The Councillor

April 2003 **News Magazine of the Commonwealth** Monthly Publication

The Commonwealth for a Cure

THON 2003: 'Hope Surrounds Us'

By: Vera Spina

University Park – Every year students gather at Rec Hall at Penn State's University Park campus to join in Dance Marathon (THON).

Junior Olney Pray is about to become one of those dancers, but she has never experienced THON before.

Olney is representing the Council of Commonwealth Student Governments Central Staff THON Committee team. She is dancing with three other students from the organization; Lauren Cycak, Matt Helf and Thom Slaski.

They are all students who have attended Penn State Commonwealth Locations before moving to the University Park location. They were all involved in with THON at their respective campuses. And all but Olney have attended THON before.

"I am a Kindergarten/ Elementary Ed major and I always want to help kids. I believe that participating in THON will allow me to help kids in a different away," she said. THON is all about the kids. It is the largest student run philanthropy in the world over $20 million has been raised for kids with cancer.

Fellow dancer Lauren talked about how to prepare for THON, "No caffeine, in bed by 11pm every night, working out and trying to get healthy." Olney started preparing by getting herself excited for the event. She also has stopped drinking caffeine and is drinking more water and juice. The girls talked about buying new sneakers for the event. They both got a new pair of sneakers and have broken them in. "I went to Rapid Transit Sports and told them I was dancing in THON. They helped me find shoes that are so comfortable. The also gave me a discount," Olney said. Lauren also got her sneakers at Rapid Transit Sports, downtown State College.

The CCSG Central Staff/ THON Committee dancers where chosen by CCSG THON Director Tara Minchin. Olney was very surprised to learn that she was a dancer.

"There were at least eight other people from Staff that wanted to dance, I felt honored that I was chosen." She is going through a variety of emotions right now; nervousness, overwhelmed, excited and she can't believe how that THON is February 22, 23, 24.

This year THON will host 686 dancers and 343 couples. Morale Captain for Dancer Relations Nikkie DeSimone said, "We (captains) have been learning the line dance and I am really looking forward to teaching it to the dancers."

She also mentioned that this year there are forty-nine events planned, meaning the dancers will have something to do every single hour that they are on the floor. Richel Peretti, '97 dancer, said while giving advice to Olney, "Participate in all the events to keep you entertained, dancers do get bored."

Olney greatest worry is staying away for the forty-eight hours. She feels that it will be the hardest part. Lauren stated that, "This year it will be a lot more fun for me, I can whine about being tired, people will have to cater to me, and there is no work for me to do this year." Nikkie talked about how for her THON would be a lot harder this year, she danced last year, "It is not OK for me to get tired or down, exhaustion is not an option for a moraler."

Richel spoke about what dancers must be able to do, "As a dancer, you must be able to lean on other people and trust in them and to ask for help." She also

See "THON" p. 4

Smiling for the Kids: Dubois Dancers Thon 2003. (THON photos on this page by Candy McGill)

Line Dance 2003: In the end over $3.6 million was raised by Penn State Students

Mail Call: Behrend Dancer Michelle Rizzo shows off all the support she got during THON's Mail Call early sunday morning!

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End of the Year Message From outgoing CCSG President and Vice President



Greetings! As the outgoing President and Vice President of the Council of Commonwealth Student Governments (CCSG), it has been our privilege to represent the concerns of the Commonwealth students here at University Park.

CCSG has faced various challenges over the past year. Despite the obstacles that have come before us, we were able to implement *Innovative Leadership for an Evolving Commonwealth* into the completion and progress of our platform goals initiated last May:

Career Services: Student representation was obtained at the Annual System-Wide Conference (May 2002).

Lobbying: Despite the election year, meetings were held with representatives across the state in an effort to gain their support in increasing the appropriations given to Penn State. The Governmental Affairs Committee spearheaded the second annual Rally at the Rotunda (April 7, 2003) in an attempt to make our voice heard in Harrisburg once again.

Digital *Councillor*: Through the help of Student Affairs, we were able to secure web space for the *Councillor*. Progress has been made to place current and back issues on-line.

First Year Seminar(FYS): Surveys were conducted throughout the Commonwealth and at University Park to obtain the students' perspective on the structure and focus that their First Year Seminar course provided them. This is only the first step in working with the faculty to create more effective and standardized FYS courses.

Legal Affairs: A liaison was created this year to investigate issues in Judicial Affairs for this organization. This initiative is only the first step in determining whether there should be a department created within CCSG to focus on Judicial Affairs, educate more people about the system, and provide more representation.

Change of Assignment (COA): Data was gathered from current and former Commonwealth students through the help of the Student Government Associations and a Casino night held at University Park. The COA committee used this data to put on their first pilot program at the Fayette campus on March 27, 2003.

Diversity Summit: Although the Summit was cancelled, the information gathered and interest generated can pave the way for future leaders to work on this initiative.

As we look back over the year, we have made many accomplishments both big and small. Although some initiatives are still in progress, the foundation has been established for future administrations to build on.

We have been truly honored to serve as your President and Vice President for the 2002-2003 academic year. Thank you for granting us the opportunity to work with you and for your dedication and determination to improve the Commonwealth.

For the Glory,

Mike Cooper and Nikkie DeSimone,
CCSG 2002-03 President and Vice President

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Beyond the Stereotype

Harrisburg's Mark Lunasin, Jolynn Ruppert and Franie McClellan push above and beyond the college stereotype juggling 20-plus credit schedules, demanding part-time jobs, long commutes and their social lives.

By: Pete Strella

We've all had those nights. It almost seems like your teachers collaborated to make the most tedious assignments due on the same day. You can hear them laughing at you as you stay up all night, gulping down your caffeine-filled beverage of choice and slaving away to get three papers done in one night.

The average student is all too familiar with the aforementioned scenario. Many students are busy enough taking 15 credits per semester and working a part-time job. Yet a handful of Penn State Harrisburg students have decided that 15 credits is not enough. For one reason or another, they have decided to take over 20 credits this semester in addition to working at a part-time job or internship.

Mark Lunasin is a 22-year-old computer science major who is taking 21 credits this semester. "I remember one night last semester when I had four things due the next day," said "I worked on them all day, but then I decided to go out and party for a little." When Lunasin came home, he stayed up all night to complete two papers along with calculus and chemistry homework due the next day.

In addition to his 21 credits, Lunasin makes an hour and a half drive to New Jersey every weekend to work and visit his girlfriend. It adds 20 hours of work and travel to his already busy schedule. "I don't have that much free time," said Lunasin. "I make free time. Maybe sometimes I'll sacrifice doing homework and go to the bar or something."

Jolynn Ruppert, a 21-year-old applied behavioral science major, has a schedule very similar to Lunasin. She is taking 22 credits and makes a 30-minute commute to serve tables at Ruby Tuesdays on the weekends. Her course load also includes a three-credit internship at Red Lion Senior High School in York.

Like Lunasin, Ruppert also lacks free time. "Once a week I try to put time aside and go out with my roommates. And Friday and Saturday nights are usually open," said Ruppert.

So why would a student willingly put themselves into such a stressful situation?

Ruppert said she wants to lessen the load for her final semester in the spring, when she plans to take 12 credits. In addition, she increased her course load when she decided on a career to pursue.

Another student, who requested to remain anonymous, said he could not afford to pay another semester's tuition. The student is taking eight courses so he can graduate in May. On top of that, he does not have a car.

"My mom drives me to school everyday," he said. Even a person who takes so many classes can still manage a little free time. This student plans to play violin in a production of "Guys and Dolls" this spring.

Ruppert said the key to handling the heavy workload is good time management and "being able to have time for yourself, even if it's just an hour a day." Lunasin agreed, saying that "not burning yourself out" was crucial.

Franie McClellan, a 30-year-old criminal justice major, said she relies on scheduling her time and having the discipline to stick to the schedule. Another key is, "making sure that when I have the big test in one course, I'm not ignoring what I have to do for other courses."

McClellan is taking 23 credits this semester, after taking 23.5 credits in the fall. "My goal was to finish in three years," said McClellan. "I'm older. And when I decided what I wanted to do, I wanted to get my education out of the way and start working."

McClellan said she works 20 to 30 hours a week for police services and, to top it off, commutes thirty to forty five minutes daily from Carlisle.

McClellan rarely gets stressed out despite the heavy workload. She credits this to breaking her projects into sections and working on them one piece at a time. She also makes sure to read her syllabi at the start of the semester to anticipate big assignments. Her method worked well enough last semester that she did not stay up all night studying at all. "There weren't that many late nights either," she said.

It almost seems that her busy schedule makes her a better student. "Last semester was my heaviest semester it was also my best semester so far."

All students who are taking over 20 credits are required to get their advisor's approval. But with online courses, many students are able to get around this without a penalty.

"I'm going off of what students tell me, but I think it's a shame because they think they can do it, but some of them become overwhelmed, said Cindy Leach, a humanities staff assistant. "I just think it's too much."

