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VOLUME XLIII, NUMBER 11

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 19, 2000

PUBLISHED TWICE WEEKLY

Showing Us the Money

Governor Pataki Gives
SUNY \$80 Million in
Proposed Budget

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Changes Made to Meal Plan

By KAT FULGIERI
Statesman Editor

In response to a high level of resident dissatisfaction, Chartwells has announced and implemented a series of changes to the spring 2000 meal plan.

The changes were finalized in early January, and Campus Dining Services is making several efforts to ensure that students will be informed of the changes as soon as possible.

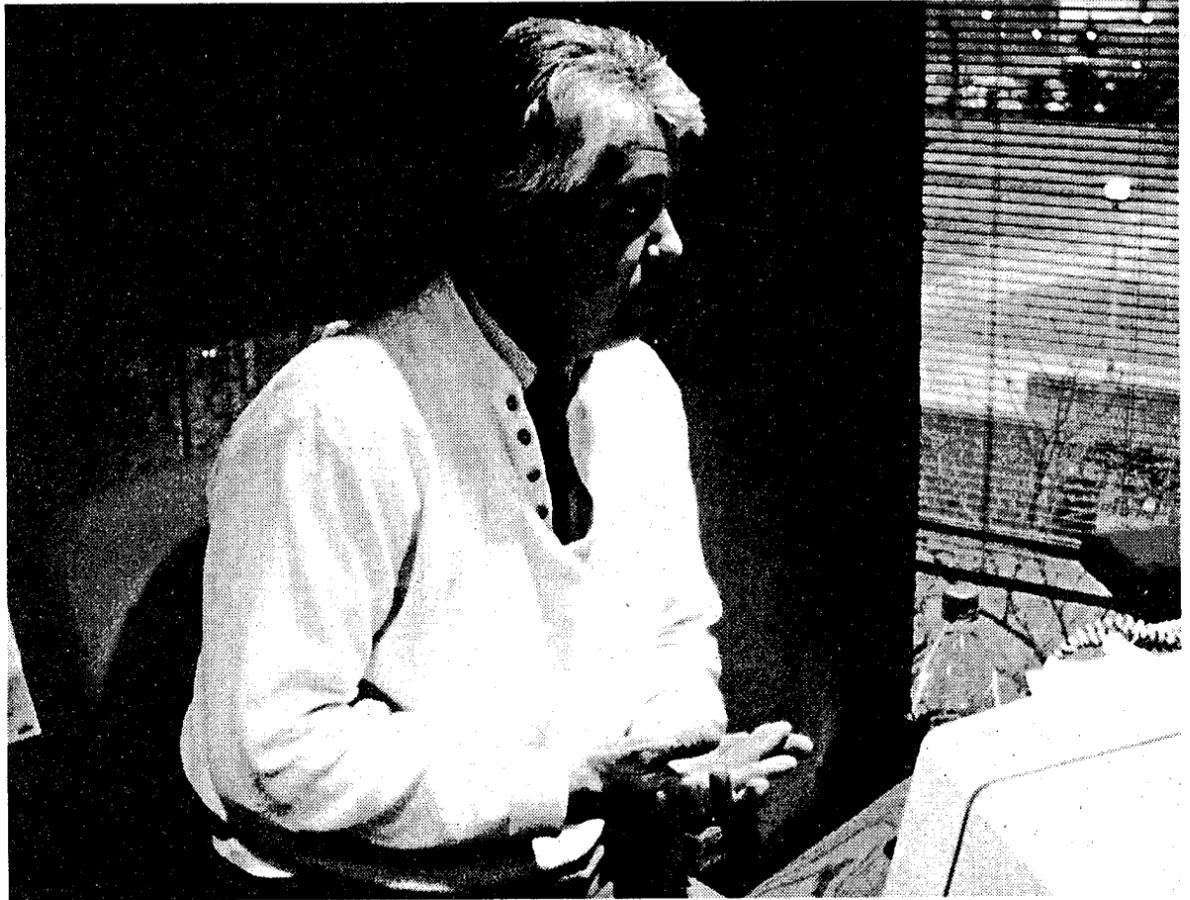
Dennis Lestrage, who serves as resident district manager with Campus Dining Services, is using several avenues of information to let students know about the meal plan changes. All residents will receive fliers in their mailboxes detailing the changes. In addition, Lestrage has arranged for a broadcast message regarding the meal plan to be sent through the phonemail system to all residents.

The meal plan for spring is only slightly different from last semester's plan. Under the new guidelines, the "Use It or Lose It" policy at the residence halls has been abandoned for a modified program. Campus Dining Services has introduced an altered version of the policy, which will only make students forfeit points if they spend under forty points in a two week period. Additionally, the Student Activities Center will be accepting meal cards on Wednesdays during campus lifetime.

The changes constitute the administration's response to the demands set forth at a Polity-sponsored rally that was held at the end of last semester.

Dissatisfied with the meal plan, the members of Student Polity presented a list of demands that called for the abandonment of the "Use it or Lose it" policy, a free midnight breakfast, an end to the division of resident and campus points, better prices and quality, and an end to the shutout of residents from the SAC during lunch time. Polity also called for the cessation of the operating fee that is charged to each student.

Ken Johnson, FSA business manager, explained that everyone is doing their best to keep the residents content. "This campus has very diverse needs as far as dining goes," Johnson said, "Some people work, some people go home, some people want to have breakfast early, or some don't want it at all." Johnson went on to explain that Stony Brook is among very few campuses in its attempt to provide all students with a satisfactory meal plan. Instead of operating on a system that counts the number of meals per week, Stony Brook offers



Ken Johnson of the FSA anticipates a positive campus reaction to changes in the meal plan.

Statesman/ Ruth Chung

a variety of dining facilities that are open 20 hours a day. This program is much more difficult to maintain, and it is less cost effective for Chartwells. The operating fee has been accessed merely to cover basic costs.

