least two suicide bombers with high explosives strapped to their chests waded into markets crowded by people looking to pick up food and other goods before the weekend begun, detonating themselves and killing at least 115 innocent bystanders. Over 170 others were seriously injured, and there is some confusion in the Iraqi government as to how many bombers were involved.

"It was a very, very crowded market. All those killed are innocent," a wounded but otherwise unidentified man told a Reuters new reporter in Baghdad.

A few miles north of Baghdad in the town of Khalis and about 20 miles

south of Baghdad in the city of Mahmoudiya, at least three car bombs were involved other incidents at roughly the same in a similarly crowded marketplace, with similar results.

Baghdad police swept through the capital city to discourage further violence, only to find at least 25 bodies riddled with bullet holes and no immediate signs of motive.

As this was taking place, the new U.S. ambassador to Iraq, Ryan Crocker, was being sworn in Thursday.

"We have a historic challenge ahead of us," Crocker said in a news conference after the ceremony. "Terrorists, insurgents and militias continue to threaten security in Baghdad and around the country. Security is without question the central issue."



Source: CNN.com, Yahoo! News

Staying healthy as the seasons change Niagara fire wakes continued from page 1

By Sheri Kroskie
staff writer

For most college students, spring signals the start of baseball season, the start of flip-flop wearing season, and the start of gorge-hiking season. For an unfortunate few, spring also means the start of college sickness season. Director of Behrend's Health and Wellness Center, Patty Pasky McMahon, said that fall and spring are the peak seasons for viral infections, such as mononucleosis and influenza. While it has not been scientifically proven that the warm weather is directly related to the increase of flu or mono cases, Pasky McMahon said she believes there is a connection. According to Pasky McMahon, who is a nurse practitioner, protecting yourself from illness is simple. "The hardest thing for people to do is usually the easiest," Pasky McMahon said. "Nutrition, rest and exercise are the keys to good health."

Studies showed that the flu has been one of the most devastating infections in human history. In 1918 and 1919, the flu killed 50 million people worldwide in just a few months. Fortunately, flu seasons this dangerous are rare. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, five to 20 percent of Americans get the flu each year. That is 15 to 60 million people in the United States alone.

Approximately 200,000 are hospitalized because of flu complications, and 36,000 die. Many of these deaths could be prevented if people got



As the promise of spring comes to Erie, students are spending more time outside. They should also take the necessary precautions to avoid getting sick.

their flu vaccine in the fall each year.

College campuses like Behrend are particularly vulnerable to outbreaks of flu and other illnesses. College students contract six to seven colds a year, a rate much higher than a typical adult, according to the University of Iowa's Student Health Services website. The stress of classes, poor exercise and eating habits and lack of sleep also lead to health problems. Plus, dormitories, gyms, libraries, and classrooms are breeding grounds for germs.

The flu is caused by a virus, mostly attacking the lungs but also affects other parts of the body. The three types of influenza virus that are identified today: Influenza C, Influenza B, which causes sporadic outbreaks of the flu, especially in communal settings like college dorms, Influenza A, is responsible for the classic outbreaks every winter like clockwork.

Mononucleosis is another big illness that plagues college campuses. Health officials say mono is probably the worst as it usually knocks you out for long periods at a time.

Since germs spread so easily through coughing, sneezing, and even breathing, Pasky McMahon said that good hygiene is critical. "If you make sure you wash your hands, keep your hands off of your face and cover your mouth when you cough, you lessen your chance of spreading an infection or picking one up," Pasky McMahon said. "Rest, rest, rest! A virus that wouldn't have bothered you a month ago could now affect you if you haven't gotten enough rest." She stated, Pasky McMahon also explained that your body needs an average of eight hours of sleep every night. "Some people require even more sleep, Pasky McMahon said. "For some people, more than eight hours of sleep a night is a luxury." Doctors say when a person is at rest, their body produces more antibodies that help fight off infections. To try to remain healthy this season, eat well, exercise and get adequate rest.

Police and Safety Services Manager Jim Amann said that they currently do not have any suspects. "We are talking to residents and trying to see if anyone has information to share," Amann said, "If anyone knows anything, they certainly shouldn't protect that person. They might be looking at it as a prank, but they were risking lives."

Police and Safety Services are not looking at the fire as a prank. According to Amann, the culprit faces arson, risking a catastrophe, and reckless endangerment charges. "He is facing felony charges," Amann said. "That building houses hundreds of sleeping people, if that fire would've gotten out of control, there possibly could have been serious injuries or a death," Amann said.

