Poverty Awareness Meal

Brings Awareness to Serious Problems

Briana Mitchell

Picture this: you wake up in your queen-sized bed to the smell of a three-course breakfast brought to you by your maid. Of course, you don't have time for breakfast. Eating would take too much time out of your day. You throw on your tailored business suit and hop into your expensive BMW, on your way to one of the most prestigious law firms in your area. Then you wake up. It was only a dream. A dream that many in the United States wish to be true. A dream that many don't get to see, because they are unfortunately waking up on the floor of an apartment that they share with five people and rushing off to a job as a clerk at a supermarket. This is the typical life of 1.2 billion people worldwide—a life of poverty.

Poverty is an epidemic that many people are not aware of. To have less people ignorant to this very serious problem, the Campus Environment Team held their Poverty Awareness Meal, with all of the proceeds going to the Back Mountain Food Pantry, an organization that gathers food for the less-privileged families in the Lehman district.

Each of the three economic levels was represented at the meal, with all participants randomly picking out an “economic status” and eating food that corresponded with that level. The upper class was served their food, which was a meal of salad, pasta, tomato sauce, meatballs, and fruit juice. This was an indication of canned soda. Hunger was satisfied for most of these people, but there was nothing nutritious in this meal, for it was filled with nothing but sodium and sugars. The middle class represents 33% of the population, with some of these people teetering on the thin line between middle class and poverty.

The lower class, which accounts for roughly 42% of the population, had to make their own food: a meager meal of snack Ramen noodles and a very small bottle of water.

Seating arrangements at the meal also represented the different economic levels, with the upper class sitting at tables with padded chairs, the middle class sitting on chairs, and the lower class sitting on the floor. Some of the lower class participants sat on unpadded chairs, to represent the lower elderly population, who receive very little accommodations. Monologues were given by representatives of each economic class, describing their average day to day lives. The upper-class female described her family’s night out and their upcoming family vacation. The middle-class female spoke about her life as a stay-at-home mom and her husband’s job that was talking about layoffs. The lower class male spoke about:

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Penny Wars

Melissa Gunshannon

Sabotage, spare change, and whipped cream pies are not things commonly associated with each other, but for one week this past November, they never had more in common. From November 10-14, the Penn State Wilkes-Barre THON Committee hosted a Penny Wars competition between the clubs on campus. Each club chose a representative, and the THON Committee set up cans for each club/person, inviting the Penn State Wilkes-Barre community to “vote” on who they would like to see get a pie in the face.

Pennies counted for +1 point, while nickels counted for -5 points, dimes were -10 points, quarters were -25 points, etc. The strategy was simple: decide who you want to see take a pie to the face, and put silver coins and bills into their can; decide who you want to save, put pennies into their can.

At the end of the week, points were counted, and with a score of +919 points, Dave Gernhart, president of the Engineering Club, was named the winner. The Lion Ambassadors club, which also coincidentally has Gernhart for president, had the lowest score of the game, at -11,394 points. Thanks to a lot of sabotage and high donations from campus members, Gernhart had to pie himself.

When asked why he would want to pie himself, Gernhart explained that he figured it would be a selling point and that people might put more money in the jugs to see it happen. “I had some fun doing it—just seeing how people got into it,” Gernhart said. Gernhart was excited about the students’ enthusiasm not only to see him get pied, but also to contribute to THON through their donations.

According to Courtney Senghaas, Penn State Wilkes-Barre’s Overall THON Chair, a final total of $376.05 was raised through the Penny Wars competition. Senghaas said that...
Desiree Thorne

The holiday season is usually a time for baking cookies, decorating trees, and buying presents, but there is also something else very unique going on this holiday season. Despite the financial recession, there are uncounted charities taking place both on and off campus. In the community, there are the familiar Toys for Tots, Adopt a Family, and Salvation Army collections outside of stores. On campus, the Collegian is holding a very special charity for the local Head Start children. Collegian members have placed boxes in all of the major buildings on campus to collect children’s books for the Head Start center in Lehman. New and lightly-used books will be accepted and delivered to the children on Friday, December 12. Along with providing the books, Collegian members will offer an afternoon of story time for the pre-schoolers.

