

Webster's to reopen in late February

by David Amerman

Elaine Meder-Wilgus, owner of State College's popular Webster's Bookstore Café, thinks that books should be a part of everyone's daily life. Starting in 1999, Meder-Wilgus was able to share this passion with the State College community through her own business.

However in 2010, the economic recession swept up Webster's in its path and forced the South Allen Street location to close when its lease expired after Meder-Wilgus fell several months behind on the rent. Webster's moved to a temporary location on 121 S. Fraser St. and operated from that location until the close of the six-month lease.

Since the initial closure of the main location on South Allen Street, State College residents and friends of Webster's have responded with support and calls for the bookstore to reopen, according to Meder-Wilgus.

"When we first got the news that we were losing our lease, my family and I thought that was pretty much it and we

were out of business," Meder-Wilgus said. "And then, a groundswell of thousands and thousands of people came forward and said, 'No. We won't let this happen.'"

According to Webster's Internet sales manager Molly Haight, these supporters contributed their money and energy in order to help Webster's.

"People donated their time to unpack boxes and sort books for us," said Haight. "We had people come in every day being like, 'So what can I do?' just because they love Webster's."

Thanks to its passionate masses of supporters, Webster's is now set to re-open in late February once everything is organized inside. Webster's will be moving from its former location on South Allen Street to 133 E. Beaver St., once home to the Creative Oasis art studio.

The new space is twice as large as the previous location, which Meder-Wilgus says will help Webster's store more books. She added that the large space will also allow Webster's to consolidate their business into one building instead of its previous system of maintaining multiple loca-



Photo by David Amerman

Webster's new location is twice the size of their old one, allowing the bookstore to increase inventory. Staff and volunteers are busy unpacking boxes and preparing the bookstore café for its opening.

tions for a bookstore café, a book warehouse and a separate café.

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School holds classes on MLK Day, stirs controversy

by Radesha Piles

State College Area High School held regular classes on Martin Luther King Jr. Day this year, drawing disapproval from students and community members.

This marked a change in the school's observance of the federal holiday. In previous years, the high school has given students the day off and required teachers to attend a professional development day. This year the school calendar allocated 177 mandatory school days, nine in-service days for teachers and 16 holidays. Changes in the calendar are passed to the school board and then to the school calendar committee, which rotates the holidays that will be recognized with day off for

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--Donna King

students.

In preparation for MLK Day, the school planned to focus the day around civil rights education, according to Julie Gosselin, Executive Secretary of the State College Area High School District. She stated that this year, as an alternative to

having MLK day off, teachers provided students with diversity training.

"There were tons of diversity programs implemented for our students," said Julie Miller, district public information specialist. "Spanish classes were translating MLK speeches into Spanish. History classes watched Gandhi to compare him to the MLK figure. Art classes were [painting] the figure. And students watched the 'I Have a Dream Speech.'"

The decision to hold regular classes this year upset some students as well as community members, who began appealing for the recognition of MLK Day as a high school holiday in 1998.

Dr. Donna King, a professor at Penn State University, community activist and

self-proclaimed "movement mama," said she situates this discussion within a larger, ongoing struggle for social justice and civic involvement.

"We fought for five years for MLK Day to be a holiday," said King. "I sat at the school board meetings year after year for State College Area High School, and finally we received the day off. The question is: Are the parents included? Are the students included? What [do] community members feel?"

Though many diversity-oriented lessons were planned, some students say that they were not provided such curriculum

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Understanding our bodies as machines

by Matthew Hertert

Health Talk

As I am sure all practitioners do, I get many questions about the best kind of exercise, shoes, pillows, diets and health trends. Usually the best response I have to offer is a general, common sense type answer. The truth is there is never an accurate one-size-fits-all answer to these kinds of questions.

The negative side of this is that it is frustrating to not be able to provide a specific, definitive answer for a patient, especially when they are actively seeking to better their life. The positive side is that in most cases we can answer our own questions by relating to the body through a simple metaphor, by acknowledging a modern reality, and by paying attention.