According to Cerroni, if the police do not solve the case, the residents of the second floor will be charged for the damages to the walls, carpet, and floor.

"It's not unusual to hear about injuries or deaths from residence hall fires," Amann said. According to the National Fire Protection Association, there were 1,380 fires at universities. Officials from the United States Fire Administration said that 80% of all fire related deaths occur in residence halls.

to because of baseball...I thought it would be a great chance to get involved," said Campbell.

Another volunteer, Mackenzie Light, has formed a special relationship with her child, an autistic child also named Mackenzie. This is Light's third year in the program and has worked with the same girl each year. "We were able to form a relationship throughout the eight week program and continue to keep in touch today," said Light. "Volunteering with the TOPS program has been an amazing experience for me and the children who participate in this program. I am very thankful that I can take part in it and have such an impact on the children's lives."

More information on TOPS can be found at www.usyouth-soccer.org, or contact Coach Perritano at dpp2@psu.edu.

Lisa Ling brings international continued from page 1 Task force works continued from page 1

allowing me to cover the current international issues that I wanted to. I was and still am committed to telling international stories so the American public can be more informed about the world. I truly believe that if Americans are given the opportunity to care, they will."

Ling also took the opportunity to give her opinion on the media in the United States saying she wishes international issues were covered more often. "It seems that the American public cares more about Anna Nicole Smith than they do about what is going on around the world. But I think since the media continues to cover it, they are by default forced to care. It is a travesty that national news stations don't cover these types of issues and that the American public is kept in the dark. If the media covered them, then maybe by default Americans would care about them too," explained Ling.

At this point in the evening, the crowd was completely transfixed by Ling's speech and video presentation, and many were ignited to ask questions, which she answered with a personable honesty. Many asked about her time on The View, some wanted to know how she had the strength to go into such dangerous situations, and others were completely content being in her presence. Senior Communication major Jenna Gregory said, "I have been watching her for years. All through high school I followed her on Channel One, and for her to come here is just incredible. She just has such a presence. She is amazingly interesting but it's her presence that is so capti-

vating. Her passion just emanates."

Like Gregory, many Behrend students were very impressed with the comfortable and real persona that Ling spoke with. Passion for excellence can certainly be learned through Ling, and many students took notice. "She is such an inspiration and just has such obvious passion. I would love to follow in her path some day," said Gregory.

In addition to her numerous international reports on National Geographic Explorer, Ling is also currently a regular contributor to the Oprah Winfrey Show, where she focuses mainly on international affairs dealing with women and children like gang rape in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, bride burning in India, and child trafficking in Ghana. However, Ling said the piece she is most proud of is her investigative piece of China's Lost Girls, which shows the results of China's one child law. "I am so glad that I was given the opportunity to work with Oprah and deal with issues of women and children, because if women don't stand up for each other, who else is going to?" said Ling.

Ling hopes to continue working on both the Oprah Winfrey Show and National Geographic Explorer, where she will undoubtedly reveal many more secrets of current international issues. To learn more about the speaker series contact the Penn State Behrend Office of Student Activities or phone 814-898-6171.

local environmentalists for its interesting trees. Senior Associate Dean, Dr. Robert Light said, "The faculty and staff have further developed the Arboretum at Penn State Behrend which works with the ground crew to make the campus a place recognized for its education, research, and outreach related to its trees and plantings." In addition, Light said, "The faculty and staff have established a Landscape Committee that works with the grounds crew to beautify specific sites on campus."

The task force has also been successful in incorporating the use of geothermal heating in residence halls and reclaiming heat from the Junker Center pool area to use in other parts of the building. In addition, automatic heating and cooling setbacks are being utilized when buildings are not in use, and automatic light shutoff has been installed in classrooms and parking lots when they are not in use. Among other promising efforts to reduce energy use, Light said, "They are working with housing to promote the installation of "low-flow" showerheads in residence halls, and working with housekeeping to maintain the college's active recycling program."

Educating the Behrend community about sustainability is a vital asset to create a more knowledgeable and environmentally friendly campus. "We need the faculty, staff, and students to realize how important becoming sustainable is, not only on campus, but in general. The entire community must drive sustainability efforts and not wait or rely on a few to push the program," Light said.

The Greener Behrend Task Force is integrating sustainability topics into the curricular offerings throughout the college as part of their education campaign. The community can become more involved in creating a more sustainable environment by "Learning more about sustainable issues and working with college leaders to promote environmentally friendly ideas," Light said. With future plans for the task force, Behrend will continue to stand as a role model for other institutions by promoting a greener environment.