April 2nd and Ongoing!

Shenango Student Art Exhibit

At the Study Lounge of Lecture Hall at Penn State Shenango
- Open to the Public
- Students' artwork will be on display.

Why Would Anyone Choose Mont Alto?

By: Katie Sior

Why would anyone choose Mont Alto? Well, why not? As a freshman, I am often asked why I chose Mont Alto to begin my college career. I am proud to say that Mont Alto was actually my first choice for college.

Yes, it is small. True, it is in the middle of nowhere. And, yes, there is not a large population. But, why should all of this matter? It sure didn't matter much to me. The first time I visited the campus, I fell in love with it. Now, I came from an area just like Mont Alto, but I enjoy areas like this.

When I began counting down for college, I couldn't wait. I was so excited to be on my own and to meet my roommate. Move-in day is a blur. The excitement was short-lived when I realized that my family was leaving to go back home and that they were just going to leave me there, alone.

Yes, I cried when they left, so what! That made me realize how much my family really means to me. The next couple days were filled with all different types of emotions. I began meeting people, but I just didn't feel like I fit in all that as well. Maybe college wasn't for me. Maybe I made a mistake in choosing Mont Alto. What on earth was I going to do?

Thank goodness my roommate and I seemed to bond instantly. It was almost as if we were meant to be together. I began meeting some really great friends, ones that I know will be with me forever, and then I met someone very special. Things started to look up for me.

Now, when people ask me where I go to college and I say Penn State Mont Alto, they ask me if I didn't get into University Park or another campus.

Why would they think this? Is it hard to believe that when an individual applies to college that their first choice could possibly be Mont Alto? Why is this? I love it here! I am close to home, but far enough away to have my own life. I finally got out of those awful high school days, and now I have a chance to start over.

I am now involved in a number of activities (SGA, SAC, THON, Lion Ambassador, Orientation Team) that I have a hard time finding a second in the course of the day for myself. I couldn't have asked for anything more. I feel like I belong at this tiny school. I am so happy with my decision, a decision that is going to determine the rest of my life. GOTTA LOVE THE ALTO!

Honored Activist brings American Indian Movement (AIM) issues to campus

By : Robert Trishman

"To change the future, we must first accept the past."

This was the theme of a presentation by Native American activist Vernon Bellecourt on Tuesday, January 28 at the Morrison Gallery in the PSH Library.

Bellecourt is the principal spokesperson for the American Indian Movement (AIM). He is also the President of the National Coalition on Racism in Sports and Media, and has participated in protests against the use of nicknames like "Redskins" and "Indians" at major sporting events. He has also received the Phoenix Martin Luther King, Jr. award for activism.

Bellecourt has led protests outside of museums where remains of Native Americans were put on display. Officials forced him and four others from a museum in 1991 for trying to rebury Indian remains on their own sacred ground. Since then, a new policy requires museums to return the remains back to the respective tribes.

Bellecourt started his presentation by showing a video called "The Immaculate Deception: American Holocaust on Indian Nations." This is the pilot of a miniseries currently in production featuring Floyd Red Crow Westerman, better known as "Chief Ten Bears" from the movie *Dances With Wolves*.

He then introduced himself to the audience in his native language and gave his clan name. He said, "I strongly believe that we have a message that has not been heard" and expressed concern about biological weapons.

Bellecourt pointed out that before European settlers arrived in America, the Indian population was up near 60 million. He said colonists used the first instance of "biological warfare" against the Indians. Blankets were the most valuable trade items for the Indians, and colonists sent smallpox-infected blankets to be traded with them, thereby infecting the Indians.

He then spoke of AIM saying, "AIM is for people without powers or rights." He said the people of AIM are "cleansing themselves from the inside" by returning to traditions, tribes, and spirituality.

"Their business is hope," he said.

Bellecourt brought a message of peace, and criticized the use of names of Indian chiefs such as Apache and Black Hawk for military helicopters. He quoted Black Hawk, who said, "Why do you Americans insist on taking with a gun what you can have through love?" Bellecourt said, "We don't represent that kind of violence."

Bellecourt encouraged war protests. "We should not lose one drop of precious blood of any of the young men and women in this country just to protect petroleum resources."

There was also an announcement before the presentation that students can sign up for an email list in the Library for information on politics and activism.

Mont Alto Senate in Full Swing Second Semester

By: Erica Schwartz

Mont Alto's Senate is rocking after a very successful first semester!

Last semester we had most of our focus on the Winter Ball. "A Night in the City" was in fact one of Mont Alto's largest events ever attended. We had approximately 200 hundred students and made over $1,100 in ticket sales. Since we knew that all the time and effort we put into making that event so successful was worth the it, we said, "why not do more?"

That is exactly what we are doing.

This semester we have a whole new set of goals. The biggest goal that Senate has taken on is the idea of getting Blue Light Call Boxes on campus for security. We have already met with our Chief of Police and our Director of Business Services. The locations have been set and we are awaiting prices from the company as well as finding out where all our funding will come from.

Hand in hand with security is the lighting on campus. Last year there were some places that were in need of additional lighting. That has been taken care of and this year we are just touching up on the dim areas.

The commuter Senators brought up the idea of Commuter Appreciation Day. (Thanks to Berks for the idea!) This event will be held in April lasting for two days. We will be handing out bags filled with free prizes such as pens, pencils, and information sheets about Senate. There will be an hour dedicated allowing students to ask questions in an open forum style covering a survey that we sent out to all commuter students last semester.

We have also discovered that our commuter parking lot is in need of relining. Surprisingly it's not too expensive to do; we just need to wait until all the snow melts! If it is not done this semester then it will be done over the summer.

Along with our parking lot problems, tickets given to students who park in other areas than where they are supposed to park is getting out of control.

The idea of an electronic ticket maker formulates a huge improvement, allowing the ticket to be printed out for the offender while a copy goes straight into our computer system. It makes the work much easier and is a great way for us to calculate the number of tickets a student gets.

If this sounds like a lot to accomplish in a semester, it is; but the catch is I'm not done!

Our annual Spring Fling is approaching soon. The Senators have opted to be in charge of the Talent Show. This should be interesting! We invite a local band, set up inflatable games, fun pictures are taken and tons of food is served.

Last but not least, in order to make Mont Alto a true Penn State campus, we have looked into ordering flags to hang on our light poles along our main drive into campus. Next year we are celebrating our centennial and we would like to see our campus' history as well as the future hang together with pride.

Senators are seen everyday as average students. We work hard at our studies but we also are truly dedicated to Mont Alto. We love where we are and take pride in our work. After reading this, don't ever be afraid to work hard and demand answers. Without hard work you'll never get anywhere, but hopefully we will!

Black History Month: *How to celebrate, when to do it and why.*

By: Steve Standridge

In 1915, noted black scholar and historian Carter G. Woodson founded the Association for the Study of African American Life and History. The organization would later initiate Black History Week, which was celebrated in the second week of February to coincide with the birthdays of Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln.

In 1976, as part of America's Bicentennial celebration, Black History Week was expanded to Black History Month as we know it. Now, people everywhere proudly celebrate it.

Most of us know the names of notable black activists such as Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Malcolm X, and Bob Marley, but know very little about their work.

- ***Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.*** is possibly the most notable civil rights leader in American history. He constantly spoke out about equality and civil rights for all people. He was a non-violent leader who considered his faith in everything he did, and believed that love would conquer all. "I believe that unarmed truth and unconditional love will have the final word in reality," King said. His birthday is celebrated as a national holiday. Did you know that it was not celebrated in all 50 states until 1999? The holiday is now celebrated in more than 100 countries worldwide.

- ***Malcolm X*** was also an avid civil rights champion. He studied Islam for years and was outspoken on issues of black unity. He founded the political group Organization of Afro-American Unity. Late in his life, he turned his focus to the equality of all men. "It is not a case of our people… wanting either separation or integration. The use of these words actually clouds the real picture. The 22 million Afro-Americans don't seek either separation or integration. They seek recognition and respect as human beings," he said.

- ***Robert Nesta Marley***, better known as Bob, is synonymous with Jamaica and reggae music. Marley was also an outspoken civil rights leader, unafraid to speak out against the oppressive government in his home country of Jamaica. He traveled all over the world spreading his message of "one love." This message was about people of all colors living together and loving each other. "I believe in freedom for everyone, not just the black man," Marley said.

- There are many great African American authors who had a lot to say about civil rights and black history. Check out a book or two by Ralph Ellison, Richard Wright, or Toni Morrison.

- The ***National Association for the Advancement of Colored People*** (NAACP) is perhaps the most well known African American organization. It was founded on February 12, 1909 in New York City by a group of black and white citizens. Its principle objective is "to ensure political, educational, social and economic equality of minority group citizens of the United States." The long and storied history of the NAACP includes a commitment to non-violence.