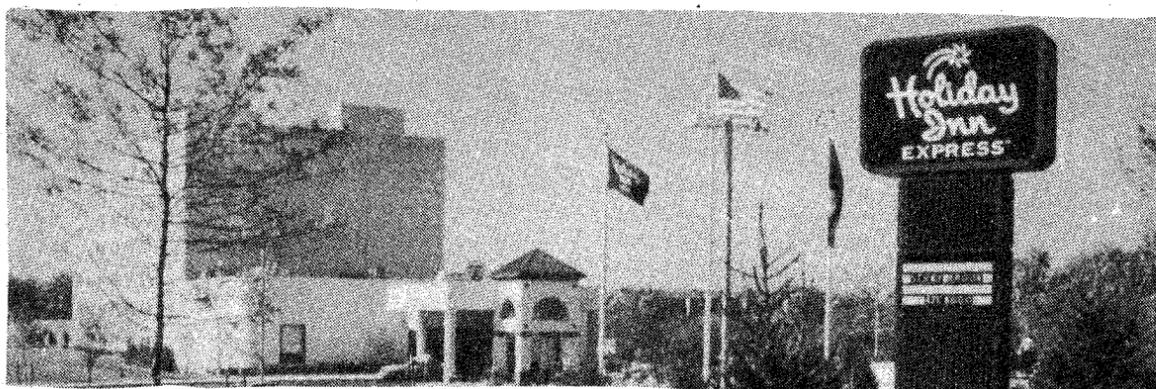
In response to questions on the pricing that many residents view as unacceptable, Lestrage offered several comparisons to local off-campus eateries that speak to the competitive nature of Stony Brook pricing. In terms of prepackaged goods, Lestrage also explained that Stony Brook does not get the same pricing structure as Edward's or Waldbaums, and the high prices charged for things like soda and cereal are a reflection of this.

Finally, on the issue of the SAC shutout, both Johnson and Lestrage cite safety concerns as the primary reason behind the shutout. "Five thousand people go through that activities center on any given day," Lestrage said, "It was

never a building meant to handle huge volumes of traffic." Johnson explained that too many people inside the SAC during peak areas would lead to a decline in ambiance and extra long waits.

Both Campus Dining Services and the Faculty Student Association have expressed their desire to keep the residents happy. Campus Dining Services has hired a new executive chef. Gary Adler, formerly of the Metropolis Restaurant, was brought on board in December. "He's going to bring a new dimension to the culinary aspect of campus dining," Lestrage said.

Both Johnson and Lestrage maintain that the best way to keep residents happy is to talk to them. Johnson expressed that students should be encouraged to talk to dining managers and administrators. "All managers are available to review questions and comments," he said.



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A Thought
From
Rabbi Adam



By now everyone is back. Probably still settling in, but ready to go. Looking forward to a new semester, new classes, new friends and new experiences. It is a renewal of sorts. An opportunity to start from scratch. To begin all over again.

The beginning of this year's spring semester coincides with TuB'shvat (Sat. 1/22), the Jewish Rosh Hashanah for the trees. A renewal. An opportunity to start from scratch. To begin all over again.

The trees shed all their leaves this past fall. Stopped their growth. Left behind what they had accomplished the summer before. In the Land of Israel, it is during the winter, the Mediterranean rainy season, that the tree becomes introspective. Instead of spreading its branches out, it is absorbing the rains inwardly. Only to grow once again. The first inklings of budding is marked by TuB'shvat, the new year for the trees.

So it is true by us, as we at Stony Brook realize TuB'shvat in our academic life. After a break from our studies, we, in a way, stopped our growth. We put the fall semester behind us. Instead of branching out we became inwardly oriented. Instead of achieving, we took time for ourselves. Only to grow once again.

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A Budget Increase for SUNY³

By JENNIFER KESTER
Statesman Editor

Gov. George Pataki, known for slashing funding of New York public universities, seems to have changed his tune as he announced a proposal which would increase SUNY's budget by \$80 million.

The 10 percent increase, the largest to be proposed in an executive budget, is part of a package proposal that Pataki released last week.

The proposal includes a 7.3 percent increase for SUNY community colleges, a 13.1 percent increase for schools in the City University of New York system, and a 6.2 percent increase for CUNY community colleges.

The proposal also calls for a decrease of \$40 million for New York's Tuition Assistance Program since this year's students are less in need. In addition, it proposes to freeze undergraduate tuition rates at CUNY and SUNY.

"It's one of the better budgets we've seen in years," said Todd Stebbins, the New York Public Interest Research Group coordinator at Stony Brook. "But much work needs to be done to restore cuts from the past,

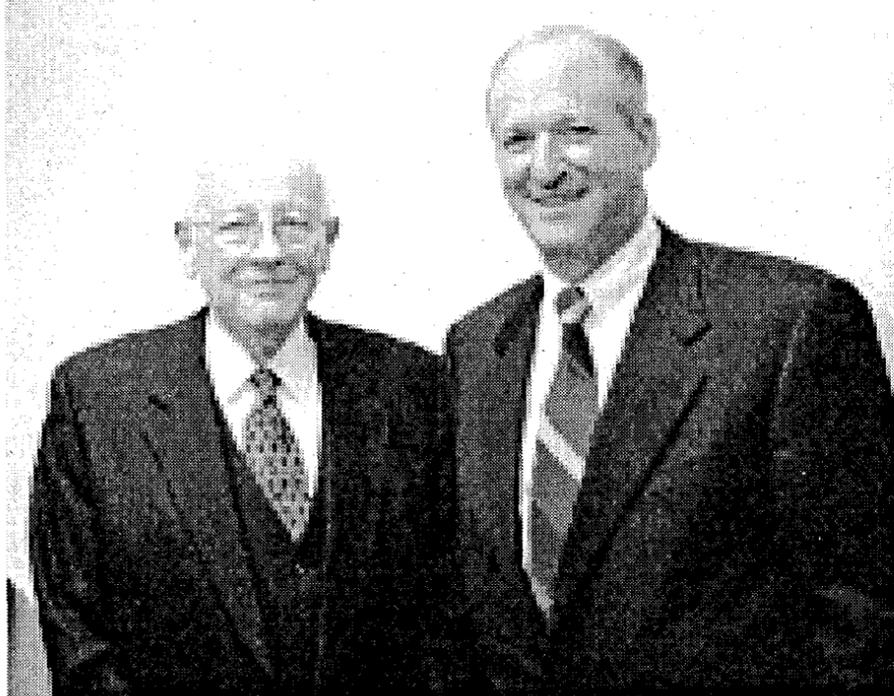
there needs to be a rollback in tuition."

"With the surplus in the budget they should put it back to where they cut it - higher education," Stebbins said.

Although Thomas Egan, chair of the SUNY board of trustees, called the budget "a tribute to the leadership of Governor Pataki and a rousing vote of confidence in our new chancellor, Bob King," many are questioning the governor's sudden generosity. Pataki, a Republican, cut last year's budget by \$28 million. Some attribute the increase to Pataki's relationship with Robert L. King, the newly appointed SUNY chancellor, who also served as Pataki's former budget director.