If you think of the body as a machine, in many cases you can simplify problems and

provide your own answers. Second, the reality is that our machine has been doing certain things for a very long time—hunting, fishing, farming and gathering—that most of us aren't doing full time anymore. Third, by “paying attention” I mean that your body will let you know if something is good for it or not. Don't ask me, ask your body and, more importantly, listen for an answer.

Thinking about your body as a machine is a pretty pragmatic way to approach health, especially if you're someone who loves machines. We all know someone who can spend an entire Saturday washing and detailing her car, changing the oil and fil-

ters and replacing the brake pads. While this model is simplistic in the sense that machines are not self-regulating or self-healing the way our bodies are, many people take our healing capacity for granted. They wait too long, ignoring their symptoms until their health problems are serious.

Machines need maintenance. You wouldn't tape over your oil light if it came on. You don't wait for your car to run out of gas before filling the tank. If your tires are balding, you don't replace them repeatedly without addressing the alignment. We all know this stuff, and these same principles apply to your body and self-care.

This view of the body also applies to larger concepts, like wear and tear. In general the body doesn't like repetitive-stress activities, and usually breaks down more quickly when subjected to them. Prevention is cheaper and more time efficient than repair. If you only start a machine once a year, it isn't going to work well, and the same is true of only exercising once a year.

The modern reality to acknowledge is that since we've been on the planet, our bodies have been walking machines. For thousands of years our bodies have been standing, walking, running, lifting, and moving. While a few professions have always been sedentary, most of us have only been sitting for a few decades, and that is not long enough for the machine to evolve and adapt to how we're trying to force it to work. The way we use our bodies now is like trying to jackhammer a hole in the sidewalk with an electric toothbrush: it may work eventually but you're going to hurt that machine.

This can help you answer your own questions about running barefoot or with five-finger shoes, questions about standing desks over sitting desks, footwear, types of exercise and what kinds of chairs are best for posture, all of which translate to how you function, which translates to how you feel.

A profound “discovery” about the body relates to these discussions: our upright evolution has put structure in place that is

meant to stand and is affected by sitting. A European MD named Janda identified two major muscle systems that criss-cross the body like girders as you look at it from the side.

The postural muscle system is what gives us posture, and its antagonists, the phasic muscles, keep us from collapsing like an accordion.

When your body is constantly stressed against its design—like sitting with your head craned forward to read email—the body uses the strong posturals to protect the joints in your neck to keep them from dislocating, to keep discs from herniating, to slow arthritis. A smart decision on the part of your body, but the consequence is that the phasics now can't exercise, and get weaker, making the joints even less stable, so the body turns up the posturals, so the phasics get weaker, and so on, and so on....

This modern reality isn't as widely known as it should be, but searching the Internet for “Janda phasics” will give you many resources for knowing what to stretch and what to strengthen. When seeking chiropractors, personal trainers or physical therapists it's important to try and find caregivers who understand Janda's work.

Finally, the truth is that your body is the boss. It will tell you if what you're doing is bad for it. This applies to the foods you eat, the drugs you take, the shoes you wear, the chair you sit in and the exercise you're doing (or not doing). Your body only has one way to tell you that it needs your help: pain. Pain is your friend, so listen.

That said, I advocate a preventative mindset. Usually by the time symptoms are present, pathology is in place. Symptoms are your body's way of telling you it can't heal itself or maintain the problem any more without intervention. If something hurts, then listen to your body and stop. Avoid pain before it happens instead of waiting too long then “patching the pot-hole.”



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Sleep disorder center in construction at Mount Nittany

by Sierra Dole

It took a heart attack for Bellefonte resident Randall Yarnell Sr. to learn why he hadn't gotten a good night's sleep in six years. While he was in the hospital and on a heart monitor, doctors realized that he periodically stopped breathing while he slept. They diagnosed him with obstructive sleep apnea, a breathing disorder that affects one in four American men.