One doesn't have to look far to see role models like these; however, Kenisha Davis, president of Penn State Harrisburg's Black Student Union, says that in addition to Dr. King and Malcolm X, she also admires our own Dr. Clem Gilpin and Dr. Felicia Brown-Haywood. "They do really great work here on campus," said Davis.

This year, Penn State Harrisburg offered several events during its Black Heritage Celebration such as a dance class with live African drummers, speakers, live music, and re-enactments.

Penn State Harrisburg's Black Student Union also hosted several unique events in February: a coffee house, a play, and a multicultural noontime series featuring "African Resurrection," a West African drum, dance and folklore celebration. The BSU also planned a trip to Harlem, NY in early March to visit the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture. This trip included tours, exhibitions, performances, shopping, and dining.

Also in the area, other schools had events. Lebanon Valley College offered their "Africa Colloquium" through mid-February. It included art exhibits, film, discussion, music and lecture. All events are free and open to the public.

Dickinson College hosted a two-day symposium on the Underground Railroad including speakers and presentations. This was also free and available to Penn State students.

Remember, Black History Month is not just a celebration for African Americans; it is a celebration for all Americans. Black history is an essential part of American history and a great time to celebrate the sights, sounds and events that *are* Black History Month.

Penn State Altoona Update

By: Stephenie Schroth

The Student Government Association at Altoona is making remarkable progress. During the Christmas season, members of SGA volunteered their time to participate in the Red Cross Caring Hands Gift Wrap. This event raised money for those less fortunate by wrapping gifts at the local mall.

Two Senators, Martin Cepeda, Student Affairs Committee Chair, and Stephenie Schroth, Academic Affairs Committee Chair, presented their resolutions to the Altoona Faculty Senate on February 18th. Mr. Cepeda's resolution calls for awareness and the removal of smoking facilities from the entrance of campus buildings. Miss Schroth's resolution calls for enhancing the advising program, including advisors being available during posted hours, providing alternate advisors, and advising in the prospective majors only. Faculty Senate agreed to review the resolutions at their executive meeting in March.

The Academic Affairs Committee is also investigating the possibility of implementing a foreign language section on the First-Year Counseling and Advising Program (FTCAP) tests for incoming freshmen. This would eliminate the confusion of foreign language placements. Brian Marko, CCSG Northwest Caucus Director and former Penn State Altoona SGA President, is adamantly working on the smoking issue and the foreign language tests at University Park. Altoona's SGA would like to personally thank Mr. Marko for his continued involvement at Altoona.

In other news, Gene Petriello, Faculty Senate Representative, is conducting a survey in response to a change in the drop/add deadline. The survey aims to yield evidence of students' desires not to change the current dates.

The Student Affairs Committee held a Commuter Appreciation Day on February 27th. Commuters were welcomed with key chains and hot chocolate.

Also, David Przygoda, Junior Class President, and Stephenie Schroth, Junior Class Vice-President, conducted the first-ever Junior Class Meeting on February 27th. All of the Junior Class was invited to come together and discuss issues that face the class.

STUDENTS GATHER FOR 2ND ANNUAL RALLY IN THE ROTUNDA

University Park – On Monday, April 7, 2003 at 11AM, students from the Council of Commonwealth Student Governments (CCSG), which is the umbrella organization of the 19 Penn State Commonwealth locations Student Government Associations, along with Penn State's Undergraduate Student Government (USG) and student government representatives from other state related higher education institutions will rally in the Capitol Rotunda in Harrisburg. The students will unite to garner support for increases in state appropriations for higher education in Pennsylvania.

CCSG President Michael Cooper will be addressing the students as well as a guest speaker from the Pennsylvania House of Representatives. There will also be a Media Question and Answer Session. Before and after the rally, students will be meeting with State Representatives from throughout the Commonwealth.

Interested? Contact:
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Harrisburg's THON Preview

Leading up to the big day and the preparation beforehand

By: Jason Russo

Yes, folks it's that time of year again. THON is just around the corner. So pull out your wallets, donate some money, and participate in the activities here at Penn State Harrisburg.

For those of you not familiar with THON, it is the largest student-run charity in the world. Donations are collected year round with a 48 hour no sitting, no sleeping event that happened February 21 – 23 of this year. Since THON was started back in 1973, $20 million has been raised for the Four Diamonds Fund, which benefits kids with cancer. There are over 230 organizations that partake in the dance marathon including 700 dancers. Four thousand students from all of Penn State's campuses participate in the fundraising effort.

Here at Penn State Harrisburg, $4,986 has been raised through many different measures. Volunteers at Borders bookstores raised money by gift wrapping various items for people. There were other volunteers who stood outside on the streets in the blistering cold collecting money from anyone passing by. The Capital Times sold T-shirts in which all proceeds were donated to THON.

There will be one more weekend of raising money. The Bachelor/Bachelorette auction on February 4 is sure to bring in some mad bling. There are many top contenders that should go for a decent price. Can collecting will also continue this weekend along with pledge books where an individual or organization can donate money straight out.

According to Parul, SGA President, THON itself will be packed full of activities. Besides dancing, throughout the event there will be such things as water gun battles and at some point powder will be poured onto the floor which turns Rec. Hall into a big Slip 'n' Slide. But there are some strict rules to follow if you plan on attending this year. For one, no caffeine products will be allowed. People have been known to get over-exerted and there have been some times where students had to be carried off in stretchers. Also, dancers are not allowed to have anything that tells the time of day. This includes such things as watches, cell phones, pagers, or digital cameras.

This year's THON is sure to bring in a huge sum of money for the Four Diamonds Fund. There are at least 15 people from Penn State Harrisburg attending. If you know of anyone or see someone attending, be sure to show your support.

2003 CCSG THON Committee

On behalf of The Council of Commonwealth Student Governments, The Councillor, The Commonwealth and the Kids, we thank you for all your hard work and preparation in making THON 2003 a true success!

THON 2003

Cont'd from page 1

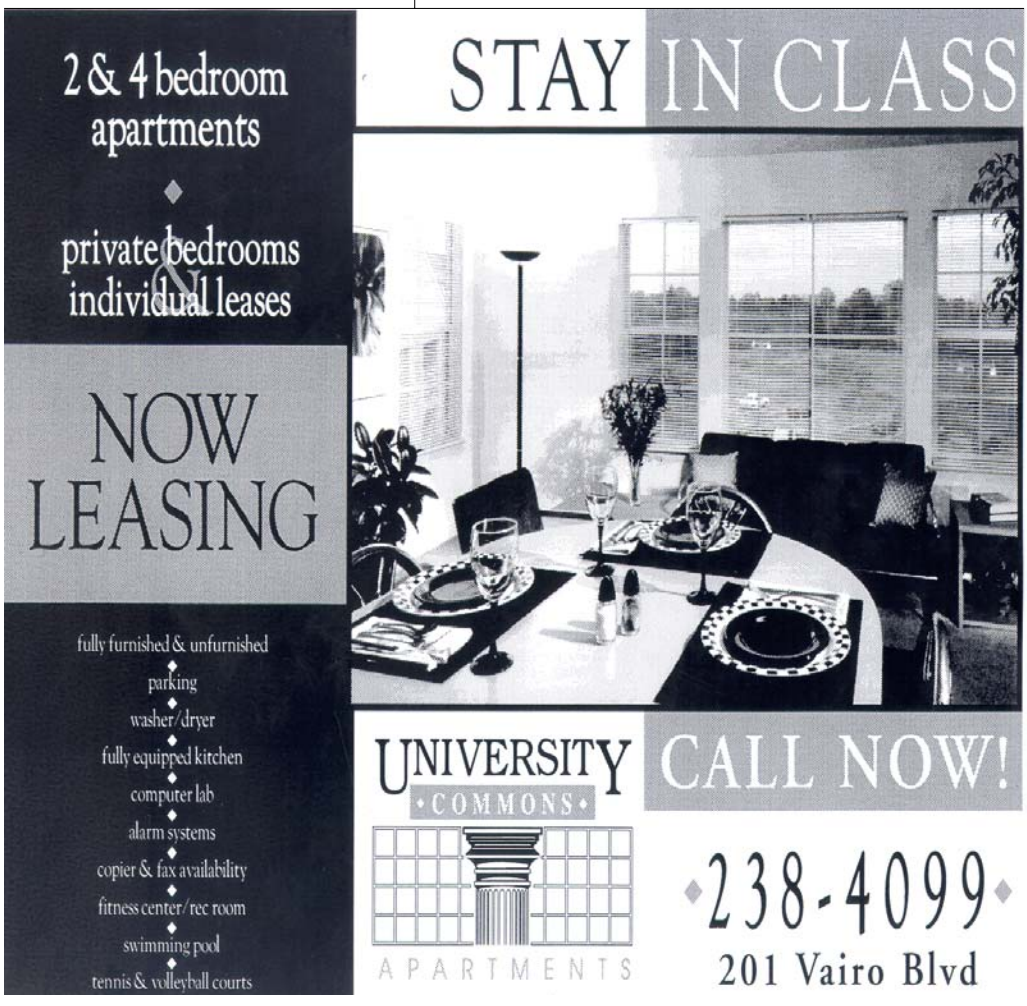
reminds us what it is all about, "The pain and the agony that you go through is nothing compared to what a child with cancer goes through; you are going through this to give them hope." Olney also said that she talked to other people who have dance and they shared with her stories about their amazing experiences. "I want to experience that, and I want to do it for the kids."