"This represents a clear commitment by Governor Pataki to help us build a durable new financial foundation for the State University," King said in a press release. "It is a huge boost for the State University as we work with our campuses to deliver continuous improvements in the quality of the education they offer students."

The money allocated for SUNY includes \$56 million for salary increases and \$24 million to be distributed to campuses based on its figures in enrollment growth, research



Courtesy of SUNY

Former Chancellor Ryan and newly appointed Chancellor Robert King.

and academic quality.

As the budget grows, so has both enrollment figures and research activities at SUNY schools. Egan said that this year, the freshman class at SUNY schools was the highest it has been in a decade. In addition, of all the graduates of New York high schools,

40 percent are choosing SUNY to continue their education.

The increase in funding comes at a time where all in the legislature are up for reelection. It is also a time when King's qualifications are coming into question, since he does not have any experience in academia.

SUNY Chancellors Don't Come Cheap

How much does it cost to find a qualified person to run the State University of New York?

About \$27,000 a block, apparently.

That's what a Los Angeles consulting firm wants, \$108,667 in all, for helping SUNY run a national search to find its new chancellor, documents obtained by The Associated Press show.

That search ended with last month's hiring of former Pataki state Budget Director Robert King, who worked four blocks away from SUNY's central administration building the entire time.

Such a payment to management firm Korn/Ferry International makes no sense, especially when SUNY already is having money problems, Assembly Majority Leader Michael Bragman of Onondaga County said.

"We all know that Bob King has always had the inside track for this job and such a huge payment to an outside consultant is outrageous," Bragman said. "As far as I know ... I think there was only one other candidate besides Bob King. I question if a national search was necessary to identify a candidate from within our state government who works just a few blocks away."

"It should have only taken a quarter, one call," said Assemblyman Alexander Grannis, D-Manhattan.

The SUNY system is controlled by Gov. George Pataki through his appointments to the SUNY Board of Trustees.

A trustees' search committee unanimously recommended King - a former prosecutor, colleague of Pataki's in the Legislature and bureaucrat in Pataki's administration - to be chancellor over Stanley Koplick, chancellor of the Massachusetts state university system.

Koplick died Jan. 3, two days after King officially started as SUNY chancellor.

King's hiring in December culminated a long search which began in January 1999 when former SUNY Chancellor John Ryan said he wanted to retire. Korn/Ferry was hired in July.

SUNY spokesman Jon Sorensen said King was not

preordained to be chancellor because of his relationship with the Republican governor.

"He went through the process like everyone else," he said. Sorensen also said Korn/Ferry deserves its money because it did a true national search.

"They put together quite a long roster of people, many of whom were interviewed and explored," he said. "They presented a list of traditional and nontraditional candidates and it's wrong to accuse these people of not working hard because they did. They earned their money with a lot of time and the result of this search turned out well."

Sorensen said six candidates were interviewed for the chancellor's job.

Korn/Ferry hasn't been paid yet because state Comptroller H. Carl McCall has yet to approve the firm's contract with SUNY.

"We have the contract, it's under review and we have questions we have asked the state university," McCall spokesman Dennis Tompkins said. "We have some procedural

and some substantive questions."

Tompkins would not say what questions the comptroller, who is also a Democrat, has about the contract. SUNY cannot pay Korn/Ferry until the comptroller approves the contract.

Sorensen said one question that SUNY is refusing to answer is who the other four finalists for chancellor were. "We insured our finalists privacy because they have jobs in higher education that could be jeopardized," he said. "We find it highly irregular and inappropriate. We made commitments to these finalists."

A call to Korn/Ferry's offices in New York City was not immediately returned Thursday.

Assembly Democrats have complained about the university system hiring high-priced consultants while it has this money problem. For example, SUNY is paying nationally-recognized health care consulting firm PricewaterhouseCoopers \$1.1 million to investigate SUNY's teaching hospital finances and recommend ways to make the hospitals fiscally viable. AP

The Y2K Bug that Never Bit

By JULIE MINGIONE
Statesman Editor

Stony Brook University has settled into the rhythm of Y2K with seemingly minimal difficulties. Optimistic from the beginning, USB always considered itself well prepared for the uncertainties Y2K could have caused.

Optimistic from the start, Philip Doesschate, Director of Information Systems, Division of Information Technology at Stony Brook said simple, "I don't really expect anything big."

Systems that were the main cause for

concern were those containing financial aid records, student registration records, personnel-payroll, and student grades. The problems that could have occurred included a loss of heat and water, as well as disruptions to email, dial-in services, and administrative systems.

Precautions were taken, and the systems were shut down at noon on New Years Eve to, "...perform a full back-up of the software and data files on the system," according to Richard

Continued on page 7



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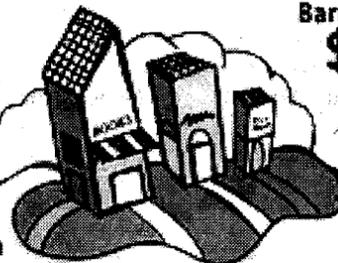
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The Bookstore Alternative

By JULIE MINGIONE
Statesman Editor

A new website run by Stony Brook University students is seeking to change the way college students buy and sell textbooks.

The site, Schoolbooks.org, allows students to easily and quickly purchase or post books for sale.

A young website, Schoolbooks.org was launched on December 1, 1999 by Jason von Bartheld, a senior computer science major at Stony Brook. The idea to build a website had been with von Bartheld since his freshman year, but it took until now to learn all the information necessary to start a functioning site. He gained the knowledge and inspiration for the site while working as an intern at the Long Island web company, Millennium Communications.

The site is designed to be relatively easy to use and hassle-free. Says Von Bartheld, "There are no sign up forms or fees and students can go directly to the sale page." Von Bartheld, along with his two partners; Dawn Leach, a recent Stony Brook graduate and Chun Lee, a Stony Brook graduate and Computer Associates employee; operates the site. When asked why they chose to design a site dedicated to the resale of textbooks, Leach spoke of the demand from students to get the most money for their used books. "There is a huge need for a site like this. The bookstore is not giving students the right amount of money. This is an easy way for students to exchange."

"The less steps involved, the better for students," von Bartheld said.

The process begins when an interested student connects to the site. It takes a series of three steps in order to sell a book. Two are needed to buy books. If selling, the student is taken to a short form to fill out. Required is the book's information such as title, author,

edition, class for which it was used, the sellers asking price and any notes or special information about the book. After completing this short process, the book is posted on the site and that student will be contacted via e-mail when someone is interested in buying their book.