"It's a terrible thing, sleep apnea," Yarnell said. "You don't get a solid sleep. You wake up for an hour, sleep for an hour, wake back up again, etc. It got to the point where a good night's sleep for me was four hours... Finally being diagnosed made me stop wondering what was going on."

Sleep disorder sufferers like Yarnell will soon have access to a state-of-the-art sleep disorder center, which Mount Nittany Medical Center will open this fall.

Mount Nittany currently has two sleep labs, which are used only for diagnosing and treating sleep-related breathing disorders, according to Robert Moser, administrative director for Geisinger

"By catching [sleep] disorders sooner, we can work to prevent some of the long-term effects such as obesity, depression, diabetes and cardiovascular problems these disorders may cause."

--Robert Moser

Health System Sleep Services. He explained that the new center will provide diagnostic and therapeutic testing as well as treatment for patients who express symptoms of any sleep disorder.

"Sleep disorder centers are high in demand," said Elle Morgan, Communications Coordinator at Mount Nittany Medical Center. "More and more people suffer from sleep disorders each year, and it's important to catch these disorders early to prevent the long-term effects they have."

More than 40 million Americans suffer from long-term sleep disorders each year, according to the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke website.

According to Moser, the new center,

Renessa Abiola, who are members of the African American support group at the high school, attended a half day of classes followed by a field trip to Penn State University, where they participated in a day of service activities alongside college students.

"I attended two periods of history and science and nothing [about MLK] was mentioned," said Abiola. "I think it's not fair. There should be more than one day out of the whole year to celebrate MLK. Our school takes off for hunting season, why not MLK?"

Donna King claimed that the disconnect between what activities were planned and what was actually done for students at the school has created the need to inform parents and students about the change of calendar initiatives.

A forum, coordinated by King, to

which is expected to open by November, will stay open 24 hours a day to accommodate shift workers who might otherwise find scheduling an appointment difficult. It also will guarantee direct callers an appointment within 24 hours, with a turnaround time—from the moment the patient walks into the center to when the results are in the doctor's hand—of 48 to 72 hours.

In addition, technicians who are registered through the Board of Registered Polysomnographic Technologists (BRPT) will be available around the clock to perform non-invasive testing on patients.

Specialized equipment will allow patients as young as 2 years old to be tested—a dramatic improvement from

address such concerns is scheduled to take place in February.

Meanwhile, at State College Area High School, the African American support group is working on a community show-

the current equipment, which can only test patients 18 or older. This change will allow staff to find the cause of sleep disorders and start treatment much sooner in young patients.

"By catching these disorders sooner, we can work to prevent some of the long-term effects such as obesity, depression, diabetes, and cardiovascular problems these disorders may cause," Moser said.

According to Moser, Mount Nittany Medical Center has spared no expense in equipping the new clinic to better serve patients and get them a better night's sleep. When patients arrive at the center for overnight testing, they will receive private rooms with full baths, flat screen TVs and breakfast areas.

"It's pretty much an upscale hotel room," Moser said, "We try to make it as relaxing an environment as possible and make you feel right at home. Everything you normally do before bed, we want you to be able to do that here."

There are many symptoms of sleep disorders including waking up gasping

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case of African American history for Black History Month. The students state that they want to educate and unify their peers and that introducing their culture at school is very important.

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on MLK Day.

"We didn't really talk about MLK that much," said senior Brian Charles. "It was a normal day of school. I'd be interested in learning more about it. Martin Luther King played a big part in our history."

Some students expressed shock that they were in school on the federal holiday and not provided educational activities about Martin Luther King Jr.

"I was actually happy that we had school because I thought we'd be doing some activities [related to Martin Luther King Jr.]," said senior Daphne Weidner. "I don't have history class this year, so maybe that's why, but I heard nothing, even from my peers."

Some students, like sophomore

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"It's such a fantastic space for a bookstore because it's slightly underground and it's not as expensive as the old store, which means we can afford to house more books," said Meder-Wilgus. "We've been able to go through some of the old stock and discover some forgotten gems. We've had boxes of books that have been sitting around unopened for nine or ten years because we didn't have the space to put them out or the time to deal with them."