Richel gave Olney, the first time THON-goer, a lot of advice. She reminded her to keep her feet moving at all times, to meet different people and probably one of the most important things; wait as long as possible before you get a massage (because as soon as you go, you will want to go back!) Nikkie also provided information about some things to expect at THON.

For the first time, there will be a THON-Store set up on the floor so that the dancers can purchase keep-sakes, there will be a "Hospitality Stand" on the floor for the dancers at all times. And "THON Thoughts" will be returning, it is reminiscent of "the confessional" from the MTV show the Real World (where a camera will be set up at all times for dancers to share their thoughts).

Olney is also overwhelmed by the gravity of the event. To put it simply, THON is huge! "I am overwhelmed by what will be happening and who I will be helping." Richel reminded her, "Play with the kids!"

Twenty-year-old Olney is excited and honored to be a part of the largest student-run philanthropy in the world. Penn State students from across the state have been working and fundraising since mid-October and all their hard work will be complete at THON 2003. The total will be announced and the children's faces will light up. And it will be at that point that Olney will understand what it is all about.



A THON Experience: From the Floor to the Sideline

By: Carlos De la Rosa

For a lot of people THON is more than just the largest student-run philanthropy in the world. For students at Penn State University it has become a tradition.

I remember during my freshmen year someone invited me to go to a THON meeting. At that time I didn't even know what THON meant or what it implied, but in my desire to become more involved in school, I went.

In a room with another 20 some students we listened to that year's current THON chair at Mont Alto, Erica Schwartz, explain what THON is, her experience and her plans for this year's THON group. That very same meeting she asked for those who wanted to become dancers for a Mini THON.

Mini THON is a 12-hour dance marathon where Mont Alto dancers for that year are chosen. Since I've always loved dancing, I volunteered to dance. Before long I found my self standing in front of Gander Mountain with a can in my hand and a sign that said THON hanging from my neck asking people to donate money for the cause. I was canning for the first time ever in my life, although I did not know what exactly to say to people.

Standing outside I gained a new respect for THON, and as the hours went by I was filled more and more with the desire to be a THON dancer. Mini THON came and went and along other students that wanted to dance that year, we survived the 12 hours. Before the next canning weekend they announced the dancers for that year; I was one of them.

THON now had become a personal thing for me. Another three canning weekends and a Dancer retreat passed by before I ever went into REC Hall. I still get shivers when I think of my time on the dance floor. The line dance, the bathroom breaks, the people I met, the kids squirting you with water guns, my friends supporting me for the last four hours.

I don't think I have ever yet experienced anything quite as powerful in my life as those 48 hours. In two days I experienced an entire range of emotions collected in 18 years; and I would have done it again if I had the chance.

It is to no surprise that when my sophomore year started, I was already excited about THON. I wanted to dance again, to be a captain; in fact I wanted to do everything for THON. So again I canned and did Mini THON. But sadly, I wasn't picked this time.

Far Left: Dancers get down at THON. Left: Drew Lavenburg uses his head to support the kids! (Photos by Candy

For some time I was left with a feeling of loss and despair; I was afraid to experience THON in any other way than that of the dancer. I was scared that the THON I experienced would change to the meek bystander version. I didn't know what to do. I still went to the meetings, but THON had lost it's magic to me. Don't get me wrong, I was happy for the people who won, but I was jealous that they were going to experience THON and I wasn't.

I still didn't understand that there could be more than one way to experience THON. Right before Winter Break, I borrowed a friend's copy of THON 2002 video so that I could see myself in it. By the time the video ended I was in tears; all the memories of THON had flooded back to me and I couldn't help feeling lousy for having neglected my dedication to the cause. I had resolved to do more the following semester.

As it usually happens in life, things occurred that somehow managed to change my view. If it wasn't an RA meeting it was a cheerleading practice; little by little I found that the time I had planned to dedicate to THON was slowly being taken up by other activities. Other members of THON found me at fault that year, and the scariest thing crossed my mind: they might not let me go to THON at all.

With that in mind, I did a 180-degree change. I couldn't miss THON; it was absolutely out of the question. So I helped in every little way I could all the way up to THON week. That Monday night when our last meeting before THON was held, I was frantic. I was full of the "THONism" and already psyched up for Friday.

The weather that weekend wasn't the greatest and in four separate vehicles we made our way up the windy roads to University Park. We got there just around seven, and it had already started. I don't think I've ever unloaded bags out of three vehicles as fast as I did that night. I couldn't wait to see Rec Hall.

I went through the doors to Rec Hall again, different doors this time, and after finding where Mont Alto was seated I had my first bystander look at THON. I was shocked. I don't think I expected it to affect me as much as it did; to look upon the dancers like other people had looked at me last year just changed my views of THON.

We were there for the kids, and to support our dancers. With signs that said "MONT ALTO LOVES BECKY AND MAHDI," instead of Carlos and Laura, I kicked off my second THON experience.

THON 2003 was nothing like THON 2002, but definitely not in a negative way; they were both very different to me. None shall ever compare to the other, and I think that will hold true every year.

I admit that the line dance this year was better, and that some unforgettable memories were made, but throughout the weekend I kept getting flashbacks of my experience the previous year. Along with my campus I got to see how the anything but graceful Zach Mills attempted to do the line dance, and how Joe Paterno made his way through the crowd to show with heart-felt warmth his support for THON and the dancers.

I was even surprised to see how fraternity guys seating next to me fell to tears during Family Hour. Yeah, it was different, but different isn't bad. As I danced with this year's dancers for the last four hours, I found myself thinking of how powerful THON is.

From dancing 48 hours straight one year, to sleeping a scant five the next, THON showed me that it really doesn't matter how you view it. Once you decide to become a part of THON, it is something that stays with you forever. Whether dancer, bystander or family member coming by to see how someone is doing, THON touches you in a way that it changes your heart forever. This year's experience was nothing like last year's, it was altogether wonderful and new.

I now know that there are different ways to experience THON, just like there are different ways to get involved with it. I can't describe fully how it felt, even if I wanted to. To those who don't know how it feels, they the best thing to do is go to one to see what I'm talking about. To those that know, I'm guessing you are already waiting to see what next year's THON experience will bring.

The only thing I can say for myself now that I have seen THON through different eyes is: **I wouldn't miss it for the world.**

Diary of a Dancer: Jim Dykes

By: Vera Spina

Jim Dykes is a senior at Penn State New Kensington, majoring in Business Management/ Marketing. The following chronicles his thoughts leading up to, during and after Dance Marathon 2003. This is, Diary of a Dancer.

The Week before THON feelings:

Excitement, anticipation, doing it for the kids, a bit nervous because of what I will act and be like during it. I know I will, and have to make it, and I know I have the support of all of the Penn State family and the kids to keep me going! Can't wait to see our THON child again and hang out with him! I know my other three dancers (Mike Kelly, Rich Moser, and April Sheats) will be right there with me and together we will all support one another, along with all the other dancer couples.

I wanted to dance because I want to do it for the kids and want to experience the real feeling of being up for 48 on your feet to help children with cancer. This is my last opportunity to do it since I'm graduating in May, so I knew the time was now!
I have been a campus moraler the past two years and I saw how rewarding and selfless it was to do this for the kids, so I knew from my first moment that I was a morale for my friend Matt in 2001, that I had to do it!

I've cut myself out of caffeine completely for two and a half months now. You can't have any during the 48 since it is a stimulant, and you will crash after it wears off. I've been playing racquetball regularly and going to the gym to stretch my legs and get them into shape. As far as other preparations, we do canning and we did a Mr. PSU to raise money for THON for New Kensington. This is my second year in Mr. PSU and even if I didn't win I had the time of my life raising money for the kids.

Dancers: Jim Dykes, center, with Olney Pray, Left, and Lauren Cycak (Photo by Vera Spina)

Day of THON feelings:

Right before THON, I was nervous. I was going to be meeting a lot of new people who I would depend on and be dependent on. But I knew inside of me that myself as well as all of my fellow dancers would make it and have the time of our lives doing it "FOR THE KIDS"! All of my support from my friends at Penn State New Kensington and my moralers Brigid and Scott were my guidance and I couldn't have done it without them.

I suppose around the 24 hour mark my feet started to hurt really badly and I had to have the arches of my feet taped, but all the kids laughing and having the time of their lives made the pain go away and I too felt like a kid again. With all the love and support *I FELT NO PAIN*.