When a buyer is interested in purchasing a book, they must fill out a contact form. And for those concerned with their privacy, e-mail addresses are not made public. "In order to make sure that students' information is protected, e mail addresses of book sellers are not shown anywhere on the website," von Bartheld said. When the potential buyer fills out the contact sheet, Schoolbooks.org e-mails the information to the seller without revealing the seller's e-mail address. "Only Schoolbooks.org has their e mail address," he said.

If a student is interested in buying a book from the site, they can conduct a search using keywords such as "U.S. History" or "calculus" and have the ability to make their search as narrow as possible.

Schoolbooks.org is not listed on search engines yet, as von Bartheld, Leach, and Lee seek to perfect their site. The site is operating only with students from Stony Brook University, but von Bartheld estimates that within a few weeks time the site will be listed on search engines. The website is organized around each individual campus, as everyone on the site has a different IP (Internet provider) address for their computer, and each campus has a predictable range of identifications. "Schoolbooks.org uses that address to determine which campus a user is from in most cases. This cuts down on the amount of steps it takes to buy or sell a book," according to von Bartheld.

Leach, Lee, and von Bartheld hope to expand the number of campuses their site serves. They first plan to contact and inform colleges and universities in New York

State about their site, and eventually aspire to span the nation as well as the globe. "We hope to reach anyone interested in getting this site on their campus," said von Bartheld.

When asked whether she had ever bought or sold textbooks on the web before, sophomore Irene Wu said "No. Even though I could probably get more money for them, it seems like a hassle."

Von Bartheld anticipated reactions of this nature and assures all students that Schoolbooks.org is, "As easy as possible." He went on to say that, "Some people make their sites harder than they have to be, but (Schoolbooks.org) has no sign up forms, no fees or other nonsense." He asserts that on his site, the prices "usually beat the prices of the bookstore."

TIPS FOR A BETTER TRIP TO SCHOOLBOOKS.ORG:

Make sure your e mail address is accurate. A common error when posting or buying books is typos in the e mail address. For example, many people type john@ic.sunysb.edu instead of john@ic.sunysb.edu. If buying books, this means that unless the seller realizes your mistake and fixes it, you will not hear anything back about your request to buy the book. However, sellers can edit their e mail addresses and other post information at any time by getting their "session ID" from the confirmation email that is sent to them when they post their books and by clicking on the big yellow EDIT on the navigation bar on the left side of the screen.

Make sure your ISBN is accurate. ISBNs uniquely identify books. Two books may be identical in title and author, but different in edition. These two books will have different ISBNs. This is why many people searching for books use ISBNs first. They know that this is the quickest way to find the exact book they are looking for.

Check your email frequently. Some people use secondary email addresses when posting books and don't check them often enough. People buying books usually will only wait a day or two for a reply before assuming that the book has already been sold and moving on.

Post books early and have them stay hidden until the day you want them to start. Some people know they are going to sell their books but aren't ready to do it until the end of their current semester, or their next one has begun. These people often set the start date of their book to some day in the future. When this is done, their book's start date, title and ISBN show up in buyer's searches, but the book's details and contact form is hidden until the start date has arrived. This lets buyers know that the book is going to be sold some time in the near future and also lets them know when to stop back and request it from the seller.

More campuses coming. Soon, we are going to list ourselves in the search engines and start encouraging other campuses to post their books. This means that more books will be in the database and the chances of students finding their books will increase greatly.

Found a bug? Let us know. Unlike programming for operating systems such as Unix or Windows, web programmers can never be sure what type of software (or web browser) will be running their application. There are many different versions of many different browsers and this makes the debugging process very difficult. But unlike programmers on operating systems, web programmers benefit greatly by being able to get feedback instantly from users who report bugs. So help us make this application flawless. If you find a bug, let us know by clicking the CONTACT US link at the bottom of any page and give us a description of what you found.

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Editorials

Taking A Chance

Roll out the royal red carpet, because Robert L. King has been crowned the new chancellor of the SUNY system, replacing John Ryan, who retired in January.

The search committee, which included Stony Brook's own President Kenny, agreed unanimously to have King step up to the throne, showing that they are worthy of the respect of court jesters and not trustees. In his new position, King will wield a mighty scepter and his kingdom is quite vast. As SUNY chancellor, he will reign over a system that is responsible for the education of 250,000 students. Ironically, that figure is the exact amount King will see on his year-end paycheck. That's a dollar per student. Not too bad for a man that has zero, zilch, no experience in the complex world of professional academics. His appointment is as absurd as commercials that try to sell products from people that are not doctors, but play ones on TV. King is not an educator, nor has he ever played one on TV but he might have heard of SUNY. Would you trust this man?

King has no Ph.D. He has never stood up in front of a class to teach. He has never seen a student struggle in class or held

office hours to offer help. But he is now in charge of the largest university system in the country. How can he have even a hunch as to the inner workings of a university system?

For all of those that may have forgotten, (this means you Pataki and trustees) the word "university" should be equated with "education," not politics. Under King's leadership, education is winding its way down into the foreign policy sect of the state government. So why has King been selected?

Probably because money talks and King can count it. Maybe he doesn't know his ABC's but he surely knows his 1-2-3's. He comes to us as former budget director of Governor Pataki, a politician who has shown time and again that his loyalties lie no where near classrooms and campuses.

