

# VOICES

of Central PA

“Occupy” movement  
dwindles in Centre County

Support group helps  
parents of children with  
eating disorders

Activists hold protest during  
Marcellus Summit

Special photo section:  
scandal rocks Penn State

PSU grapples with  
'Academically Adrift' students

Autumn Blaze to perform in  
Penns Valley

Preview of First Night 2012

Opinions and columns:  
Deutsch, Hertert, Campbell,  
Cosmo, Birdwatch and more

December 2011 / January 2012

## Destined for default

pg. 18

\$75 billion  
in student loans  
in 2007

\$96 billion  
in student loans  
in 2009



pg.18



pg.14



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December 2011/January 2012

# A community in crisis: what next?

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November was supposed to be a good month for Happy Valley—a month to enjoy the last bright bursts of fall foliage, to break from work and school and eat turkey with our loved ones, to watch Joe Paterno add another victory or two to his record-breaking coaching career.



It turned out to be a very different kind of month.

The appalling crimes that surfaced in the Jerry Sandusky scandal—both of commission and omission—remind me that our little valley is not immune to the evils that pervade our world.

Our children fall victim to sexual predation.

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from the desk of managing editor

**Lucy Bryan Green**

tors. Our leaders succumb to the temptation to protect those with influence and prestige, rather than the most vulnerable among us. Our idols choose what is expedient, instead of what's right. Our young people, when their traditions crumble before them and their identities are disparaged on national television, are capable of thoughtless, even violent, reactions.

During the days and weeks this tragedy unfolded, I found myself alternately overcome by horror, anger and despair. The town I love, the students I teach, the institution I graduated from and work for will never be the same.

So what now?

We, as a community, must begin the difficult work of healing. Each of us—with our different skill sets, resources and aptitudes—has an opportunity to be a source of restoration in the wake of catastrophe.

Maybe you'll be inspired to help the organizations you're involved with to instate measures that will protect children from abuse. Maybe you'll campaign for legislation that will offer stronger safeguards to whistle blowers. Maybe you'll

take part in creating strategies to prevent corruption in the institution or corporation you work for.

But you don't have to be an activist to make a difference. You might be a force of goodness simply by listening to someone who is mourning the loss of a hero, by donating to local organizations that serve victims of abuse or by paying attention when that little voice inside of you tells you something's not right.

It is my goal, as I move forward, to treat my students, neighbors and colleagues with compassion—even if I don't agree with their opinions. I hope you'll join me in exercising patience, gentleness and thoughtfulness as we navigate the wreckage of this scandal.

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