The feelings a dancer goes through at THON don't even touch what a child with cancer goes through. And for that one weekend we did whatever we could do to make them feel no pain and have the time of their lives. You would be surprised how much getting squirted with a water gun by a child will lift your spirits when you are tired and down.

I had many people ask me if I would do it again, and immediately I said that **I'd do it again in a heartbeat.** I definitely want to be a part of THON for the rest of my life!
During family hour I went through a roller coaster of emotions and I know deep in my heart that we all did truly make a difference for the kids. I had never cried so hard in my life as I did when the families told their stories and when they played "Angels Among Us", and I know that they are truly grateful and I would have done anything to make their weekend fun.

Our THON child Erik Hosler and his family were there the whole weekend and I had the time of my life with them! Myself and Erik even got our picture taken with Coach Joe Paterno! At the end his family all gave us great big hugs and I knew that we made the weekend special for them and that made me feel good inside.

After THON Thought:

My memories of this past weekend will last a lifetime! Just telling my parents about my experiences yesterday made me feel good inside and that I made the children's weekend special! I feel very happy that I helped contribute to THON and made a difference in those children's lives.

One last note: HOPE REALLY DOES SURROUND US, and the feelings that we went through this weekend were well worth the joy and happiness that we brought to the children's hearts and souls. For that weekend they truly felt no pain and I feel great because we helped to make that happen!

ROADTRIP TO THE WEST: Shenango and Erie



From the Left: Penn State Shenango Bookstore employee, Becki Adams, and Mike ward all pose for an enthusiastic shot at a day-trip to Shenango!

By: Becki Adams and Mike Ward

On Friday, February 28 we had the privilege of leaving University Park to visit a pair of Commonwealth campuses. We left *very* early on a day that we did not have any classes to get up for anyway. It was very snowy and very dangerous, especially given our state of awareness that early in the morning.

Our two targets: Erie and Shenango.

Why these two campuses you ask?

Well, we picked Erie because any campus that isolated from the rest of the state had to have things to do there. We picked Shenango because a) we had never heard of it before looking at the maps of Commonwealth campuses, b) it has a funny name and c) we sympathize with it coming from a campus of comparable size at Lehigh Valley.

Besides a truck almost crushing us about five minutes into the trip, the two and a half hour ride to Shenango was uneventful. We stopped at Sheetz because we hold a bizarre infatuation with the MTOs and particularly a peculiar fixation on Hamzel Pretzels (they are surprisingly good for breakfast!)

We arrived at the Shenango in Sharon, Pennsylvania (dangerously close to Ohio) around 12ish. Our first impression of this campus was not a good one as we entered into a parking lot with craters rivaled only by those on the moon. Upon getting out and looking around the town for about 4 minutes we almost packed up and started our journey north to Erie. However, in our graciousness, we gave this little campus another shot.

We moseyed over to the Book Store because in our experience at the Lehigh Valley campus, Book Store employees rule! It was there that we met Kelly and Pat. We learned some fascinating factoids about the Shenango campus such as: it is the only urban PSU campus, and it's the most western campus (or "the closest PSU will ever get to California" as the Director of Student Affairs put it). Kelly and Pat then arranged for us to have a tour guided by Jason, the local SGA representative.

By doing this we actually stayed much longer than we had anticipated, but in exchange developed an appreciation for the small PSU site. We dubbed it "the small campus with a big heart." We got to see their Lion Shrine, the gym, the billiards room, and the brand new library. We also heard a lot about Dr. Thomas Rookey, the new

(See "Road Trip," p. 7)

Phantoms, Cheesesteak-Hunting in Philadelphia

By: Becki Adams and Mike Ward

This winter break, we decided that we wanted to go to a hockey game with a group of friends. Flyers tickets being $7,000 a piece and us having fourteen dollars and thirty-two cents between us, we opted to go see the crappier, and less expensive Phantoms game.

Being Lehigh Valleyites, we met at the universal meeting place of Weis's parking lot. We are going to list those that accompanied us even though you don't know them: Shawn ("The Driver"), Erin ("The Late One"), Michelle ("The Bubbly One"), Bob ("The One Who Illegally Rode to Philly in the Trunk"), and Jimbo "Never Drive Below 95" Preslar.

After spending half an hour in Weis waiting for Shawn to pick out the beverage of his desire, we were off for the City of Brotherly Crud. Bob read Prey in between his naps in the trunk while the rest of us ignored him. Things went smoothly going down the turnpike until we got to our exit where we waited for a long time.

Being bored on the exit and the street swamped by traffic-managing cops, Shawn of course decided that this would be a good time to bring out his GUN. (True story: Shawn once shot himself in the hand with a BB gun. He was out of school for a week). Naturally, we were a little concerned and after subduing him, we managed to hide the gun (even though it was fake) out of his reach underneath the seat. (We're not making this up).

We wouldn't have minded the hold up on the exit if a) we didn't miss the entire first period and b) all the traffic was headed towards the Sixers game at the First Union Center. We waited about 45 minutes and there were about 25 people at our game. We would write about the game itself, but we don't remember the team that the Phantoms were playing against.

The most vivid memory we have of the game was the intermission entertainment of a bunch of kids playing hockey. We're going to burn in hell for this, but it was hilarious the way they kept falling down. We also were trying to avoid the herd of wild orange-shirted hooligans that were giving people free stuff at the small cost of your dignity.

The Phantoms lost in overtime- pissed us off.

Since we only saw about 17 minutes of actual game time because of the traffic, we decided to make more of a night out of it. We asked a random woman at the Spectrum for directions to Pat's Cheese Steaks. As it turned out, nobody was actually listening to the woman giving directions figuring that someone else was.

Magically, we were able to find the said eatery, while Jim and Bob somehow ended up in Connecticut (this is a hyperbole) before finally making it there. Pat's was delicious, but dangit, one cheese steak just wasn't enough so we went across the street to try out Gino's Cheese Steaks.

We fiercely debated our unanimous decision on which cheese steak was better (Pat's), and decided to pack it up before the crazies came out. Stupidly, we let Jim lead as he headed in the EXACT OPPOSITE DIRECTION of where we came from. We came dangerously close to New Jersey.

Yikes.

We finally righted our ship but not before Shawn ran through a red light right in front of a police station. Apparently all the cops were inside or intoxicated because nobody seemed to care (except for Shawn's passengers who were freaking out).

We got back on 76 and Jimbo took off like a winged rodent out of Hades trying to beat us. Due to traffic he ended up 2-3 car-lengths ahead of us. In the end, he beat us by about an hour and a half due in some part to him driving 120 miles per hour, but mostly because Shawn missed the exit that we told him was coming up 3 times. Jim merged through 3 lanes of traffic to make said exit.

We don't remember the name of the exit that we actually got off of, but it should have been Leather Corner Post because that's memorably a stupid town name. Shawn of course did not fill up his gas tank before leaving in his vehicle that gets 4 gallons to the mile.

As it turns out, NOTHING is open in Leather Corner Post after twelve, so we ended up taking a potty break at Blockbuster video 2 minutes before they closed (but only after Shawn tried to get into the parking lot by driving the wrong way into a Taco Bell drive-through).

After leaving and getting gas, we drove home merrily singing Feuer Frei by Rammstein. We made it safely back to Weis, finding Bob abandoned by Jim an hour ago.



ROAD TRIP

Cont'd from p. 6

Executive Officer, and all the great things he planned for the campus. While impressed with the campus, Jason took us out into swinging downtown Sharon.

We went to the Quaker Steak and Lube (which we hear has great wings), and the Hot Rod Café. We also got to see the self-proclaimed "largest shoe store in the world," which was guarded by an anti-war cowboy hippie singing his pro-Saddam libretto on the corner. We were won over by the friendly people at the Shenango campus- the folks in the Book Store even gave us paper and a pen because we forgot ours!

So then we were off north to the Erie campus. It was about an hour ride en route on Route 79. Our first goal once in Erie was to see Lake Erie. Somehow, we managed not to find it, instead finding ourselves in some bay. We retreated from the body of water that was close enough to being Lake Erie (for us) to the Erie campus.

We parked and proceeded to the Reed Union Building, or as I like to call it, "the RUB." (Ha!) We walked in a circle trying to find something to do, and ended up asking the receptionist what there was to do in the area.

"Nothing," was her retort. "What is a Lion Shrine?" she continued.

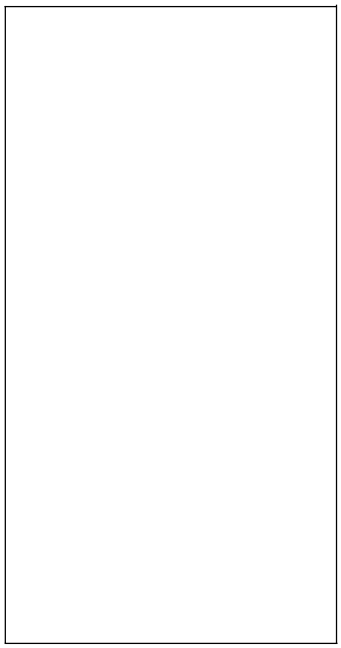
Exasperated, we headed back towards Lake Erie this time armed with directions from our receptionist friend. We didn't want to go to the indoor water park that she also recommended and we wanted to drive by the Fireworks/ Karate Supply store. We're not making up the existence of such a store. This is actually a good idea because it's just so inconvenient to have to go to two separate locations when I need a bottle rocket and nun chucks).