This will be the Collegian’s second consecutive year to help the Lehman Head Start center. Last year, the club delivered books to the children in December, and then in May donated T-shirts that read “Future Penn Stater”. Along with donating T-shirts at the end of the spring semester, members of the Collegian and the Nittany Lion spent an afternoon playing outdoor games with the children. We are continuing the same traditions this year, as they are much appreciated by the children and Head Start staff.

Free Fun Fridays

Reminding Students to Have Fun

Brieana Mitchell

College can be a stressful time for many students. Projects, exams, and papers to juggle between six classes can get pretty hectic. There’s no time for hanging out with friends, and even less time to go back home and spend time with family. Even though we all would like to have a stress-free college experience, there is no such luck.

Luckily for the students at Penn State Wilkes-Barre, we have Free Fun Fridays. This is a series of events held on Fridays by the Campus Environment Team, a committee whose goal is to bring the campus together with events and activities that promote diversity. CET is run by the campus activities coordinator, Jackie Warnick-Piatt, who says that the reason for Free Fun Fridays is “to remind people to have fun, relax a little, and to participate in an event for no particular reason—literally just for fun!”

In the past, Free Fun Fridays have given away items to all participants. For example, on Wear Orange Day, all participants who wore orange received a free orange. Other Free Fun Friday events are solely for the laughs. On High School Yearbook Day, students and staff brought in their yearbooks to share their senior pictures. This year, Free Fun Friday kicked off just before the Thanksgiving holiday, and the event was held in the new John R. Murphy Center to get the students acquainted with the new building. Rewards for participants included hot chocolate, cold apple cider, and cookies.

Free Fun Fridays will continue throughout the academic year; just watch the Blue Screen. With lots more work ahead and laughs coming perhaps less frequently, you’ll be glad you took the time to attend.

Lazzy Artists Return Music to Penn State Wilkes-Barre

Andrew Race

We can all remember earlier this semester when the Radio Club was no longer playing music in the Student Commons. The place was like a ghost town. For most of us who were used to the Radio Club’s entertainment in previous years, it was depressing. Well, another campus club, the Lazy Artist Surviving Society, decided to do something about it. When it was being debated whether or not the Radio Club should be disbanded, Lazy A.S.S. President Jeremy Burgess talked to the Student Government Association about taking over the Radio Club as a form of art. The idea was approved by the SGA, and the benefits can be heard all the way up by the Hayfield House. When asked about this accomplishment, Burgess said, “I’m excited right now. It’s huge to have the music going again! The music really adds an atmosphere to the campus. Since music has been going again, there has been more student life in the Commons area. Still, some problems exist that we need to overcome, but it’s a learning process. I’m looking forward to better serving the student population than it has been in the past. I’ve been working on incorporating more diversity as well as what the students really want to hear!”

You can hear every type of music imaginable, from rock and country to jazz and soul. The Lazy Artist Surviving Society has done a great job mainly due to the efforts of students Dave Buckley, Ted Carl, Austin Gardiner, and of course, Burgess. There are plans to create a committee out of the Lazy Artist Surviving Society to assist in running the Radio Club. Students interested in joining should contact Lazy A.S.S. Vice President Andrew Race (AJR293@PSU.EDU) or President Burgess (JDB426@PSU.EDU).

The Penn State Wilkes-Barre Collegian is not only available to all students on campus, it is also accessible by EVERYONE online at wb.psu.edu/collegian.htm.

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The article entitled “Who is Nurse Lucy Viera?” in the November issue of the Penn State Wilkes-Barre Collegian contained errors. Nurse Viera graduated from Wilkes University in 2004. Although she has been employed at Geisinger Wyoming Valley since 2000, she did not become a nurse until 2005. The Collegian apologizes for the errors.
Men's Basketball

Johnny Pazzaglia

The definition of rhythm is “movement or procedure with uniform or patterned recurrence of a beat”. What does rhythm have to do with basketball? Well, our Penn State Wilkes-Barre men's basketball team had a hard time getting on track this season, but the team members have developed a rhythm and are back to great play. The team has put itself at 3-3 overall and 1-1 in conference play thus far. Collin Coleman is the leading scorer for the men's team, averaging 14 points per game. Second in line for the scorers is Mike Ackey, with 12 points per game. Zach Cohen is leading the team in assists with 5 per game, and Malik Walker controls the boards with 5 rebounds per game. As a whole the team averages 66 points per game. The first half of the season is almost over and the team has four major league games left, and two Division II games left against Slippery Rock University and East Stroudsburg University.