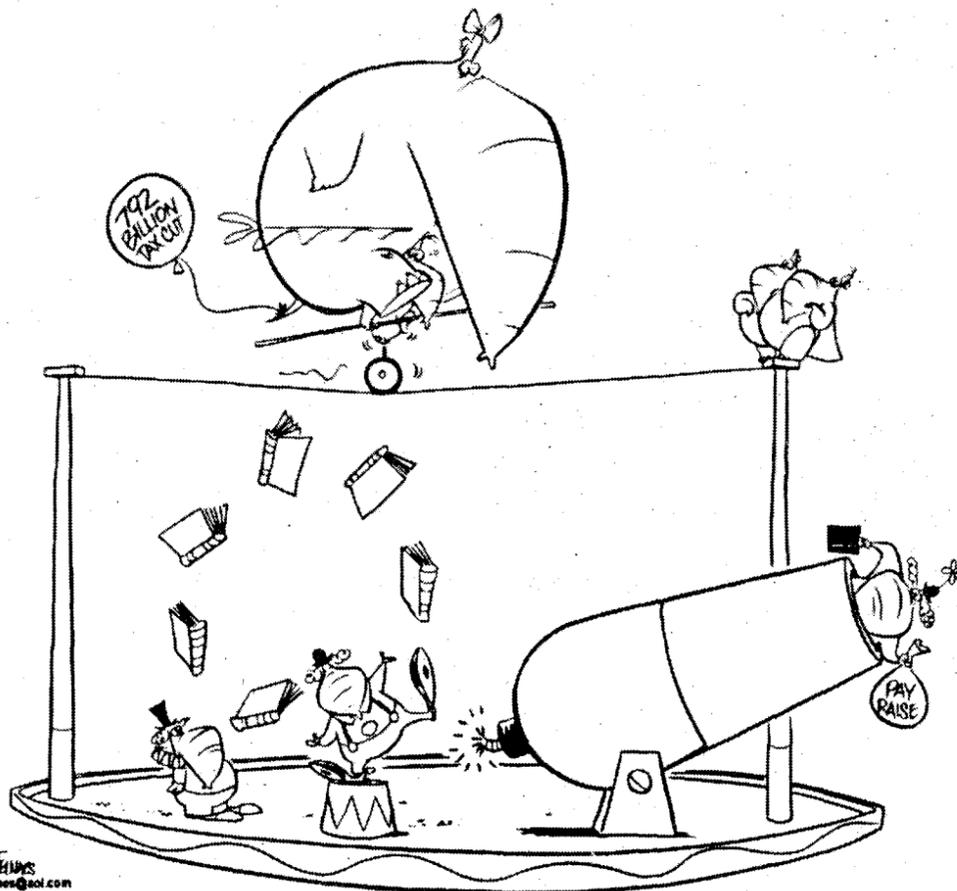
But hey, what's not having a Ph.D. among friends, right? After all, King reassures us that "not having a long career in academia" won't be an "impediment" to his new job. Perhaps, but having no career in academia will. He went on to say that his knowledge of the government will be helpful as will his experience overseeing a big budget. But that big budget

has done little to support SUNY. And budgets are not living breathing humans trying to squeeze a degree out of a system that continuously squeezes pockets.

This isn't the first time that the SUNY system has shifted its focus from academics to politics but it has never been quite so blatant.. King is no more than a politician with a politician's agenda. He claims to be willing to wrestle a bit with his good buddy Pataki to advocate for SUNY. Can you see it? Discussing tuition increases and renovation programs over a beer, Bobby refilling Georgie's glass when he isn't looking just to get him to agree to give some more.

But judging by Pataki's recent actions, it looks King may have gotten Pataki drunk just in time for his budget proposal which for once has kept SUNY off the cutting room floor. In sharp contrast to last year's budget which left SUNY \$28 million poorer, this year offers us \$80 million or a 10% increase. Hmmmm, why so generous? Could it be because he'll be helping a friend?

Maybe it will be beneficial to have King. Maybe we can finally get out of the peasantry.



THE BUDGET CIRCUS

A Sneak Peek at Staller

By KAT FULGIERI
Statesman Editor

The start of a new semester comes with a new listing of events at the Staller Center. The Winter/Spring seasons offer a wide variety of fine arts performances to the Stony Brook community.

Kicking off the season's events is a performance by the Martha Graham Dance Company on January 23rd at 3 p.m. On a tour featuring ballets choreographed by the influential Martha Graham, the dancers will perform selections from *Appalachian Spring*, *Errand in the Maze*, and *But Not for Me: Gershwin Graham*.

The following week will focus on the auditory senses when the Carnegie Hall Jazz Band arrives on January 29th at 8p.m, directed by Jon Faddis. The show will be a celebration of the jazz tradition, paying specific tribute to the jazz greats, with attention given to new trends and styles in the genre.

Returning to the Staller Center stage on February 5th at 8 p.m. is the ten member a cappella choir Ladysmith Black Mambazo. Following up a sold out show in 1997, and led by composer/founder Joseph Shabalala, the group has been the recipient of ten Grammy awards, and enjoys the distinction of being Africa's number one selling group. The choir is renowned for being a stellar testament to the beauty and power of African music.

Making their Long Island debut at the Staller Center on February 20th at 7 p.m. are the members of the West African drummers. Revered as the world's number one percussion orchestra, and led by director Doudou N'Diaye Rose, the drummers combine their talents and sense of rhythm to achieve their amazing musical songs and sounds. The group has played at Shea Stadium, as

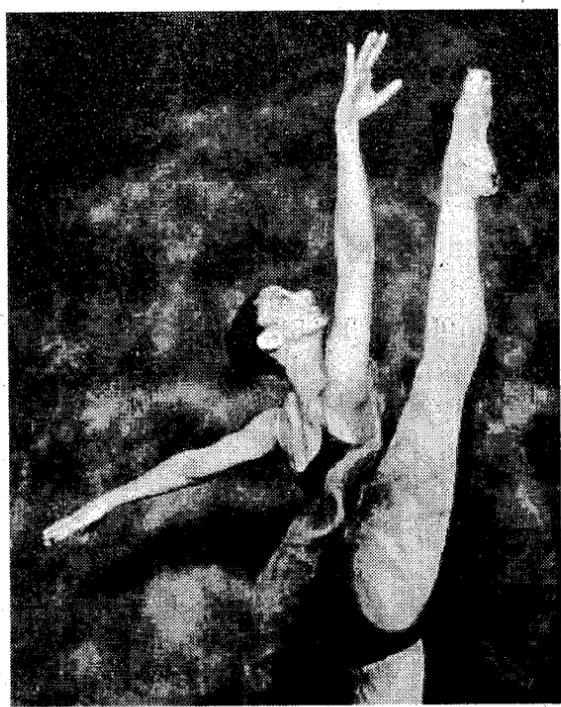
an opening act for the Rolling Stones. The night promises to be an enjoyable and incredible one.

Moving away from the African musical tradition, on March 2nd, Stony Brook will be privileged to here the sounds of The Danish National Radio Symphony Orchestra. The orchestra will stop at the Staller Center on their way to Carnegie Hall, featuring American violinist Pamela Frank. Founded in 1925, the group has established a national touring presence, and has also achieved great success throughout Denmark.

At 8 p.m. on April 1st, an appropriate event will take place in honor of April Fool's Day. Sponsored by the *Long Island Voice*, Les Ballets Trockadero De Monte Carlo, an all-male comic ballet company, offers a parody of traditional ballet that will be enjoyable for anyone, regardless of their experience with the ins and outs of the dance world. The group is well-known for the satirization of classical works, including *Swan Lake* and *Giselle*. Performances by the "Trocks" have been commended by various publications.

The Dance Theater of Harlem will be appearing on April 29th, but do not rush to buy tickets, because the performance is sold out. For those attending, the show is greatly anticipated one that promises to be entertaining and breathtaking, as the performances of the group are highly publicized and always well-received.