Due to the fog and ice, even though we were pretty sure we saw Lake Erie, we weren't positive we saw Lake Erie. After consulting with Lake Erie veterans we found out that not only did we see Lake Erie, we were standing on it. The mounds of "snow" that we were standing on were actually frozen waves.

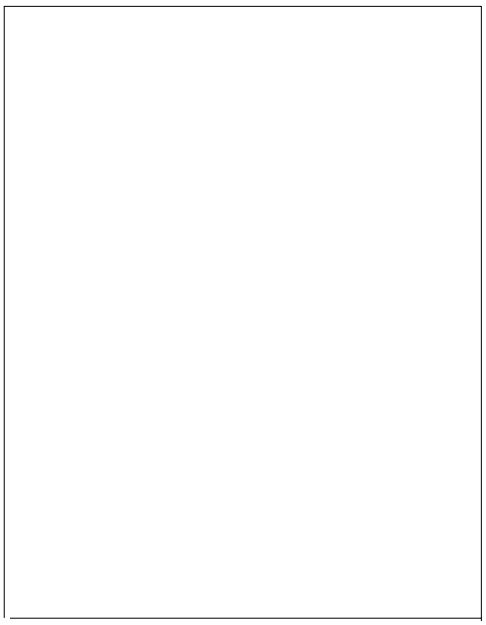
After checking out Presque Isle (although it was clearly a peninsula because otherwise we couldn't drive to it), we drove back to the Erie campus in a last desperate attempt to soak up some of the local flavor.

We found that flavor at Patrick's Family Restaurant. After our filling meal we began our long trip back to State College, happy to be heading home, but with a newfound appreciation for these Commonwealth locations to the west.

To see our entire photo gallery from this trip and video clips we filmed while we were there, check out our website at www.bampaw.tripod.com.



Becki and Jason outside in Shenango.



Right and Above: The Sights and Sounds of Penn State Shenango's Town of Sharon. (Photos by Mike Ward)

'It's all about freedom,' a pro-war look at Iraq

By: Mike Ward

I have been writing for The Councillor for about a year and a half now, and during that time I've written a fair share of "Bomb Saddam" editorials. So much so in fact, that it has become my "thing" here at the newspaper.

At this point, I can honestly say that I'm tired of the debate. Of course debate and disagreement is an essential part of our democratic-republic, and while I found anti-war protests (which all too often were just platforms to bash America in general) to be a nuisance, I tolerated them and respected their right for them to disagree.

Now that the actual decision has been made, I feel it our duty to stand behind that decision as Americans whether you think it was the right one or not - especially when these rallies are taking police officers away from their jobs of protecting us against terrorism in this time of high alert.

All the while I'm watching the likes of Michael Moore and the morons shutting down cities and a part of me is hoping they keep it up. I hate to break it to you liberals (and I normally wouldn't be giving you advice, but I'd just miss you too much if you went away) but when the majority of Americans see you shutting down streets in major cities, participating in "die-ins" or "vomit-ins," they laugh at you at best and are repulsed by you at worst. At this point you are becoming shrill to the point of lunacy.

If you want the peace movement to ever be a viable one again, you mainstream liberals NEED to stand up and stop those on the fringe from defining your movement because you're not gaining any converts this way. Of course, if you ever get too fed up and start to see the light, there's always room for you on the right!

At any rate, I think that there is very little ground left for me to cover argumentatively after all the articles I've written on the topic. My original intent for this article was to write what basically would amount to a "see, I told you so," article. Of course, I could go on for pages deconstructing the liberal arguments one by one (My personal favorite: "It's never been proven that Saddam even has weapons of mass destruction! Plus there will be mass casualties when he uses them on us!" Think about it. Don't worry too much though because Sean Penn said everything's clear). I don't want to write that much and you don't want to read that much.

Instead let me just wrap this up not by tearing down, but by building up. Much has been made about whether Saddam has weapons of mass destruction and whether military force is necessary to disarm him, and I truly believe that this is a reason enough for war. I trust George W. Bush because I believe he sees his office first and foremost as a duty. However, I believe the true crux of this operation is much wider than just disarming Saddam. I believe it to be a war on a mindset of hatred.

Have you seriously thought about what it's going to take to live in a world where we don't live under the threat of terrorism? I have been since September 11, 2001. It won't be through appeasement (look up Hitler), it won't be through money (look up North Korea), and it won't be through inspections (it's failed in Iraq for the last 12 years).

Peace has to be WON. Look into history and you'll find our enemies turned to allies by the democracy and freedom we installed in their countries after we defeated them militarily (look up Germany and Japan). Show me one instance when appeasement has achieved peace and I'll come to your side. Appeasement never works. Thinking otherwise is turning a blind eye to history.

Who would have thought that Germany and Japan would ever be our Allies during World War II? Who would have ever thought during the Cold War that the Soviet Union would crumble and become our friend? Who can imagine now a democratic, peaceful Middle East ruled by democratic governments elected by the people who look to the United States as a liberator? Harry S Truman imagined such a world. Ronald Reagan dreamed of such a reality. George W. Bush shares this dream, and he's running a play that we've run before and that we know to have success. George W. Bush isn't an oil-thirsty tyrant, he is a visionary.

Rebuilding a nation after war is a uniquely American idea because we are a land unique among the nations. One founded on an experiment Thomas Jefferson believed would produce a revolution every twenty years. What it produced is so great because its pedestal is the most basic of human desires: freedom.

Ours is a nation of unparalleled success because of the freedom of the individual. Now at a crossroad in history, George W. Bush is taking the war for that freedom started on September 11, 2001 and turning it on its head to spread the very thing Osama bin Laden seeks to destroy. "Iraqis can't handle democracy," you say? Freedom is the natural yearning of every man and woman. Recently oppressed people realize the price of freedom much more than us who take it for granted. Surely they will treasure and respect this newfound liberty even more than we do.

"Iraqis don't want this war," you say? I submit to you a quote from Iraqi citizen Ajami Saadoun Khlis whose brother and son were murdered by Saddam's regime. Weeping on the shoulder of one of his liberators he said, "You're late. What took you so long? God help you become victorious. I want to say hello to Bush, to shake his hand."

When Harry Truman was opposed by isolationist Republicans in congress, he went ahead with the Truman Doctrine passing the Marshall Plan and rebuilding our European allies and enemies alike. When they told Ronald Reagan "You have to learn to live with the Soviets," he responded by demanding, "Mr. Gorbechev, tear down this wall!" Maybe I'm just naïve but I believe that when history judges this generation, they will look at George W. Bush and see him as the man that defied the United Nations to create a new world because I believe Iraq will see us as liberators not conquerors.

There will always be radicals that simply hate America, but I believe the bulk of the population will welcome us. It *is* possible to drop bombs *and* bread at the same time, and attention is being paid that the proper people get the payload that's intended for them.

My prayer is that this war will be over even before this article goes to print, but if it is not continue to pray that this war is pushing us closer to a world without color-coded terror warnings even if there may be more terrorist strikes in the short term. To our troops I echo Ajami Sadoun Khlis, "God help you to become victorious."

Above and Below: Photographs of a March 16th rally at Valley Forge, PA., in support of U.S. troops . (Photos By Mike Ward)

Bush's Dogged Determination is Disturbing

"There are too many people in the national and international communities who love our country, whom our government have failed to persuade that it is in anyone's best interests to go to war with Saddam. I think it ironic that a nation like Russia is mediating—like a peacemaker—to give the inspectors more time in hopes to avert a seemingly impending U.S./Iraqi war; knock, knock, hello, I thought the U.S.A. was the peacemaker."

-Terry Johnson, Shenango

By: Terry Johnson

The New York Times reported that the Los Angeles City Council passed a resolution recently opposing unilateral war against Iraq and urging President Bush to employ all diplomatic options to deal with the crisis. Los Angeles is now the country's largest city to oppose such a war, joining more than 100 other cities and counties including Chicago, Philadelphia, and Detroit.

Although the Bush Administration has failed to convince the American people as well as the International community of the necessity of the U.S. going to war with Iraq, the Los Angeles Council members who opposed the measure voiced their concerns that it was not the Council's business to take such a stand. Another concern voiced by a Mr. Garcetti was the possibility of cutbacks in the Los Angeles City's police and fire departments if our government spent billions to go to war.