Sometimes all a team needs is a little wake-up call to get into the swing of things. One thing that always motivates a team is the appearance of fans, and empty bleachers don’t help our team members play to their fullest. Come on PSU students, we’ve got to cheer for our team! There is a game on December 12 against Penn State Hazleton. We should set up a white out! The way I see it, the Athletics and Recreation Building should be shaking from all the craziness going on in there. Cheering fans can also be used as a scare tactic. If we are cheering and hollering and hooting, teams will be scared to show up at Penn State Wilkes-Barre, which ultimately means that they will have bad games because of the trembling. With your hands shaking, it’s hard to shoot a ball. I say we give it a shot—a shot at a white out. And that doesn’t mean that the usual five people show up to the game with white shirts; I’m asking that a large number of us go because the place can fit a lot of people, believe it or not. While you think about that, also keep in mind that the next couple games include:

- December 10, 2008- At PSU Brandywine 8:00 pm
- December 12, 2008- Home vs. PSU Hazleton (WHITE OUT) 8:00 pm
- December 20, 2008- At East Stroudsburg University 1:00 pm

A new season is almost upon us. Let’s get it started with the sport that everyone loves, and experience how our team members are doing.
The Hayfield House, the prized beginning of the Penn State Wilkes-Barre campus, most recently housed the campus registrar, financial aid, admissions, Student Support Services and numerous faculty and staff offices. However, long before it was part of Penn State Wilkes-Barre, it was the summer home of Mr. and Mrs. John N. Conyngham.

The tours and information packets provided by the campus are a bit vague on the history of the Conyngham family. Nevertheless, the couple continued to live there. Conyngham was born on September 13, 1865 in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. He attended Harry Hillman Academy, Johns Hopkins Preparatory School in New Haven, and the Sheffield Scientific School at Yale University.

Upon the completion of his schooling, John went to work with the Annora Coal Company as a secretary-treasurer and later became superintendent. He had several other jobs before pursuing his interest in the coal business with the West End Coal Company, Mocanaqua Coal Company, Buttonwood Coal Company, and Tioga Coal Company of New York. John was also president of Breton-Woods in New Hampshire and director of the Staples Coal and Stapels Transportation Company of Massachusetts, the Parrish Coal Company, and the Red Ash Coal Company of New York.

A very charitable and philanthropic man, John was president of United Charities and Luzerne County Humane Association as well as secretary-treasurer of the Wilkes-Barre General Hospital, trustee of Community Welfare Federation, and a member of the Wyoming Historical and Geological Society.

Bertha Robinson Conyngham was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John Robinson of New York. Her family’s wealth came from success in the banking industry. In fact, her family’s wealth was so extensive that she possessed nearly $10 million more than John and her family strongly disapproved of her marriage to him. Nevertheless, the couple married on April 18, 1895.

Bertha was a very secretive woman, as seemed to be the case with many individuals of such great wealth; thus not much is known about her, her history, or her family’s riches. Yet, like her husband, Bertha was interested in helping the community. In February of 1937, Bertha donated Conyngham Hall to the Bucknell University Junior College in Wilkes-Barre. Conyngham Hall and the former garage and stable served as classrooms for the Junior College.

Workforces Woes:
Staying Afloat in the Job Market during the Recession

The following article was submitted by Penn State Wilkes-Barre graduate and 2008 valedictorian Robert Winkler. Winkler is currently a software developer at Pepper Jam, a computer marketing company, and has offered to share his thoughts and advice with students looking to begin their careers in the midst of the current economic crisis.

