Changing of signs continual

By Katy Delaney
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Signs in front of campus buildings are continually being changed but few people seem to notice.

Siebert Hall is still Siebert Hall whether the sign reads Annie Ware Sabine Siebert Hall or not.

"We have a standard replacement program because in some areas there were no signs," said Julie Karovics, graphics coordinator for OSU landscape architecture.

Karovics said the south campus area had only three signs left and they were broken or vandalized.

In cases such as south campus, it is necessary for the signs to be there for identification's sake, but there has been a trend for the past seven or eight years for the university to put official names on the building signs, instead of just the last name of the person it's named after, she said.

Karovics said Hayes Hall is an example because the official name was changed to Rutherford B. Hayes Hall. It was changed because people used to think it was named after Woody Hayes, even though it was originally named after the former president, she said.

"We wanted to make it clear that they're named for the real people," she said.

But, Karovics said people often call the buildings only by the last name on the sign anyway. "People are not going to say they live in Abraham Lincoln Tower, they're going to say Lincoln Tower."

The department changes approximately 30 signs a year at a cost of $530 per sign. The funds for the changes come from budgeted money for signs.

She said the sign program began eight to 10 years ago and funds are regularly budgeted for this specific purpose.

"It's basically maintenance money," Karovics said.

Although Ohio State uses different companies each time they need a batch of new signs, certain standards have to be met. A company must manufacture the signs to university specifications and those companies bid competitively.

Jean Hansford, campus planner, and a group of consultants put together the current system of how the signs should look on campus. Uniform size, print and content are standards that must be met, she said.

Once a company is chosen, the signs are installed by OSU crews, Karovics said.

Existing signs are only replaced if they are damaged or missing. New signs will not automatically be put up because someone decided they should include the person's full name, or because the university changed its logo.

"We don't have that kind of budget," she said.