Another sold out show is a concert that will take place on Saturday, May 13th. Broadway star Patti Lupone, the woman who defined the role of Evita, will perform a variety of selections from musical theater on the Staller Center stage. Lupone is a seasoned and talented showstopper, and the evening will be a treat for those lucky enough to have tickets.



Courtesy of Stallercenter.com

The Dance Theater of Harlem will perform to a sold out audience.

Tickets to Staller Center events are available through the box office at (631) 632-ARTS, or online at www.stallercenter.com. Prices for shows vary, and discounts are available for children, seniors, and SBU

Y2-Okay

Continued from page 3

Reeder, Chief Information Office and Director of the Division of Information Technology.

There was minimal external help in handling the Y2K preparations at Stony Brook. Most of the work was handled by the DoIT team and other on-campus technical support.

"There were two transition teams, one for East Campus and one for West Campus...Each of these were charged with preparing their respective areas for Y2K and for providing staffing during the transition period."

What technicians such as Reeder sought to prevent was the likelihood of the computer to confuse the date 00 as 1900, not 2000. If that occurred, calculations concerning the date and time would be inaccurate, and data sorts that organized by year could be wrong. This would affect calculations in databases and spreadsheets. Critical systems and applications would have malfunctioned.

The good fortune bestowed upon Stony Brook's computers could be attributed to Stony Brook's Research Foundation. The Foundation is responsible for receiving and

allocating approximately \$500 million in grants and donations for university research. The Research Foundation would have many angry donators to answer to if their money was missing due to a Y2K related difficulty. Scientific equipment and other systems that are date sensitive on campus were prepared for the year 2000 by The Foundation to ensure that all would run smoothly for the University upon Y2K.

When the year 2000 dawned, there were approximately 40 workers on campus. The few hours before and after midnight saw the gathering of these technicians in the Emergency Operations Center (EOP), "...to monitor the activity of various campus functions such as electricity, heat, networks, and numerous computer systems," according to Reeder.

When asked if he minded missing a conventional New Years Eve celebration, Reeder replied simply, "After a long period of preparation for the Y2K event, having nothing bad happen was enough of a celebration for me."

Statesman Editor Erin Rosenking contributed to this article.

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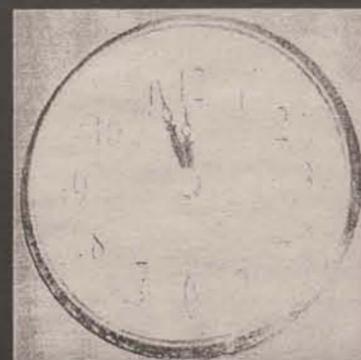
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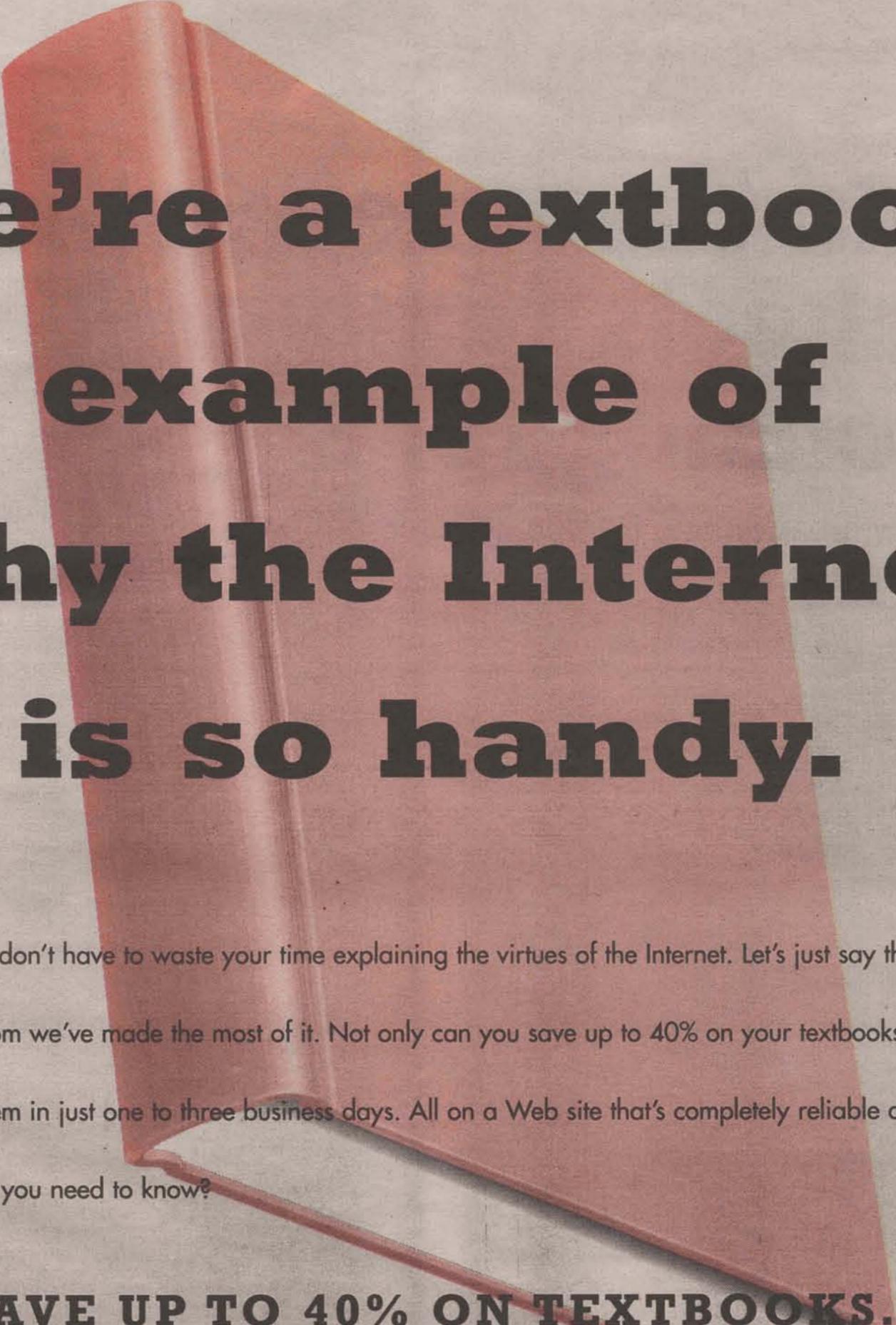
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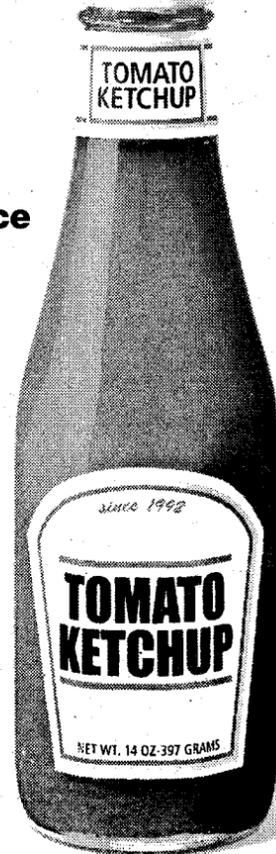
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Tell Me About It