Along with the bigger bookstore, the new Webster's will feature a larger kitchen, a stage for live performances and two gallery walls for art exhibits. One gallery will be named after the late David E. Newman, the founder of Creative Oasis.

"[Newman's vision] for Creative Oasis was to give people who may not be connected professionally or academically to art space to create," said Meder-Wilgus. "So we're giving space to exhibit what people create to honor his memory."

According to Haight, having an art gallery featuring local artists in a coffee shop will also provide a unique artistic experience for customers.

"Actual art galleries are at a disadvantage because people simply walk through, look at everything and then leave," said Haight. "At Webster's, you can sit, have a coffee and enjoy the gallery."

The East Beaver Street space will also be more accessible and browsable than before, according to Meder-Wilgus and Haight.

"The income side of Webster's was always successful, but it was the overhead that had really become too much."

--Elaine Meder-Wilgus

"The new location is a beautiful rectangular shape with two exits and lends itself to better flow because that other space was sort of a bowling alley," Meder-Wilgus said. "We had to have different sections for the café, the records and the bookstore and even though we managed to blend them together, there was a natural separation by the length and dimensions of the old space. In the new space, we can really allow for people to walk around and not feel like they're standing in a hallway."

In order to prevent another situation like the closings in 2010, Webster's has a new advisory board of professional financiers who have volunteered their time to keep the business' accounting in control.

"The income side of Webster's was always successful, but it was the overhead that had really become too much," said Meder-Wilgus. "And when the recession hit, our expenses just kept going up. So this advisory board has been really fantastic in getting all the plans in order. I'm incredibly blessed that these people have stepped forward to be on this advisory board to assure the health and wealth of Webster's and the community that resides within it."

With Webster's financial house in order, Meder-Wilgus and her staff are now focused on getting the new location stocked, coded and ready for the grand opening in late February. The reopening, according to Meder-Wilgus, will be marked with a festival of diverse events that will celebrate the culture and energy of the local community.

"It's going to be tremendous," she said. "We have belly dancers lined up, we're going to have readings, a political singer-songwriter coming in to do a performance and an open mic night."

Along with the opening festivities, Meder-Wilgus is also excited for her community to see the new bookstore and café.

"People are going to lose their minds when they come in and see the sheer volume of books," she said. "I can't wait. They're going to squeal. It's going to be great."

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or gagging, paused breathing, head banging and especially insomnia. Moser said that by using a screening tool, physicians can determine whether or not a patient may have a sleep disorder.

This tool consists of the following four questions: Do you snore loudly? Are you tired a lot? Does someone observe that you stop breathing while asleep? Do you have high blood pressure?

If a patient answers yes to two or more of these questions, he or she may suffer from Obstructive Sleep Apnea (OSA).

Anyone who feels they may suffer from a sleep disorder can call the Mount Nittany Medical Center's Department of Sleep Medicine directly or visit their website for more information.

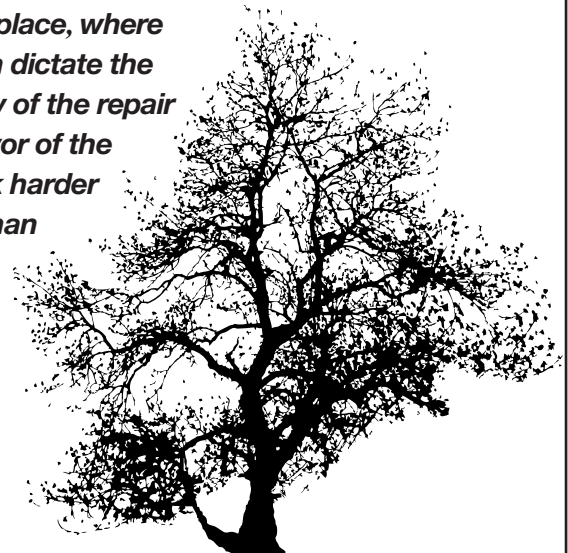
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