Dorms get smoke detectors

By David M. Crawford

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Installation of smoke detectors in university dormitories is nearing completion after more than nine months since its start.

The Ohio General Assembly enacted legislation 18 months ago that required smoke detectors be placed in residential buildings 75 feet or taller.

University officials decided to put detectors in all campus dorms for safety and economic reasons.

Smoke detectors in Blackburn Hall have been in operation since March 25. Detectors in other dorms will be turned on in the next few weeks barring any unforeseen difficulties, according to Elmer Stewart, chief engineer of residence and dining halls.

Stewart said a smoke detector was placed in each room and in the hallways of dormitories. They are activated by smoke of any type when it reaches a density of three percent or more per square foot.

Besides emitting an alarm when smoke is present, the detector also relays a signal to a panel in the dormitory office which will pinpoint trouble.

Stewart noted that "in the past, most fires in dormitory rooms occurred when they were unoccupied and a cigarette or candle was left burning.'

Stewart said that with smoke detectors in operation, their activation would alert someone before a fire has a chance to fully develop.

Mary Morgan, director of Blackburn Complex, said students in her dorm were a little apprehensive at first about having the smoke detectors because of the threat of false alarm. But overall she is "pleased with the reception of the system by Blackburn residents."

Stewart said dormitory personnel are also alerted to any malfunctions or tampering of smoke detectors by a trouble light in the dormitory office.

George J. Bailey, chief of the OSU Fire and Safety Department, said the penalty for tampering with smoke detectors is the same as tampering with any other piece of fire equipment - a $500 fine, 60 days in jail or both.

Stewart said that like any new major project there will be a few problems to iron out but he thinks the detectors "will make the dorms as safe as an environment to live in as possible."
Lack of support will shut down cultural center

By Dawn E. Wilson
Lantern staff writer / 4-14-83

The multi-cultural center in two North Campus dorms will be eliminated after this year, said Glenda Belote, director for student development.

Located in Blackburn and Haverfield houses, the center was established two years ago. It houses 35-40 students. Belote said the elimination will be "minimally disruptive" to those students, because they will be able to stay in their present rooms if they wish.

The center was originally intended to develop interaction between American and international students.

"That never materialized because we couldn't find enough multi-cultural students who wanted to live there," Belote said.

Belote said a balance of various cultures among residents in the center was never achieved, so the center was not significantly different from any of the regular environments in the dorms.

The decision to eliminate the center was made by Belote, William Hall, director of residence and dining halls, and Roger Meyer, director of administrative operations. The three reached the decision after reviewing the recommendations made by an environmental task force in mid-January.

The task force, headed by South Area coordinator Terry Piper, included two members of the Office of Contracts and Assignments, two dorm directors and seven students.

Such a task force is created about every two years to review the living environments in the dorms. Belote said the purposes of the review are to see if the environments are accomplishing what they were intended to do and to see if students are still interested in the special environments. Special environments besides the multi-cultural center include the honors residential center in Taylor Tower and the engineering floors in Houch House.

No commitment

Belote said the center never garnered much support from faculty and staff members.

"There was no commitment," she said. Because of the lack of support, the center never developed the kind of programming for residents it should have, Belote said.

"We (Residence and Dining Halls) delivered on what we promised and were prepared to expand it. We've given it a fair shot," she said, referring to the two year period since the center was created.

Belote said the Office of Residence and Dining Halls believed the center was not functioning as intended, and therefore the office was "holding out promises" of an environment it was not providing.

Carmen Alvarez-Breckenridge, coordinator of the Office of Hispanic Student Programs, said she served on the committee that originally developed the center. Since that time, however, she said she does not remember her office having any involvement with the center. She said she hasn't been kept informed about the center.

Tina Love, coordinator of Black Student Programs, said she was unaware of the center's existence.

Not giving up

Belote said she is still committed to the concept of a culturally-oriented living environment. She said Residence and Dining Halls "will be going back to the drawing board" and hopes to bring such an environment back into the system in a year or two.

Karin Kurtz, a sophomore from Bucyrus who has lived in the center for two years, said she is sorry the center is closing but acknowledged that the program is not working well.

"We do things with our floor, but not cultural things. I don't think it's got anything to do with the cultural thing anymore," she said.

Sheila Huntley, a freshman from Stow, is upset over the elimination of the center. "I would like to know where they got that information (that the environment was not functioning well). To me, it's false," she said.

However, Huntley does not object to improving the center.

"There's no problem with trying other ways," she said.

Sharmila Ruparel, a freshman from Bombay, India, said she is against the change.

"It's helped me a lot. I don't think I could have made it in one of the all-American dorms," she said.

But Ruparel also said the center could be improved.

"There is room for improvement, definitely," she said.

Because the students can return to the dorm next year, Ruparel said the change in the environment may not be very great.

"Even if we lose the name, it probably would be as multi-cultural as it is now," she said.
Gee stays in dorm, raps with students

By Monica Setar
Lantern staff writer

A man wearing a bow tie invaded a north campus dorm Monday night, stealing a student's pizza. The man escaped early Tuesday morning, carrying a rose and doughnuts.

The man was last seen directing university affairs in Bricker Hall. President E. Gordon Gee stayed in Blackburn House Monday night in an effort to get to know students better and make himself available for questions.

Students had positive opinions about Gee's visit.

"I think this strengthens his ties with students," said Billy Chapnick, a first-year dorm resident. "It shows he cares about students and he's not just an authority figure."

"It was kind of neat having the president of such a big university come to your dorm. You usually see him up addressing hundreds of people and here he is in your living room," said Daniel Chirayath, a first-year student majoring in engineering.

"I think it says a lot about his personality, he's very friendly," said Kathy Komara, a sophomore dietician major. "You wouldn't see this at many other universities."

The program was partly designed by the Blackburn Haverfield Nosker House Government Executives, said Chapnick, special events coordinator.

Chapnick said the HBN executives were sent a letter before the visit saying Gee should be in bed by 1:30 a.m. because he had to get up early for a busy day.

Gee walked around Blackburn and Haverfield houses wearing a new scarf and gray bow tie and a complimentary BHN T-shirt. He met with students and asked questions about their majors, hometowns, activities and future plans.

As Gee left Haverfield House he spoke to the night assistants on duty about their work schedule.

"Do you get much studying done?" he asked the night assistants, one of whom was typing a paper, the other studying for a test.

The tour ended in the lobby of Nosker House where students gathered for free pizza and Gee's question-and-answer session at 11:30 p.m.

"I think it's really great he's here," said Mike Allton, president of the BHN government. "And the free pizza helped get us a big crowd."

Gee started his question-and-answer session by talking about Ohio State.

"This is not a good university, it's a great place," Gee said. "We've been through tough financial times, as the entire country has."

Gee said the process of restructuring is not to save money but to provide better financial capital and to improve the university.

"I work for you and I recognize that," Gee said.

Some students' questions were on the lighter side. For example, one student asked how many bow ties Gee has, he said he has over 400.

Another student asked Gee's prediction for the Ohio State vs. Michigan football game Nov. 20. Gee said he expected to win the game by three to seven to 10 points. "But what do I know, do I look like I know anything about football?" Gee asked.

Gee also said he gets very nervous when watching the games. "I have a particular concern, most people see a football game, but I see a year's budget running up and down the field."

More serious questions included his stand on NAFTA, which he said he supports.

Another student asked how the university can afford new buildings when budgets are tight. "The money for buildings comes from bonds. If we stopped building it would not add to the general fund budget. Your tuition doesn't go towards them," Gee said.

Gee said he spends the night in a dorm three or four times a year and visits a few times a month.