

COMMUNIQUE

CHATHAM COLLEGE

OCT. 18, 2006

VOL. 63, ISSUE 1

PITTSBURGH, PA



LIMITED PARKING

Students complain about the lack of parking spots on campus.

Page 2



ICE HOCKEY

Chatham ice hockey team celebrates ten years of existence.

Page 7



SHADYSIDE SHOPPING

Find out about the best places to shop.

Page 6



The construction project will provide the students with a new conference center/lecture hall, cascading garden and a patio for possible outside performances. The majority of the project is funded by a gift from the Mellon Foundation.

Photo by Barbora Batokova

\$1.7 million construction underway

By Jenalee Schenk
Sports Editor

When returning students moved in at the end of August, the campus was different.

Over the summer work began to make some upgrades to the Mellon Center. There was once a swimming pool and bowling alley in the basement of the historic site.

"It has been closed down for three years since the Athletic and Fitness Center was built," said Vice President for Finance and Administration, Walter B. Fowler. "This huge space [is] not being utilized and Chatham is pretty space constrained," he added. Fowler said that the space is deteriorating and must be fixed anyway. Repairing it later would be more expensive.

The demolition showed deteriorating beams due to water leakage, which will be fixed and the edges will be waterproofed to prevent

future deterioration.

Improving accessibility for disabled students is also important, according to Fowler. The ground is being taken to a different grade so that it meets the standards of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

The space will be used as a conference center and lecture hall, and it will be about the same size of the Welker Room in the James Laughlin Music Hall.

The project will cost \$1.7 million. Most of it is funded through gifts to the college. The major gift comes from the Mellon Foundation and is an estimated \$1 million plus another supplement. Another major contributor is the McCune Foundation with \$250,000. The goal is to fund the project entirely from gifts.

As indicated by Fowler, a large amount will go towards the structural masonry repairs. "It's going to be expensive because it is so old. There

is a lot of stone work and a lot of brick work and it's just extremely expensive to do that," he said.

The architect of the project is Rothschild Doyno; Mosites Construction is the general contractor. Both firms were already involved in the Woodland Hall renovation last year and the Art and Design Center.

The pond will not be touched, according to Fowler. Significant trees in the area have been identified and will be saved. Those trees are the ones with barriers around them. None of the trees taken down were part of the arboretum.

A significant part of the construction plan is to retain the rare, imported Italian tiling that is on the ceiling and the walls on the inside. After construction began, three windows were discovered on the Chapel Hill side.

Continued on Page 2

PAT negotiations could take several more weeks, says Fowler

By Caitlin McCabe
Staff Writer

A buzz spread among Chatham College students on campus recently when an e-mail survey, sent by Walt Fowler, Vice President of Finance and Administration, revealed a possible plan to use Chatham student I.D. cards as a pass on Port Authority (PAT) busses.

Currently, Chatham students receive a ten-percent discount on a bus pass, which, according to the students, isn't enough, because even with the discount, the pass costs more than they are willing to pay.

"I guess the fact is that we're looking into changing how we deal

with PAT and it starts with more accessibility to the surrounding area for students," Fowler said.

"One thing we have done is have the Pitt (University of Pittsburgh) Shuttle run longer weekend hours," said Fowler. He added that the new bus program, exclusive to Chatham students, will host trips to sites around the city once a week so that students can explore the city via public transportation.

"Awesome! Amazing!" said Jennifer Herman, a sophomore, in response to the idea of better access to PAT busses.

"It's well needed and deserved. We pay enough to go here so we might as well have it," said Herman.

Continued on Page 3

Chatham implements SAT optional policy

By Alexandra Isaacs
Arts & Leisure Editor

The 2006 incoming class is the first to be exempt from having to take SAT tests, as Chatham joined the ranks of more than 700 colleges and universities across the nation in making ACT and SAT scores optional in November 2005.

"Diversity is important to Chatham. One of the reasons we added this policy is to give those students who fall in the lower socioeconomic scale a change to compete on the same level. In other words, those who can least afford things like SAT prep classes a chance to compete with those who can," said Michael Poll, vice president of admissions.

"This policy is not a mechanism for poor students to gain admission into Chatham. Rather, it is a policy for those who feel the SAT/ACT does not accurately reflect their ability," he added.

Continued on Page 2

Overnight guest policy violated in Laughlin House

By Barbora Batokova
Editor-in-Chief

On Sunday, Oct. 1 around 4:30 a.m., Lauren Merclean, Graduate Housing Director of Laughlin and Rea Houses, woke to find an unidentified man in her bedroom on the first floor of Laughlin House. All the facts suggest that the man was an overnight guest who was not signed in by the host. He was possibly looking for a bathroom and got confused.

When Merclean woke and saw the man standing half way in her bedroom, she asked what he was doing and then screamed and

cursed at him to get out. The man said "Wrong room!" and ran out.

Five to 10 minutes later, when Merclean composed herself and went to search the house (but not the individual rooms), he was nowhere to be found. She didn't call the campus police.