Rob Winkler

America’s current economic woes have been the story for newscasters, journalists, and anyone and everyone with an opinion, statistic, or idea about what we’re wrong, how to fix it, and how long it’s going to take for the past few months. As the vast majority of us are economic laypeople, the mess of charts, graphs, and guesses are pretty hard to follow, and the sheer magnitude of the crisis and its implications for the workforce at large do not make understanding the situation any easier or help to mitigate our fears. As a recent graduate who is fortunate to have found a job in my field of study, I’ll do my best to shed some light on what it’s like working while all of this is going on, and give you some advice that will hopefully help you to navigate the crisis while the economy sorts itself out.

I can sum up the feeling the recession has brought upon myself and my peers in the workforce: uncertainty. While it is true that anyone at any time may lose their job for a number of reasons unrelated to their workplace performance or conduct, during an economic recession the number of people this happens to invariably rises. There isn’t much you can do to alleviate that feeling of ‘what if’ while going to work every day, and it only gets worse when people you know start to feel the crunch, being laid off for no reason other than that the company cannot afford to pay them. To the people who have lost their jobs, the problem is compounded because many companies simply cannot take on more employees and have to wait for the money to start flowing again before they start hiring. This is a tough spot to be in, and if you find yourself there it’s probably pretty hard to remain optimistic.

So, as a student who will be entering the workforce in a relatively short period of time, what can you do to make yourself more appealing to potential employers? Firstly, have a clear but flexible definition of what you want to do. You may not find something that fits your exact criteria right away, but you can’t apply for everything and it’s necessary to filter out the things that you definitely do not want to do. This is a big one, and I cannot stress this enough: do an internship while you are in college, even if your major doesn’t require one. Why? Because the places you want to work want to hire someone with experience, and one of the easiest ways to get that is to do an internship. Experience is not necessary to take an internship, and there is no better way to learn (for most, anyway) than to actually do the job in a real environment. Another benefit to doing an internship is that you will probably meet people in your field with whom you can network, and they will sometimes hire you after you graduate (as was the case with me). Trust me, doing an internship will pay off dividends in the future. Be sure to pay attention in your technical writing class, or ask someone who did to look over your resume, since that will be your first impression. Don’t send anything too flashy; resumes should be one page and should tell your prospective employers everything they need to know. You should also be prepared to take an entry-level job with an entry-level salary. You may be a college graduate, but it is likely that all the other people who applied are too, so set yourself apart with your work ethic and work your way into the higher-paying jobs, but don’t expect everything (or anything) to be handed to you.

Once you find a job, you will probably want to hold onto it for as long as it is beneficial to you. While this is not always possible, as your performance and conduct may have nothing to do with your being ‘let go’, there are some things you can do to try and make yourself more secure in your position. The obvious advice is to work hard, and it holds true; having a strong work ethic and letting your results speak for themselves is and always will be a good way to set yourself apart. Something you probably have not considered, though, is to be social, because doing good work will not get you noticed if no one knows who you are. You do not have to be the life of the party, but you should get to know your peers and superiors so that they can put a name and a face to your results. This is especially true in smaller companies in which the decision-makers are accustomed to looking at more than just num-

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Thursday, December 4, was a big day on campus, with end-of-the-semester activities hosted by both the Lazy Artist Surviving Society and the Student Government Association. Lazy A.S.S. held their second Open Mic event in the Student Commons over noon hour, offering poetry readings and music to the campus community. From 7:00 p.m. to 10:45 p.m. the SGA hosted a campus bonfire, with live music and free food for those in attendance.
Commuter Monologues:

Love at First Sight

Suheiry Feliciano

I remember it was autumn. The air was crisp. The sky was clear. I got the directions from an online website known for inaccurate directions. I was apprehensive, but looked forward to the rendezvous. The anxiety I felt made the drive feel eternal…oh, wait…it actually was eternal, because those directions took me through Dallas instead of down Hillside Road.

I drove onto University Drive, past the large stone building to my left that appeared to be a gymnasium, past a small building on my right, and straight to the visitor’s parking lot. I got out of my car, slung my backpack over my right shoulder, and looked around. A smile spread slowly across my face.

The vision before me was amazing. To my left the grounds stretched out to a small pond. The Penn State Wilkes-Barre Collegian

The Penn State Wilkes-Barre Hayfield House; a happy sight to see for the crafty commuter.