"While our federal government spends a lot of time looking at the foreign policy implications of war," Mr. Garcetti said, "it's imperative for local government to look at the domestic ramifications." Garcetti's perception does not take into account the possibility that if Saddam Hussein's terrorists began blowing themselves up in the streets of his city nobody would care much about the domestic ramifications of Bush's war.

Contending that Iraq is unwilling to disarm, the White House said recently the only way the Iraqi leader can avoid war is if Saddam Hussein goes into exile. President Bush added, "The risk of doing nothing, the risk of the security of this country being jeopardized at the hands of a madman with weapons of mass destruction, far exceeds the risks of any action we may be forced to take." Of course, Saddam dismissed President Bush's arrogant statement that he should seek asylum as a mere wishful notion.

During an interview with CBS news anchor Dan Rather, Saddam rightly contended—like any nation's leader worth her or his salt—"Whoever decides to forsake his nation from whomever requests it is not true to the principles." "…we will die here," Saddam added. "We will die in this country and we will maintain our honor…" A reasonably intelligent person would agree that in light of President Bush's arrogant statement, Saddam's response was both reasonable and predictable.

Like other Americans, I am not sure why President Bush is so insistent on going to war with Iraq's Saddam Hussein despite the Vietnam-like mentality of the American people. While President Bush's rhetoric appears to be the stuff of a good argument in favor of war with Iraq, I am concerned that national and international public opinion is against a U.S./Iraqi war.

There are too many people in the national and international communities who love our country, whom our government have failed to persuade that it is in anyone's best interests to go to war with Saddam. I think it ironic that a nation like Russia is mediating—like a peacemaker—to give the inspectors more time in hopes to avert a seemingly impending U.S./Iraqi war; knock, knock, hello, I thought the U.S.A. was the peacemaker.

Bush's dogged determination to war with Iraq is a disturbing demonstration of U.S. resolve for peace and our national integrity run amok. As the only world superpower, the American people, and the world's community of nations should be able to look to U.S. leaders to influence world affairs in the direction of peaceful development as best we can, with the integrity of a Colin Powell.

Bush will do well to heed D.W. Brogan's warning of "the illusion of American omnipotence." There appear to be a tendency among the Bushies (the Bush Administration) to assume that they are somehow in command of Iraq's destiny. Although I am convinced that President Bush is an arrogant, lightweight, Texas-tough-cowboy wannabe, he is our President, unfortunately. In fairness to our President, one would agree with Professor Brogan when he reminded us that "A great many things happen in the world regardless of whether the American people wish them or not."

The Bush Administration is right to address the situation in Iraq. However, our arrogant President and government ought to take every reasonable step to ensure the cooperation of the NATO Alliance in defeating Saddam. Our President and government must also recognize that the success of Bush's Iraqi war initiatives depends just as much on decisions that the United Nations makes together as those made in Washington.

Therefore, the Los Angeles City Council was right to oppose President Bush's unilateral war against Iraq and to urge our cocky President to employ diplomatic options in dealing with Saddam. The Bush Administration and our government must be at least willing to look at their own view of the world with at least as critical an eye as they apply to the views of other nations like Saddam's Iraq.

People Converge in Protest of the War on Iraq: Overview photo from a recent rally in New York City. (Photo By Mike Ward)

"There appear to be a tendency among the Bushies (the Bush Administration) to assume that they are somehow in command of Iraq's destiny. Although I am convinced that President Bush is an arrogant, lightweight, Texas-tough-cowboy wannabe, he is our President, unfortunately."

- Terry Johnson, Shenango

U.S. LAUNCHES OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM

By: Mike Ward

Air raid sirens blared as anti-aircraft fire lit up the sky over the Iraqi capital of Baghdad two and a half hours after President Bush's 48 hour ultimatum of exile or war to Saddam Hussein and his sons ran out.

At about 10:30 ET (5:30 in Baghdad) on Wednesday, March 19, President Bush ordered a decapitation strike on a bunker in the Iraqi capital based on intelligence that the hide-out was holding Saddam Hussein and four other leaders in the Iraqi regime, possibly including his sons.

The strike was meant to bring down the regime from the top down, hoping to cause the Iraqi forces to be leaderless and frenzied. Subsequent air strikes sought to cause confusion by making them "blind, deaf, and dumb," cutting off their communications centers.

The initial air strikes were not the much anticipated "Shock and Awe" campaign much hoped for by the cable news networks. Instead these attacks were to soften up targets for the invading ground forces coming into the country from the south, north, and west on March 20.

After rumors of Saddam's demise began to surface, the regime was quick to release a video of the dictator, which officials have said to be pre-recorded. March 20 also brought the first Coalition casualties of the war with a Marine helicopter crash in Kuwait.

Despite worry of an environmental disaster resulting from hundreds of oil wells being lit ablaze by Iraqi forces, the oil fields were secured by Allied forces by Friday, March 21, clearing the way for what was dubbed A-Day by military officials and "Shock and Awe" by the news media. As over 8,000 Iraqi regulars began surrendering, the full might of American air superiority was unleashed as massive explosions rocked places of strategic importance throughout the country, leaving many cities, including Baghdad, in flames.

Operation Iraqi Freedom was successful to a surprising degree even to military analysts, launching hope of a very quick resolution. Saturday, March 22 however, brought the first major resistance to the Allied forces as Iraqi soldiers were able to capture several American POWs and kill several Coalition troops after pretending to surrender. The atrocities performed on the captured soldiers were broadcasted on Al Jazeera.

Firefights intensified as Coalition forces drew within 50 miles of Baghdad. British Prime Minister Tony Blair declared on Monday, March 24 that the mission had reached a "crucial moment." Air strikes continued to pummel the Iraqi Republican Guard who were being quickly approached by Allied ground forces under the threat of an impending chemical attack. Meanwhile, the decision was made to postpone the Battle of Baghdad to secure cities in the south that had produced intense firefights, despite a rebellion of Shiites against Saddam in the city of Basra on Tuesday, March 25. Allied forces also experienced difficulties in the city of Nasiriyah which lies on the Euphrates River in the south.

As of the time of this writing, Allied forces had encircled Najaf, and were fighting to secure the southern cities of Iraq. Meanwhile, despite historically fast advances towards Baghdad, the actual invasion of the city had been stalled as Coalition air strikes continued to soften targets inside the city.

Women's History Month Features

Just a few of the many that have created the need for women's month continue to prove that women are contributors in all areas of life. These women are some of the more recent providers of extraordinary successes, that have become role models for us all.

By: Cindy Huang

Rachel Carson

Rachel Carson is best known for starting an environmental movement in the late 20th century when she wrote *Silent Spring* (1962), an exposé that identified the hazards of DDT.

Carson is a writer, ecologist, and biologist. She grew up with an enthusiasm for nature with the help of the woods, meadows, and stream near her home. She wanted to be a writer, but felt she didn't have enough imagination to write fiction, so she turned to marine biology.

After her father died, she supplemented her family's income by working with the U.S. Bureau of Fisheries. From that, she wrote three books about the ocean: *Under the Sea-Wind* (1941), *The Sea Around Us* (1951), and its sequel, *The Edge of the Sea* (1955).

In all of Carson's writings is the view that human beings have the power to alter nature, some of them irreversible.

Silent Spring challenged the practices of agriculture scientists and the government and reminded people how vulnerable the world around us is. Testifying before Congress in 1963, she called for new policies to protect human health and the environment.

She died in 1964 of breast cancer, but left a legacy of inspiration to new generations that one person can indeed make a change in the world.

Linda Chavez-Thompson

Linda Chavez-Thompson is a second generation Mexican American, born in Lubbock, Texas. She is one of eight children and had to drop out of high school in ninth grade to help support the family on the cotton fields.

Chavez-Thompson joined the Laborers' International Union in 1967, serving as the secretary for the union's Lubbock local. Eventually she became the first woman and person of color to be elected to be Executive Vice-President of the AFL-CIO in 1995.

This is a reminder to women that they can be leaders, too. She feels it is her responsibility to bring women into leadership positions to expand the dialogue, points of view, and resulting decisions. Since the election, Chavez-Thompson became active in many national organizations, including the United Way's Board of Governors, Democratic National Committee, Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute, and the Institute for Women's Policy Research.

During President Clinton's term, she served on the President's Initiative on Race, as well as Vice-Chair of the President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities.

Mae C. Jemison

Mae C. Jemison is the first woman of color to go into space on shuttle Endeavour in 1992. As a young girl, she loved to read and dance, and enjoyed science. She loved learning about the formation on the universe; visits to the planetarium helped her learn about space.

Before joining NASA in 1987, she was an Area Peace Corps medical officer for Sierra Leone and Liberia in West Africa, and General Practitioner in Los Angeles. During her time in NASA, she worked as science mission specialist in an US/Japan joint mission. After six years, Dr. Jemison started The Jemison Group, Inc. to establish focus of science and technology into daily life.