The following morning, Merclean checked whether there was an overnight male guest signed in by the residents, but didn't find an entry. She then filed a report with the campus police, seven or eight hours later.

"I should have called the police right away, and I know that, but I am a very internal person and

I need to process things on my own before I process them with other people," said Merclean in response why she hadn't called the police right away.

"I think it would have upset me more to go there [to the campus police] right away at 4:30 in the morning. I was really shaken up and outside of my comfort zone and I just wanted to be by myself," she added.

The incident is a two-fold, possibly, three-fold guest/visitation policy violation.

According to the student handbook available online at www.chatham.edu, all guests must be

signed in and out of the residence halls. Non-Chatham (including Chatham students who live off campus) guests must be escorted at all times by their host.

If the student who brought the man in was a freshman, the first-year visitation policy was violated also. First-year fall semester students cannot have overnight guests, male or female, until the evening of Fickes Egg nog, a tradition to be held on Dec. 1.

A mandatory meeting for Laughlin House residents was scheduled for 8 p.m. the same day to inform the students of the incident. Merclean at the meeting

urged the responsible student to come forward and accept the consequences of her actions, but none did.

Excerpts from the visitation/guest policy were read to the students to remind them of the rules and the campus police stressed the importance of locking the doors and encouraged the students to call the campus police immediately whenever "something doesn't seem right."

According to Bernie Merrick, director of Public Safety, the incident was not a criminal offence.

Continued on Page 3

Chatham enrolls the highest number of students

By Robyne L. Lee
Staff Writer

This year marks Chatham's highest student enrollment since the institution opened its doors in 1869. Undergraduate freshmen number 165, new transfer students 75 and new graduate students 305. These numbers include international students.

The enrollment peak results from the aggressive marketing strategies of Chatham's Admissions Department lead by Michael Poll, vice president for admissions. Poll came to Chatham from Belmont Abbey College in Charlotte, N.C.

Tara Viti, one of the five undergraduate counselors graduated from Chatham in 2005. In a recent interview, Viti emphasized the importance of teamwork in the department. "Our weekly meetings are formatted so that

everyone gives input. We go around the table and everyone has a say in what we are working on," said Viti. In addition to collaborating on various ideas, the staff reports on their individual projects.

Admissions counselors are assigned territories for recruitment. September and October are the peak traveling and marketing period. Viti has traveled as far as India to recruit for the college.

Many first-year students admit that they heard about Chatham at college fairs in and out of state. Many said they were impressed with the presentation of the school by recruiters and felt that it would be worth a visit.

Once on campus, the school sells itself. Candace Hall, a sophomore at Chatham admits that she was undecided until she saw the campus. "Once I saw the campus, I knew this was where I would go," she said. Hall said

she didn't have any regrets in her decision.

Dhea White, a freshman said she applied to two schools: Chatham and California University of Pennsylvania (CUP). White was accepted to both schools, but she never received anything more than generic mailings from CUP. On the other hand, White said that Chatham's admissions office called her and asked about her plans. She was undecided, but the personal phone call from Chatham Admissions Department swayed her decision. "I thought I had to wait another year, because it was kind of late, but the admissions office helped me with everything and it all worked out well."

According to Viti, what makes the admissions team so successful is the fact that they are recent college graduates and know what students look for in a college. She said their ability to relate to students is advantageous.

Laughlin House violation

Continued from Page 1

There was no victim. Merckle and the residents of Laughlin House remained unharmed.

Merckle said, "Hopefully, the person who let him in learned a significant lesson." At the meeting, she also said that she was glad the incident happened to her and not to a room with four first-year students in it.

Merrick, in response to the incident, said it was important for the students to lock their doors and to report any incident to the police immediately. He stressed that guests must be escorted at all times by the host and no one should let a stranger enter the building.

As of Oct. 6, when this issue went to print, campus police didn't have a suspect on the violation, but it did receive some tips from the students. None of them led to the identification of the student responsible.

Even though campus police can immediately pull out records on who and when enters a building, in this case, such information is not conclusive, because many Laughlin residents entered the building around the time the incident occurred. Merrick said the investigation is still open.

Public Safety sends out e-mails about safety-related issues on and off campus, but this time, no announcement to the Chatham community was made. "I want to make sure I don't scare anybody needlessly," said Merrick and explained that the incident was not of criminal nature.

Christine Ohl-Gigliotti, director of residence life, said if the student comes forward or the campus police identify her, the incident will go to the conduct board that will decide how to proceed. The most severe punishment the board can recommend is expulsion.

The conduct board consists of two students, who represent the class, and three faculty members. All conduct board members are chosen through election. Ohl-Gigliotti said the board is very fair and usually takes into account when the student is honest and admits the mistake.

Ohl-Gigliotti also stressed similar issues that Merrick pointed out: lock your doors, call the campus police and know the guest/visitation policy.

