

BEEF BOX Library hours logical?



By MARTHA BLISS
Of the Emerald

Dear Beef Box,

Caught in the throes of yet another term, we must express our feelings toward the insane, twisted logic of the library's closing hours on weekends.

Closing at 10 p.m. on Friday and 5 p.m. on Saturdays, the library deserts students when the need is greatest. When other campus areas become negated as possible study areas (the EMU, dorms and area coffee houses) due to weekend partying, what does the library do but close early?

For those who occasionally need to study in peace on Friday or Saturday nights, why can't the reserve room be kept open even if the reserve room desk is closed? Few extra "person-hours" would be needed to provide this great service.

Also, is there any chance of a 24-hour study room in the library

as at many universities — at least mid-term and finals weeks, if not year round? Once again, a few extra staff hours would greatly increase service to the University community.

Sincerely,
Two book worms

Dear Two,

Your idea is a creditable one, but how many people would really benefit from the time and effort it would involve? Such is the argument William Axford, University Librarian, raises in answer to your plea.

He explains that past experiments and head counts reveal weekend nights and 24-hour exam nights as worthwhile to only a few die-hards. "Most of the kids are out doing what kids do on weekend nights," he says. "I know there would probably be a few

who would study in the library at odd hours, but we can't match every single lifestyle."

Axford says the maxim he operates under in setting the library's schedule is, "Greatest Good for Greatest Number." He explains 24-hour or weekend night services probably would not realize a maximum return on the resources needed. "If we stayed open late at night, there would probably be more employees in the building than students." He figures that even minimal staffing on late nights would cost an extra \$500 a term.

And the library doesn't have that kind of money to experiment with nowadays, he says. The library has had a hard time recruiting work study students this term, thereby being forced to pay more for its help. (He explains that the library pays only 20 per cent of a work study student's wage; the rest comes out of the student's work study grant.)

Although the library cannot afford to add more hours to its schedule, it can experiment with

switching hours around. In fact, Axford says he is currently considering closing the library four hours earlier Fridays and opening it four hours earlier Sundays on an experimental basis spring term.

"We took a survey a while ago at the service desks about weekend hours," he says, "and Sundays seemed to rate the biggest response. Sundays are big study days with Monday classes coming up."

As for opening the reserve book room to studying as you suggest, both Axford and Kathy Lundquist, the reserve book room supervisor, say the idea is good but unworkable. Because they cannot close off the reserve book shelves, security employees would have to guard them.

One suggestion Axford offers is a change in your studying times. He says he doubts that any student who puts in an eight-hour study day from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday would want to come back for more that night.

Editor's note: The beef box is open to anyone who has a beef against the University. The Emerald will answer and publish any legitimate beef submitted to its offices in Room 300, EMU. Please include your name and phone number in case we have questions.

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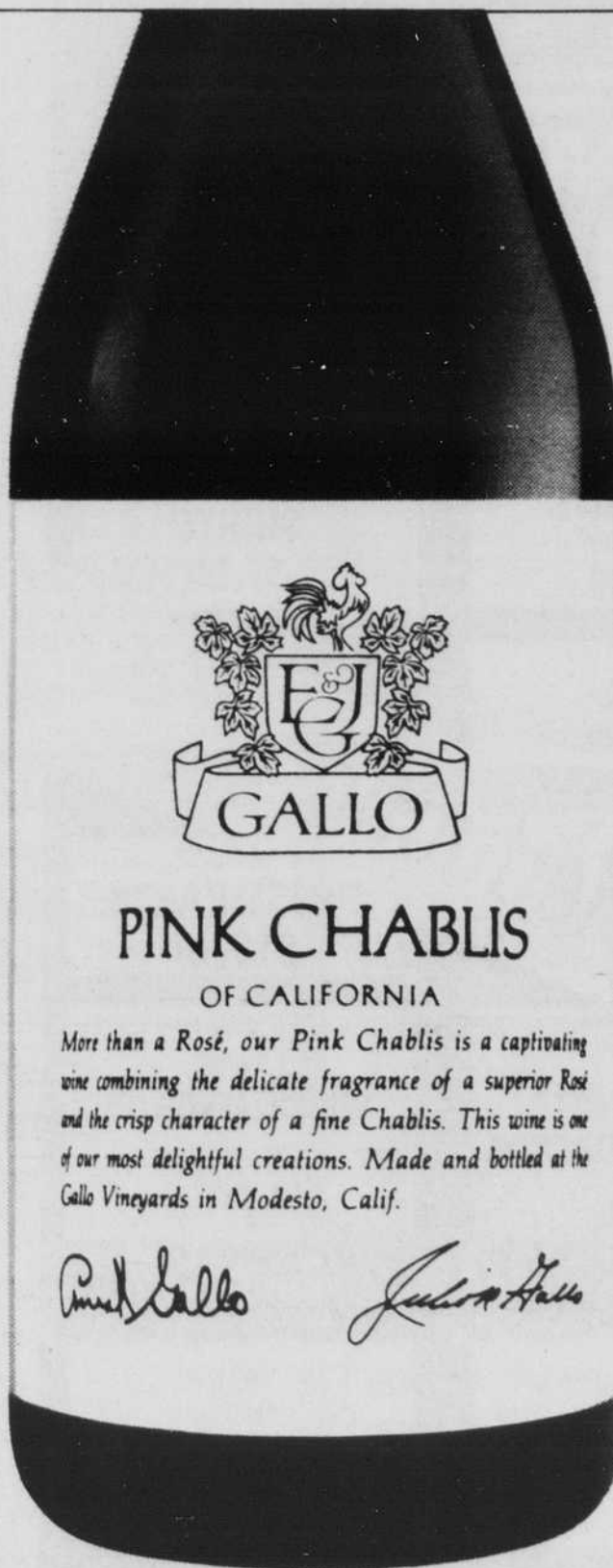
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