

Paranormal activity investigated in North Hall

By **KAY BARRETT and JENELLE BEAVER**

Flashlight Features Co-Editor and Flashlight Writer North Hall might have been closed to students on Saturday night, Oct. 4, 2008, but library director Scott DiMarco gave open access of the building to a team of ghost hunters

Steve Diasparra and son Anthony, along with a team of paranormal investigators, were granted access to almost every nook and cranny of North Hall in order to search for signs of ghostly activity. A camera crew from Blue Ridge Cable Channel 13 was also shooting Diasparra and his team for an upcoming episode of the local cable program "Round the County."

Diasparra is the founder and leader of G.H.O.S.T.-PA, (Ghost Hunters of Southern Tioga, PA). Diasparra, along with his team, investigates unusual occurrences in businesses, homes, churches and cemeteries all over Northern Pa.

Last Saturday night Diasparra and his team came to North Hall to search, as many others have for the ghost of Sarah or any other spirits lurking in the six stories of the building.

"I grew up in Mansfield and I, like everybody else, have heard the story of Sarah - many variations of that story in fact. We are really here to try to find, using logic and a scientific method, if there is any actual paranormal activity in North Hall," Diasparra said. "We have had people who work here [in North Hall] give us actual accounts of very strange things happening, like books flying off shelves or just feeling strange, like they are not alone. Some of this can be explained scientifically. EMF (Electro Magnetic Frequency) waves that a lot of hunters use to prove the existence of ghosts or apparitions, can actually be produced by wiring in a building. A building like North Hall is full of wiring so that students can do everything they have to do. "

Diasparra explained that buildings that contain a lot of

wiring can produce large amounts of EMF waves. People, who are more sensitive to EMF waves than others, can experience strange feelings. Diasparra said that according to recent research performed in London, someone who is sensitive to EMF waves may become paranoid, believing that he is not alone or that someone is watching him, and he may get the chills and even hallucinate.

"If a person is sensitive to EMF waves and has a pre-conditioned idea that a place is haunted, he could very easily get frightened or believe that there is a ghost or someone watching him or near him, even if that is not the case," Diasparra said.

Diasparra and his crew went from the basement to the sky light above the sixth floor using infrared cameras, EMF detectors and recording devices. Cameras and microphones were placed on some of the floors to capture any strange noises or visions. Although Diasparra uses a number of different tools, he stresses that he relies on human instinct and logic more than technology.

"The equipment shouldn't be used as a definite ghost detector because there are plenty of logical reasons for why devices pick up what they do or detect what they do. The cameras and EMF meter are just tools to assist us. The best tools we have are our own eyes and ears and science," Diasparra said.

The unusual occurrences detected by the team were on fourth floor south, fifth floor south and the sixth floor atrium. On fourth south, in the middle of the book stacks the EMF meter spiked and Diasparra said that there was no possible way that wiring was the cause. While on fourth floor south, the team heard footsteps running above them. When they went to investigate no one was there. On the sixth floor atrium, the EMF meter spiked once again, but it was one



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According to ghostpa.com, a recent Gallup poll revealed that 50 percent of Americans believe in ghosts.

quick flash and then nothing.

The basement gave off no signs of paranormal activity and Diasparra believes that is because the basement area was not open to many people.

Diasparra thinks that the story of Sarah originated from the death of Sarah Woodruff. She was in the first graduating class of Mansfield Seminary School. Woodruff died just months after she graduated and Diasparra believes that her tragedy influenced the legend of Sarah.