By Carolyn Hax

Carolyn:

I have a friend who recently moved here. The problem? She's so, so cheap. She was this way in college; always sponging pizza or leftover Chinese food off us, and we were too nice to eat in front of her without offering her any. Now, most of us are in grad school or just graduated. She's the only one of us with a full-time job, but she's still reluctant to put in her share. She complains about the cost of

everything; it's almost her only topic of conversation! We are sick of her. I am so tempted to just dump her as a friend, but I feel bad. She has few other friends, small wonder. Should I give up, or is there a nice way of telling her how bored we are of money money money?

—Washington

There are mercy killings, so why not mercy insultings? "You are boring, obnoxious and cheap." Though that's more mallet-to-the-head than mercy killing, I suppose. Go ahead, find the nicest way you can put it. Just tell her, please, that there's nothing appealing, interesting or warm about harping on money. It's like a toothful of spinach—she really ought to know about it. Besides, if the alternative is ditching her entirely, neither of you has much to lose.

Dear Carolyn:

My sister and I are close in age and also very good friends. She is a brilliant neurosurgeon. I enjoy moderate success in my own career. The problem does not exist between my sister and me but rather in people's assumptions of how I must feel as the average sister of a talented brain surgeon. From childhood to present, I've been disappointed by teachers and friends who compare us and ask me questions like, "So what happened to you?" As a result, I am losing my desire to get to know people on any meaningful level and fear that any new people I meet will become so fascinated with my sister that I'll just sort of ... fade into the background. I've always been very driven to succeed but I'm starting to question the point of it all.

—L.

If all the bright people were brain surgeons, where would the rest of us hide? I could get into the risks of seeking happiness by comparison, but you're your

own tutorial on that. I'll also leave the "point of it all" unexplored, since we all know there isn't one, and an exegesis on that hardly seems the way to cheer you up. So let's talk movies.

(Settle in for a long one, guys.)

(Come on, I don't do it often.)

Ever seen a little 1993 sapfest called "Rudy"? Or the inescapable "It's a Wonderful Life"? Just caught both of these again, and was reminded of what should be a psychic staple: That winning is, pardon the pun, relative. Oh sure, cross the finish line first and you win. But that's so... linear.

Try picking the winner here: the jock who comes in first; the folksy equipment manager at Massive State U. who persuaded said homesick jock not to drop out of the program; the nonjock who finished last and was damn happy to finish; the entrepreneur grossing billions off everybody's footwear; the spectator inspired by it all, including the shoe ad. Well?

Here's a better one: The people who fall out of bed, take a shower, dress badly, eat their responsible bowl of bran, catch the bus and teach our miserable undercivilized overcommercialized snot-nosed brats how to read. Winners? Not to the people giving you a hard time. Not to the society that thinks Pamela Lee's personal life actually warrants attention. (Except as a punch line.) (Pardon the pun.) Not, sadly, to you.

The truth is, you can just as easily find a brain surgeon annoyed that she's not Christy Turlington as you can an auto-show babe who thinks she drew life's longest straw. It's all in how you define winning. "Burning the fewest hours of your days wanting wishing wondering why you aren't someone else," that's the definition I like. You say you're "driven" to succeed.

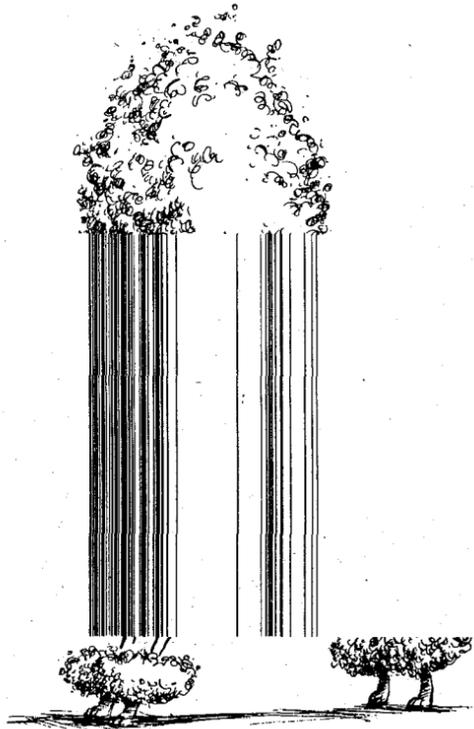
You need to ask yourself why; then you need to give yourself a brutally honest answer. Then you should probably stop talking to yourself. If your answer's anything but, "I enjoy a job well done," you're basically inviting everyone who's better than you at something (there's always someone) and everyone who's eager to point that out (hordes of them) to grind their heels in your face. And what's the point of that?

Dear Carolyn:

My girlfriend is angry with me because I asked her to not read through my old journals. Most of it is bad writing and I'd rather not have anybody read it. She started to do so without asking me when I happened to walk into the room. I've thought about trashing most of it of anyway. What do you think?

—A Writer Who Doesn't Want to Be Read

Keep the journals, trash the girlfriend. What a nosy, self-righteous twit.



DON'T GET ME STARTED.