In 1994, Dr. Jemison founded The Earth We Share, an international science camp for young teens to work together and solve current global dilemmas. From 1995 to 2000, she taught Environmental Studies at Dartmouth College and directs the Jemison Institute for Advancing Technology in Developing Countries.

She is an advocate not only for women and minorities in sciences, but many present-day issues such as education, science literacy, and sustainable development. She believes in achieving excellence and investing in the present to secure the future.

Yuri Kochiyama

Yuri Kochiyama worked to build alliances between diverse cultural groups to create social justice. She is a voice for the importance of ethnic studies, workers' rights, and reparations for the Japanese-Americans incarcerated during WWII.

Born and raised in San Pedro to Japanese immigrants, Kochiyama, whose birth name was Mary Nakahara, describes her then as being provincial, religious, and apolitical.

Pearl Harbor took an effect on every American, but for those with Japanese ancestry, their lives changed the most. As a result of the concentration camps, Kochiyama saw a parallel between the treatment of African Americans in the South and the internment of Japanese Americans. She realized fear and ignorance caused by racism resulted in senseless degradation and brutality and became committed to eliminate racist assumptions and ideas.

Through this political involvement, she met and became friends with Malcom X. Joining his group, the Organization for Afro-American Unity, she worked for racial justice and human rights. His murder intensified Kochiyama's commitment for dignity and equality. This led to one of her activities to support reparations for African-Americans.

She appreciates speaking to young audiences. She advises, "Don't become too narrow. Live fully. Meet all kinds of people. You'll learn something from everyone. Follow what you feel in your heart."

(information from http://www.nwhp.org)

Madonna's Anti-war, *American Life* Album hits stores April 22

The real question is, how will American audiences react?

By: Kevin Waltz

Madonna's American Life album (Due April 22) may be almost a month away from release, but the controversy-ball began rolling months ago. Reports that the video for the song "American Life" may be banned from MTV are surfacing while the song is gaining spins at radio stations.

Controversy was inevitable. Madonna's theme of violence continues at dizzying heights with this new project. The Material Girl first explored her violent side with 2001's video for "What it Feels Like for A Girl," which was directed by husband/filmmaker Guy Richie. The violence theme continued into her 2001 Drowned World Tour where she kicked the crap out of dancers and flew over our heads in a Kung-Fu style reminiscent of Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon.

The Richie's film Swept Away was a critical and commercial flop, but most disturbing is the way that the movie shows violence against women in a machismo sort of way. Then, the 2002 hit single "Die Another Day" came out. The song was a hit, but the video continued with themes of violence, torture and electrocution.

Violence continues with "American Life." The video shows the Queen of Pop in military fatigues showing the consequences of war. Madonna and her publicist insist that this video is not anti-war; it is pro-peace. However it may be described, Madonna may have a problem selling the video to MTV. Right now, MTV has a ban on any war-themed video. Until the ban is lifted, the "American Life" video may not be allowed to be shown.

This is not the first time Madonna courted controversy with MTV. In 1990, MTV almost refused to show the video for "Vogue," because her nipples are clearly visible through a shirt she wears. Madonna got away with it, reasoning that her nipples were at least covered. MTV agreed.

Not so later that year when "Justify My Love" was banned. It was the first time in MTV history that a video was banned, but it didn't hurt the performance of the song on the charts.

In fact, the controversy helped. The song reached number one and the video single released became the biggest-selling video single of all time.

Madonna's sexual antics continued into 1992, when her "Erotica" video was deemed too raunchy and pulled after being shown twice after midnight. And then it happened again with 2001's "What it Feels Like for A Girl." The video was shown once after 10 p.m., and never again.

If the video does become banned, how will that affect the sales of the album? With the recent low-selling albums of her contemporaries like Whitney Houston and Mariah Carey, many think that the anti-war theme of the album may have an effect. Yet industry insiders say that the war theme does not justify what is in the album. The album is not about war despite the album cover and video to the first single.

Don't forget, Madonna is not a normal "pop star." After selling over 200 million albums and singles worldwide, she is the biggest-selling female artist of all time. Her albums don't fit the mold of what is current—it sets the standards for the future of music.

Madonna has taken these risks before and has been commercially successful (Ray of Light). She has also had some commercial disappointment (Erotica). But what remains constant with Madonna is that no matter what people say, she will continue.



Cover of Madonna's up and coming album *American Life*, featuring the material girl herself.

Her international audience is so huge that she will still sell more albums worldwide than most artists. Here is the list of songs on the new album: American Life, Hollywood, I'm So Stupid, Love Profusion, Nobody Knows Me, Nothing Fails, Intervention, X-Static Process, Mother & Father, Die Another Day and Easy Ride.

Biggest winners, losers, upsets and memorable moments at the 2003 Academy Awards that almost didn't air

By: Kevin Waltz

The 75th annual Academy Awards were given out on Mar. 23 even though the country was on high terror alert. With news of the war in Iraq, board members were discussing whether or not to postpone the ceremony.

The night did go on, and as with every year, the winner list shocked and surprised everyone. Adrien Brody made Oscar history with his win for Best Actor, beating Hollywood Heavyweights Jack Nicholson, Nicholas Cage, Daniel Day-Lewis and Michael Cane. Brody's win makes him the youngest winner of the award; he is only 29-years-old.

Nichole Kidman came back from last year's loss for Best Actress and took home the award for her portrayal Of Virginia Wolfe in The Hours.

My money was on Renée Zellweger for her role of Roxie in Chicago. Zellweger was in the same situation as Kidman was last year; she was nominated for Best Actress for her role in Bridget Jones's Diary. Both lost last year to Halley Berry.

Chicago won the award for Best Picture. The Best Picture category was a competitive one, with many people thinking that members would vote for the more subdued The Hours. Though Martin Scorsese was seen as a favorite, his movie, Gangs of New York, was almost completely ignored. The movie only took away one statue when it had 10 total nominations.

Chicago was the biggest winner of the evening. The movie had two nominations in the Best Supporting Actress category—Queen Latifah and Catherine Zeta-Jones—of which Jones won the award. Chicago also won awards for Art Direction, Costume Design, Film Editing and Sound.

Chris Cooper won the award for Best Supporting Actor for his role in Adaptation.

The evening would not have been complete without controversy. Even though his presence was missed and he did not perform, Eminem's "Lose Yourself," was Best Song, beating his biggest competition, U2. The most interesting part of the evening came when Documentary Feature winner Michael Moore spoke at the podium. During his acceptance speech for his film Bowling for Columbine, Moore protested the war in Iraq while being booed by the crowd.

The most visibly absent person—besides Eminem—was Roman Polanski. After fleeing the United States over 25 years ago from accusations of statutory rape, Polanski won the award for Best Director for The Piano. Polanski is most well known because of the grizzly Mason murders that occurred at his residence back in the 1960s. His wife, Sharon Tate, who was eight months pregnant, was one of five people murdered by the Mason family at Polanski's house while he was in England filming Rosemary's Baby.

3,400 people attended the Oscar ceremony and the broadcast was the highest rated for the night on ABC. The event was more subdued than previous years, with nominees such as Julianne Moore avoiding the cameras as the walked the red carpet.

Pittsburgh's Carnegie Art Museum

A great collection debuting local aspiring artists right along side reknown contributers to the art industry.



By: Cindy Huang

What do you do with the artwork when several galleries in your art museum are undergoing renovations? The directors at the Carnegie Art Museum got creative and depicted a European style museum – a Parisian-like gallery.

The paintings are arranged by time and place of origin; chairs by theme, style, and date; and sculptures in thematic groupings.

Upon first glance into the gallery, I was overwhelmed with the amount of artwork in one room. The walls were literally covered with collections, the center of the room used for sculptures and architecture. No wall space was wasted.

Names like Renoir, Manet, Fitz Hugh Lane, and Monet are mixed in with local and lesser-known artists.

The intent of the exhibition's design is to stimulate visual and intellectual experiences of art so that they can be appreciated again.

This display provided a unique way of seeing art. Though it was hard to concentrate on one particular piece, it was fascinating to see all the different masterpieces made during the same period.

The exhibit runs until August 2003.

For more information, visit http://www.carnegiemuseums.org/cmag/bk_issue/2003/janfeb/feat4.html.

Michael Moore Madness:

After his now notorious acceptance speech at the Oscars Moor e is at it again.

Fahrenheit 911 a documentary that will trace why the U.S. has become a target for hatred and terrorism is Moore's newest project. It will explore the relationhip between two generations of the Bush family and bin Laden, leading up to George W. Bush and Osama bin Laden becoming enemies.

"The primary thrust of the new film is what has happened to the country since Sept. 11, and how the Bush administration used this tragic event to push its agenda," Moore said. "It certainly does deal with the Bush and bin Laden ties. It asks a number of questions that I don't have the answers to yet, but which I intend to find out."

(http://www.rense.com/general36/mel.htm)

Moore has put a year's worth of research into the film. He'll finish it in time to be submitted for Cannes, 2004, and released in time for the presidential election that fall.



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