Before it was a little white gazebo. I imagined spending warm spring afternoons there, doing homework or reading a good book. To my right was the arboretum; it seemed every type of tree was represented. Tendrils arrayed in the majestic splendor of reds, oranges, and yellows stretched out towards the blue autumn sky, evoking in me feelings of awe. My smile grew wider and I shook my head. I wondered at the students that rushed past it without a second glance.

Directly ahead, I could see the work in progress that would soon be the grand stone (I was beginning to observe a pattern) and glass architecture of the Academic Commons. On my left I could see the wall surrounding a court, which served as a parking lot. It looked like something out of an old Hollywood movie. I could picture the gates opening as a chauffeured car pulled out, the lady of the house sitting in the back, on her way to town for a day of shopping. I finally reached the front of the Hayfield House and my jaw dropped. The great stone manor stretched out into an L on my left. A U-shaped brick path curved around the yard before the main entrance. Past it I could see more of the grounds, and I grew more and more impressed. In the opposite direction, I could see a path that led to more buildings. I just could not believe that this was a satellite campus. It was too beautiful.

I was in love. Sure, it was a superficial love, based on appearances—a type of infatuation. I didn’t even know what the inside of that enormous house looked like! And what if there was no substance in the English department, located on its second floor? What kind of relationship could we have? Would they be able to meet my academic needs and help me fulfill my long-term dreams of becoming a writer? Or would I just be giving my all, with no return? I couldn’t live in fear. I had to take a chance. And I did. Now I’m in it until the end….
**The Writers’ Cafe**

**Jeremy Burgess**

I look for open palms
As wide as grassy fields
That always bath in the sun
Where fingers delight to dance. Because...

I lose myself in glances
And fantasize about peoples paths;
Am always ready to take chances
And am fond of certain romances. Because...

I’ve been punched
Cursed at and belittled
By both playas and haters
And still find my feet. Because...

I enjoy Hemmingway’s tradition
By finding a bottle and a pen
And if gas was cheaper
I’d chase after Karowack. Because...

I like cliché phrases
Sometimes sneak in metaphors
And fish for similes in my brain
All this because I’m a poet.

**Black Coffee**

Jeremy Burgess

Black coffee heats a glass mug as I tightly grip the cup while spooning some sugar in. The cream, white and anxious, swirls with a stir of the spoon. There are many noticeable things about the world today—specifically how pretty the leaves look as they graciously blow in the breeze. I sat in a booth awaiting company, the restaurant was fancy and at the time of my arrival had been empty. Subconsciously poured my sorrows into this bitter cup because it seemed that happy memories had flown far from here but memories of love managed to stay, corrupting such a beautiful day.

What had I been taught about life and love? Where have my endless journeys subsided? They all come back on days like today—when inspirational love songs play on a restaurant radio, where I feel like I’m the only one there even though I am not. If the coffee is good then the food and conversation may be. Either way I’m alive, breathing polluted air, believing deceitful beings and burying all of my heroes. I’ve waited a lifetime for my words to mean something without realizing they already do and to me, the writer, they mean everything.

**Movie Review**

**Twilight: Epic or...Ehh?**

**Suheiry Feliciano**

Having read the Twilight series, I was thrilled yet apprehensive at the prospect of seeing the familiar story on the big screen. I did not expect the film version to be anything like the novel, which is romantic, suspenseful and, though not brilliant, a well-told story, reminiscent of Jane Austen. I expected to be disappointed, but I hoped to be pleasantly surprised.

I went with a friend who hasn’t read the novels. We spent about two-thirds of the film laughing hysterically. (I’d like to apologize to the girls sitting next to us who took this film way too seriously.) The expression on Edward’s face every time he kisses Bella is just absurd. But we also laughed because there was some intentional comedy.

The dialogue was contrived, and (sorry, Mr. Fisher) the characters were underdeveloped—even Edward and Bella, the main characters. The audience barely learns anything about the characters. They’re fictional characters, but they were so close to being caricatures that I was unable to suspend my disbelief.