Ng



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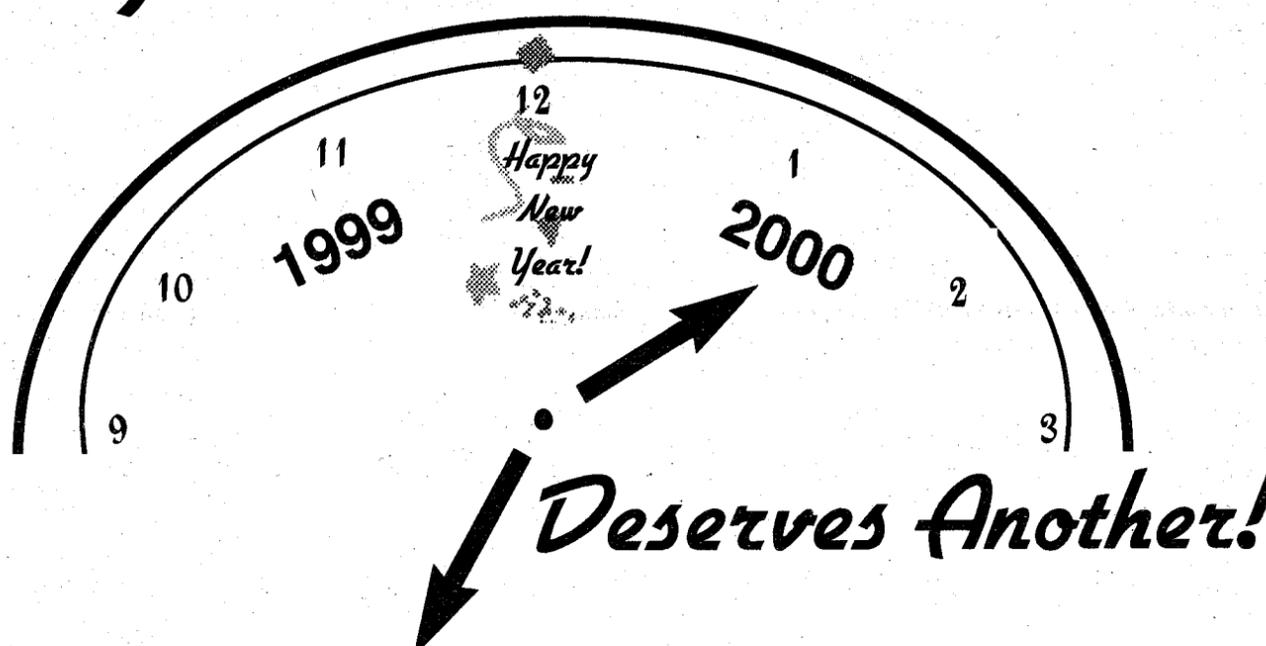


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SPRING 2000

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 Features

Island Sounds at SBU

WUSB Holds Annual Reggae Marathon

ERIN ROSENKING
Statesman Editor

Even after the post holiday gloom set in and winter's chill was biting hard, the sun, sand, beaches and music of the Caribbean was as close as the nearest radio dial during winter break.

The fourth annual reggae marathon hit the air waves of Stony Brook's own radio station, 90.1 WUSB, for eight days straight, playing dancehall, roots and culture and even gospel reggae 24 hours a day.

According to Conrod Smiles, host of WUSB's No Sound Test reggae show on Thursday nights and one of the marathon's producers, the event is the only one like it, outside of Jamaica, in the world.

And the world was listening. Listeners tuned in from as close as the campus to as far away as Belgium, Europe, Australia and Ethiopia. Smiles attributed the global attention to good advertising and the internet. "We were well advertised for about two months," Smiles said. "It was in some Caribbean papers and on postings on the web." Reggae fans were able to access the music through the Clappers Reggae web site, which could be reached through the WUSB web page, and also through the site REGGAE24.COM.

But for all of its international acclaim, the marathon began as a joke. Back in 1995, Lister Hewan-Lowe, host of WUSB's reggae show Saturday's a Party, and Kibret Neguse, DJ on No Sound Test, were kidding around in front of the program director about how

great it would be to have a whole weekend playing nothing but reggae. Much to their surprise, the director offered his go ahead on the spot. The four day weekend marathon that followed was a hit. "The response was just phenomenal," Neguse said. "When it was over, the people didn't want it to stop."

Listeners loved it so much that a constant stream of letters found their way to the desk of Norman Prusslin, the advisor for student media. A letter from this marathon spoke of how great it was to turn on the radio and hear reggae. Prusslin said that it has become a wonderful annual event for the station. "Coming during the heart of the holiday season, the message of the music is a perfect back-drop to the good feelings folks have during the holiday," he said. He praised it for its creativity and excitement, qualities he attributed to station volunteers, particularly Neguse and Hewan-Lowe.

The overwhelming audience response pushed it the following year to seven days and then finally to eight the year after that. Legendary reggae artist Ricky Grant, who has worked with performers such as the Afrotones, the Gaylads and Rockers International, thinks the music's popularity stems from the message it conveys. "It's a commanding music," Grant said. He praised the marathon, saying that it connected all artists and reggae enthusiasts, and he credited Bob Marley as "the foundation" for all reggae, saying that his music acted as a stepping stone



Kibret Neguse and Conrod Smiles

for future musicians. "Bob opened the gates," he said. "He made history."

This year's marathon sought to commemorate another piece of history. It was dedicated to what the marathon called the "Battle in Seattle" and the 600 people who were arrested during the city's protest against the World Trade Organization. Neguse believed that it was a fitting tribute. He called the protest a "significant human accomplishment" and he associated the politics of it with reggae. "Reggae is a highly political music, it's highly social," he said. "It was borne out of necessity and it has been used as an outlet for the masses." He said that the music acts like a "world-wide medium for the oppressed" that attracts people from all walks of life.

As for the marathon's highlights, both Neguse and Smiles agreed that there were many. In addition to a countdown of the top 100 reggae songs of the past decade and a New Year's Eve countdown to midnight, the marathon prompted world famous reggae singer Shabba Ranks to call. Ironically, his song "Twice My Age" was in the countdown's number one spot.

Neguse said that one of the most significant portions of the marathon came when they established a three

way link between the WUSB studio, a Jamaican radio station and the WRITN radio station, based in New Rochelle, which has the "Irie Jam" and "Link Up" Caribbean programs. The connection was the first one like it in the world and during the link, singer Buju Banton called from Jamaica.

As for the time of the year, student participation and support of the marathon was high in spite of the intercession which left few students on campus. Grant said that although they were off campus, the students were still listening and Neguse said that student support is always high for WUSB's reggae programming. He said that it appeals to people from "all walks of life" and not just those students who come from the Caribbean. "There is no other music that utilizes every aspect of life, be it love, sex, war," he said. "It appeals to everybody."

Neguse and Smiles were grateful to everyone that put in the time to make the marathon the success it was. They mentioned the many people from the WUSB staff that helped out as well as the sponsors of the program which included Stony Brook's School of Professional Development and other local Caribbean markets and food stores. With all the support, Smiles was confident that "next year will be even bigger." He admitted that "the vibes was nice."



Courtesy of Angella at Fig Tree Studios

Marathon producers Lister Hewan-Lowe and Kibret Neguse founded the event.