

ACC Deems Campus Safe

NICOLE HATCH
Staff Writer

Many efforts are made to prevent accidents and injuries at Alpena Community College. According to Dick Sutherland, VP Administrative Secretary, ACC has a safe campus and a safe program, the protection of students is a number one priority.

Representative Doug Kimmel from Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Administration (MIOSHA) did a safety walk through at ACC and had a list of concerns for the college to address. 90 percent of that list has already been taken care of. The concerns were not life threatening and mostly

had to do with labeling chemicals, guard adjustments or having signs for emergency stop buttons.

Along with those corrections, ACC has updated the lighting in the Natural Resource Center and is in the process of doing so in Van Lare Hall. Also note, the college has emergency lights that go on in case of a power outage.

Tom Ludwig, Facilities Director and Noel Schlueter from health services just recently attended a MIOSHA training seminar for safety compliance issues. They both play an important role in keeping this campus safe. The majority of school

accidents happen in good weather. According to Ludwig the occasional fender bender seems to happen on dry pavement. So far this winter there has been one reported car accident on campus. The worst accident at ACC was when a student fell from a utility pole.

Overall students feel safe at this institution. Students Delynn Glennie and Angie Hawks feel very safe here and have no cause for concerns when it comes to their safety.

ACC Student Jessica Linkeos said that her only safety concern is the icy conditions on the sidewalks and in the

parking lots.

On those icy mornings maintenance and ground crew begin their day early making sure the walkways and parking lots are salted. "It has been so cold for so long that the salt doesn't work, it can only bring ice down to a certain temperature" says Ludwig. Sand works better in these conditions and if available.

To report an accident or injury contact Dick Sutherland ext 7368, located in VLH, Tom Ludwig, ext. 7202 in the Parking office of BTC, or any instructor or staff member by calling 356-9021, student services ext.7286.

Students Gamble Away Their Last Dollars

MIKE GARY
Huron Shores

Whether it's done legally at a casino, or illegally at someone's house, students are gambling away their last dollars. A Harvard Medical study in 2000 showed that almost 50 percent of college students in the United States and Canada admitted to spending their time and money in casinos, and those numbers are rising.

The Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling stated, "Teenagers have a problem gambling rate of 10%-17%, a rate 2 to 3 times higher than the general population." But if college students have little cash and big bills, why do they gamble? Experts believe students gamble because the age group of 12-18 are involved in high-risk behaviors, which include drinking and taking drugs, which makes them more apt to gamble because of the risk involved.

College students in the local area seem to think gambling is acceptable. According to Terry Allison, a student at ACC, "Gambling is alright if you have the money. It's good

entertainment." With 26 casinos in Michigan, virtual casinos all over the Internet, and the legal gambling age being 18, students in Michigan find it easy to gamble and will often influence other students to gamble with them.

There are organizations to help people with gambling problems and most are free to join, but are completely voluntary. Gamblers Anonymous is among the most famous of these organizations. Anyone can visit their website at www.gamblersanonymous.com to join this organization or just get information on how to quit gambling.

Peer pressure and the abundance of casinos in Michigan push gambling on students, but there could be a way to use these pressures in a positive way. All casinos need people to work there. According to one employee at the Soaring Eagle casino in Mount Pleasant, the starting pay for employees at casinos is usually minimum wage, but they get tips on too.

So for students who like to gamble, the best way to win at the casino may be by dealing cards, not betting on them.

Ripley Street Station Closes its Doors

MICHAEL CHAMBERS
Staff Writer

On thursday, March 13, 2003, Ripley Street Station closed after nine years of service. Some of the employees that worked at Ripley's are now working at Neiman's Family Market.

Some of Ripley's employees are going to work at Neiman's and are being placed in positions similar to those they had held at Ripley's.

The opinion of the employees about the merge of the two stores is split.