The movie’s low budget was painfully evident in its cinematography. The vampires, who are meant to be flawless, beautiful, god-like creatures, looked just like pale, imperfect, average humans. In this aspect the make-up crew and the computer geeks could have borrowed from the Lord of the Ring film trilogy. There was even a point where you could see the edge of actor Robert Pattinson’s (Edward’s) contact lens.

The film had some redeeming qualities. Its portrayal of the drama of high school romance and the complicated nature of new relationships were spot on. Despite being an immortal vampire and a fragile human, Edward and Bella have a very realistic high school relationship (once you overlook the part about him being an immortal vampire, who can only die by being chopped into pieces and burned, and who would literally break her if he held her too tightly). One of my favorite scenes is when Edward brings Bella home to meet his family and it’s just as awkward as it would have been had they not been vampires.

There is a sports scene and a mandatory vampire fight scene, which could have been a bit longer, but are pretty cool and Something to look forward to for those loyal boyfriends dragged to see it. Overall, the film is average. Let’s hope the planned sequels redeem the film series.

**Top Ten Things to do while Watching the Super Bowl**

**Sarah Ferrier**

10. Make sure to sound proof your house so you don’t disturb your neighbors with the triumphant screams and the disappointed curses mixed with the new high definition surround sound – bought especially for the big game.

9. If you happen to have a friend over who fancies the other team make sure to make them sign a waver insuring you are not to be blamed if any harm comes to them.

8. Set up your biggest table with tons of various munchies to snack on, remember, it won’t last more than one period so have plenty of back up munchies to refill your arsenal.

7. Set up the “Tivo” to record the half time show; come on it’s the half time show, you know something’s gonna happen that MUST be reproduced on You tube.

6. Try to refrain from leaving the couch during the commercials; those pesky beer commercials will try and tempt you but you must resist!

5. Think really hard for an excuse to not go to work the next morning because you are going to have the worst case of heart burn ever; that and the day after should be considered a holiday.

4. DON’T reenact the commercials no matter how badass they look; CGI is an amazing thing and I don’t think your body can withstand such a ruthless game of rock paper scissors.

3. You have been practicing your end zone dance for weeks now, time to show off moves!

2. Just remember, it’s only a game; unless you bet a lot of money on your team, then it’s a game of life and death.

1. Even though you might be watching the big game at home with your friends, the big squishy finger is always a powerful thing to have.
The following is an update from former Penn State Wilkes-Barre student Sandra Kobos, who is currently studying in Prague for a full semester through New York University.

So here I am in my final few weeks. I have to be honest. I am extremely excited to be coming home. It is getting cold—too cold to do my favorite activity here, which is to simply walk. I have seen much of the city, but probably not enough. I feel as though I am not giving Prague the credit it deserves. It is beautiful and wonderful, but still it is time to come home.

I have learned a few things that might be helpful if you were ever to come here to visit. First, sometimes you have to pay to use a bathroom. The toilet paper sometimes may be outside of the stall. I honestly have no idea why. Next, you actually have to ask the waiters for your check. They will not simply hand it to you. If they give you bread or water or anything that you did not order, you will most likely be charged extra if you eat it. Always double-check your receipt. Also, tips are not required. Most people do at least leave a little, but never more than ten percent. I have also heard scary stories about cab drivers around here. In Prague, always call for a taxi from a reputable company, and do not get in one that is simply waiting on the side of the street. Finally, stores close a little earlier here, and some, especially non-chains, do not open on Sundays.

I visited Poland a few weeks ago to see family, and I have gone on a few NYU-sponsored trips around the Czech Republic. Overall, though, I have not escaped the city very often, like many of my fellow students. I do not resent that. I like wandering around Prague. It is cheaper than frequently leaving the city. I feel too rushed spending only two days in Germany; I don't feel as though I have a right to say that I've been there. Is it funny to say that even if I never experience Berlin, that's okay, because millions of others have?

So this is it. I loved it here. I do not regret coming in the least, but I am glad to be going back home. I did not exactly choose to come here, and sometimes that fact makes me angry, especially when I am already feeling down. It frightens me a bit that I am leaving and have no guarantee of ever coming back. But I would do it over again without a second thought.

Ahoj,
Sandra