"We are not 100-percent safe, as much as you would like to be," said Ohl-Gigliotti. "Students need to hold each other accountable," she added. Merckle had a similar comment: "Our campus is as safe as we make it."

Students complain about limited parking on campus



Photo By Timothy Hall

Chatham College has 427 parking spaces, which, according to the students, is not enough.

By Robyne L. Lee
Staff Writer

"I'm always late to my classes because I can never find a parking space."

This complaint and many like it appear to be the school mantra this year. Many students who hold a parking permit complain about the limited amount of parking spaces on campus and speculate that Public Safety may have even oversold permits for this term.

"I guess I'm just irritated that I have to pay \$180 a year for a parking space that I'm not even guaranteed to get. I mean, I parked last year, and it was bad at times, but it was never this bad," said commuter Amanda Santmeyer.

On the other hand, Director of

Public Safety at Chatham College Bernie Merrick disagreed.

"There is parking on campus, on any weekday. I can go through Fickes lot between 9 and 10 a.m. and there are 20-some spaces available," said Merrick.

He said that the problem appears to be that many people are not aware of the Fickes parking lot (located behind Fickes Hall) or they prefer to park closer to the buildings their classes are in.

According to Merrick, Chatham campus has 427 parking spaces. "We do cut it close, but we watch we don't go over," he said in response to the suspected overselling of parking permits.

Public Safety has tried to make parking more accessible by hiring parking attendants in the library

lot. However, the attendants are under an agreement with the city and can only double park 40 cars. The attendants are in the lot Monday - Friday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Students were permitted to turn in their permit for a full refund up to the end of the add/drop period on Sept. 9. According to Merrick, only one student took advantage of the refund policy.

Merrick also pointed out that people parking illegally take up many spaces. In an effort to discourage illegal parking, Public Safety increased the cost of violations from a minimum of \$10 to a minimum of \$35, depending on the violation.

Merrick is also involved in the negotiations with Port Authority on the use of its buses at a discount

rate by Chatham students. No agreement has been reached yet.

"We are still looking at the rider numbers and what the service will cost the college as well as the students," said Merrick.

Merrick added that "many people don't realize that even though University of Pittsburgh and Carnegie Mellon University (CMU) students can use their I.D.s as a pass, they still pay for it in their tuition.

Merrick also pointed out that Chatham has one of the lowest rates for parking compared to other area campus rates. CMU, for example, has a different rate for each lot on their campus; their minimum rate is \$780 per year.

See related story "PAT negotiations"

Port Authority may raise fare on buses to \$2.50

By Jessica Morriston
Staff Writer

Within months, Pittsburghers may be paying some of the highest public transportation fares in North America. Because of a huge budget deficit, riders will be charged a flat fee of \$2.50 in Allegheny County, and \$3.50 in outlying counties.

There could also be major cuts in service. These changes will have a significant impact on bus riders, many of whom are Chatham students. During the school year, most Chatham students said they rode the bus at least once or twice a week. This number is significantly higher during the summer and winter, and for students living and working off campus.

"During the summer I take the bus almost everyday, at least once," said sophomore Tamara Nappi.

Currently, Chatham students are offered a small discount. After

7 p.m., they pay \$1 of the standard \$1.75 fare. Still, most Chatham students say even this fee puts a damper on their budgets. When the regular price increases, the discount rate is sure to follow. "That's a meal a day for me," said sophomore Cara Tuckfelt of the proposed price raise.

"If you make minimum wage, \$5.15 an hour, there's no way you're going to spend an hour's pay on your bus fare," added senior Sirena Enright.

Tuckfelt, who bikes during the warmer months, disagrees. "I'd freak out," she said. But during the winter when biking becomes difficult she said she'd probably have to take the bus regardless, because she has "no other choice."

Chatham students were more than willing to offer their own solutions to the predicament. "Elect some democrats," said Tuckfelt. Nappi suggested improving the city's taxi service, or lowering fares

to make public transportation more appealing. She mentioned Cleveland's RTA system as a model, because its many stations and a three-dollar all-day pass, make it a popular mode of transportation.

Enright suggested Port Authority spend its money more practically. "Stop spending money on the outside of the buses," she said. "Who cares what buses look like, as long as they run?"

Jessica Tudeck, a recent alumna of Chatham's graduate program, agrees. "Instead of spending money decorating the outside of the buses with famous people no one has ever heard of, they should sell more ads and put them there," she said. She also mentioned the lack of ads on the inside of the buses, noting that a good portion of interior billboard space is filled with ads for the Port Authority itself.

See related story "Port Authority negotiations" on Page 1.

**BUY YOUR
2006-07
YEARBOOK
NOW!**

Cornerstone Package:

Book & CD

PRICE:

\$15 until Nov. 1

\$25 Nov. 2 - Dec. 1

\$30 After Dec. 1

TO ORDER:

cornerstone@chatham.edu
Flee Kieselhorst ext. 1836

Checks are accepted.
Mail to Box #637.