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SASU, NYPIRG Prepare For Voting Rights Fight

By Howard Saltz

Students in many colleges throughout the state are preparing for what they hope is the final battle in their fight to obtain the right to vote where they attend school, as opposed to their parents' residences, the traditional voting place.

The suit was filed in United States district court in Albany last year, and the lawyers for the plaintiffs, the Students Association of the State Universities (SASU), a student advocacy group, and the New York Public Interest Research Group (NYPIRG), will be putting the case together for the rest of the summer, according to Kerry Barnett, NYPIRG regional coordinator in the Binghamton area.

District Court Judge Neal McCurn ruled last October that Albany County students were being "unduly discriminated against" by not being allowed to vote there, but did not make that decision binding throughout the state because there was not sufficient data on which to base the decision. Suits in Broome, Onondaga and Ulster counties based on McCurn's decision were won by students just before Election Day last year.

While the case is being prepared by lawyers, research is being concluded by NYPIRG groups throughout the state. Among those compiling

data to be used in the case this fall is the Stony Brook NYPIRG chapter. NYPIRG Project Coordinator Jim Leotta said that Stony Brook students have, in all cases, been prohibited from registering to vote if they have an on-campus address, while commuter students have been allowed.

"There's two sets of rules for two sets of people," Leotta said. "We feel registration laws should be uniform and affect everyone the same...It's [the present policy] a haphazard system that, in effect, denies some people the right to vote." When registering to vote, students are given a questionnaire—which Leotta said was itself objectionable—that asks personal information, including one's address. If a campus address is given, students are not allowed to register. Having students fill out the questionnaire was ruled illegal in Albany by McCurn last year.

Reasons that students should be allowed to vote where they attend school, Leotta said, are that they pay taxes, are governed by local laws, were counted in the census, which determines how much federal money an area gets and how much representation in Congress it is entitled to, and

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Statesman/Cathy Drayton

Lisa Ann Goldsmith as Gertrude and Richard Zimmer as the Count Jolimatre in "Fashion! Or Life in New York," a presentation of the Summer Theatre Playhouse at the Fine Arts Center. See page 5.

Living and Academic Conditions Improved

By Laura Craven

Many changes are taking place during the summer months to improve living as well as some academic conditions for the upcoming semester, according to Sanford Gerstel, assistant executive vice-president.

The Laboratory Office Building, which surrounds the Lecture Center on three sides, is being rehabilitated, Gerstel said, to convert space for the use of the Computer Science Department. Gerstel said the change will triple the amount of space the department has had in the past and will definitely alleviate some of the problem created by the increasing number of students wishing to enroll in computer science courses. Last semester, students could not register for computer science courses unless they were declared majors in the College of Engineering and Applied Sciences (CEAS) courses. The problem arose when the number of students registering for CEAS courses became greater than the staff and facilities could accommodate. University records show that the number of students declared as CEAS majors has doubled since 1977, and according to Marian Visich, associate dean of CEAS, their faculty had only increased by one.

Roaches

Another problem that often confronts students in the dormitories are those ever-persistent pests, the cockroaches. According to Gerstel, the vermins will be vivaciously attacked this summer.

"We've made a huge dent in the cockroach problem," Gerstel said. He cited complete fumigation of every closed dormitory as part of the process of eliminating the roaches.

"We've taken a very firm stand with the contracted exterminating company," he said. "He's doing more work on this campus than he's ever done before."

Gerstel said he cannot promise to rid the campus of all the roaches because "as long as people continue bringing food into the dorms there'll be roaches," but he was optimistic and said there will be no population explosion this summer.

Gerstel said that nearly 80 percent of the 12 proposals approved by the Student Development Committee, which allocated \$25,000 given by the university for the development of social/recreational areas has been completed. The 12 proposals under construction include recreation rooms, coffee shops, cafes, delis and improvements on existing social recreational areas in 12 of the dormitories.

Other improvements Gerstel cited are redoing the floors, ceilings and walls in Tabler Quad with the money for the project coming from SUNY Central Administration and the labor being provided by the Stony Brook Physical Plant. In addition, Gerstel said, the next phase of the dorm cooking Program, which includes installing additional dishwashers and sinks in some of the buildings in Roth, Tabler and Kelly quads, has begun. Also included is the repainting of "as many of the dorm rooms as we can get to [before the fall semester begins]."

Also in the construction stages are three kiosks - small permanent buildings comparable to those that house Fotomats throughout the country, which will be concession stands - in

South P-Lot, the Engineering Loop and near the Library.

Gerstel said most of the projects should be completed by the commencement of the fall semester, but others will continue right through it. He cited improvements in end hall lounges as a continuing project as well as the installation of a lot of retaining walls and curbs, which are exterior projects that will continue until the winter.

Awaiting Word

In addition, Gerstel said, he has heard nothing from the State Dormitory Authority regarding the \$1.5 to \$2 million Stony Brook was estimated to receive over the next five years to be used to refurbish the dormitories. The money is part of a \$15 million allocation by the State Dormitory Authority for SUNY Dormitories.



Statesman Photos: Mung Siew in
MEN WORKING in Tabler Quad where walls, floors and ceilings are being re-done and will be completed in time for students to move in for the fall semester.