According to one Neiman's employee, a lot of employees are running scared for their jobs

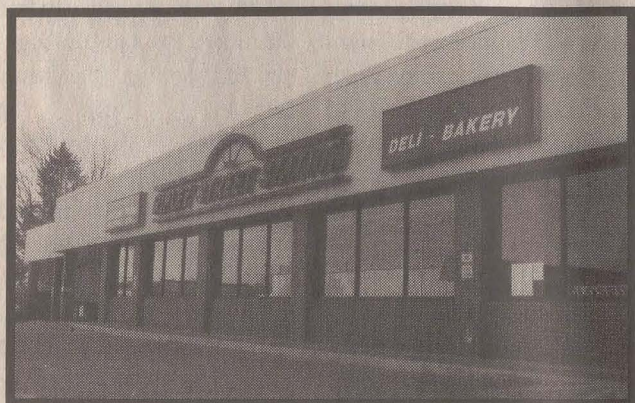


Photo by Sara Lyon

Ripley Street Station closed for business March 13.

because they don't know if they will be fired or lose their current position.

There is also some resentment by Neiman's employees for the positions Ripley employees

have been placed in.

On the other hand Service Desk Clerk Leah Dennis stated, "I think it's nice to see new faces and they bring some fresh air to the work force."

Bad Weather Will Not Close ACC

NICOLE HATCH
Staff Writer

You're looking outside, it's freezing rain and the snow is piling up, and you're thinking "I know school is going to be closed tomorrow." You would be right if you were in high school, but wake up and get dressed because you're in college now and ACC is open. Go ahead turn on the radio, they will confirm it for you. The chances for a snow day here are slim. In fact the college has only closed 3 times in ten years.

Dick Sutherland, Administrative Director and Tom Ludwig, Facilities Director, get up on those bad winter mornings at 4:00 am and travel the roads that students will be driving. They consult with state police and the road commission to make sure conditions are favorable

for students.

According to Sutherland, 95 percent of all ACC students come from Alpena and each student should use their best judgment and drive according to road conditions. In most cases the Alpena public schools are closed because of the liability with 40 students on buses. Individuals need to take the proper precautions and allow themselves extra time to get where they are going. College should be seen as a job. Employers don't call off work due to weather.

Sutherland also said that each student has a tight schedule and snow days are not factored in. Those students receiving aid have to complete so many hours and it would be hard to make up time that is missed due to unnecessary snow days.

Student Matt Gibbons doesn't fight the inevitable, he

treats a bad winter day like any other, and if there is school he will be there.

"But the college needs to take into consideration that a great deal of students travel distances. We want to come to school, we pay money to go to school, and there are times when it should be closed in fairness and safety" says ACC student Michelle Heidt who drives from East Tawas.

"We are here for the students, we wouldn't be here without them and we will make the best decision concerning their safety" stated Sutherland. So if you're still not out of bed and you think school should be closed, note that Sutherland also added the college and your instructors reserve the right to call class on Saturday if school is cancelled for any reason.

Pros and Cons of Long Distance Learning

AMY ABRAHAM
Huron Shores

On-line or traditional classes? Students are increasingly asking themselves this question as colleges continue to add more courses available on-line and virtual colleges are springing up all over the Internet.

Sound too good to be true? That depends. Students should know more of what is expected of them before they go on-line educationally. Failure of an on-line course is just as detrimental to learning experience, as it would be from a traditional class.

Amy Jacobs, a current Spring Arbor University student, had this to say about on-line classes. "I think on-line classes are great. I can take classes from my home and still be there with my

family. On-line classes are tougher than regular classes though because they are a sixteen-week course crammed into eight weeks. You have to keep on top of the reading assignments or you are doomed because you will never catch up."

Haley Romel, another Spring Arbor University student, has a different opinion about distance learning courses. "I would much rather take a traditional campus course than an on-line class. I feel I need to interact with my professors and fellow students about course matter and on-line classes just don't offer you that interaction in the same way."

Before a student enrolls in an on-line course they should ask themselves if they are self disciplined

enough to complete the course.

If you can confidently answer "yes", you should be able to succeed in a distance-learning course.

The Michigan Community College Virtual Learning Collaborative website suggests that a student should "expect to be able to spend two to three hours per credit hour on coursework every week" for each on-line class taken.

Consider an on-line class to be like a fast-food meal that offers you convenience, at your time of need and how you want it. Make sure you keep up with reading assignments, due dates, and discussions within your courses and you will partake of an experience that is of high "nutritional" content and you will have good intellectual "absorption".

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