

THE HERALD

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Government Shuts Down, Insurance Exchanges Open

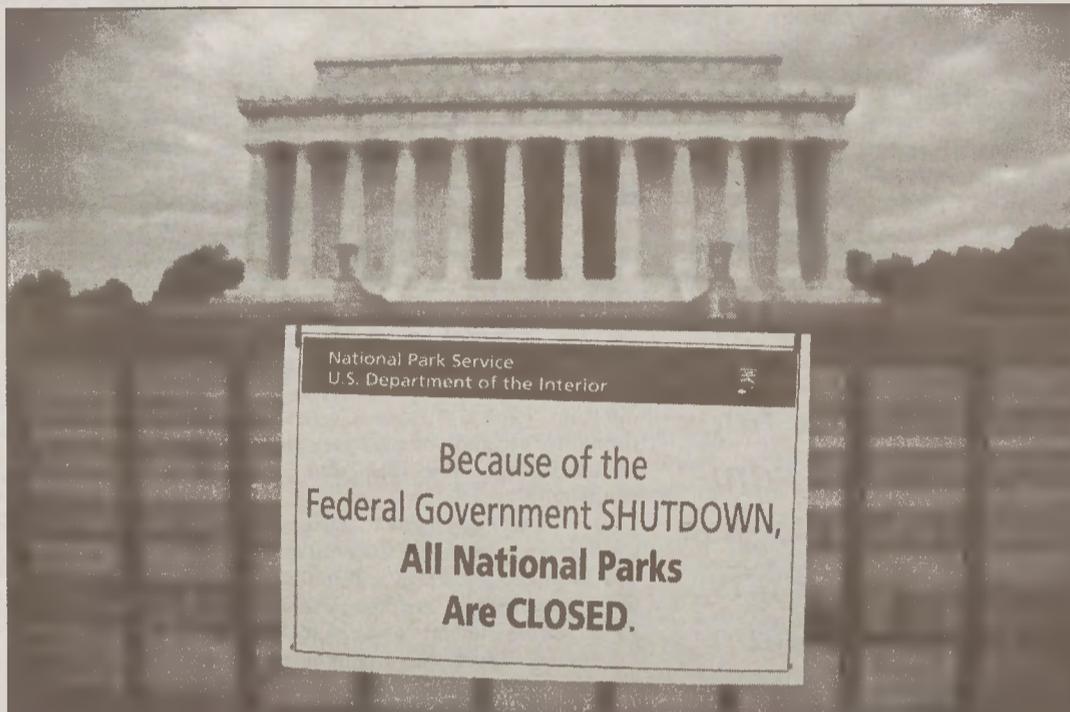
Monique Kreisman, news editor

The federal government shut down Tuesday morning because Congress failed to pass a spending bill. Many federal workers were sent home, and some are working without compensation. Only active duty military personnel will be paid while Congress works to refund the government.

The shutdown was caused by gridlock over a bill with attached provisions related to the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, commonly known as ObamaCare. Republicans tried to add an amendment to the bill that delays implementation of the individual mandate, or the requirement for individuals to purchase health insurance. Under the Affordable Care Act, which will go into effect Jan. 1, a fine will be levied on individuals without insurance. Republicans argue that the mandate is unfair; Democrats claim that Republicans are too stubborn and are responsible for the gridlock that caused the shutdown.

In a press conference, President Obama said, "This Republican shut down did not have to happen, but I want every American to understand why it did happen. Republicans in the House of Representatives refused to fund the government unless we defunded or dismantled the Affordable Care Act."

On Tuesday, Oct. 1, the first day of the shutdown, the insurance exchanges set up by ObamaCare opened. The exchanges are online marketplaces where individuals may purchase private health insurance. They are intended to foster competition and provide affordable insurance to people who were previously uninsured. In some areas, the insurance exchanges are projected to save consumers money;



via news.yahoo.com

in other states, the cost is expected to rise. Fox News reported on Tuesday that the cost of insurance purchased through the exchange in California will be 14 percent higher, but the insurance exchange in New York is predicted to reduce prices by 29 percent.

While constituents' responses to the insurance exchanges are unknown, CBS News reports

that 72 percent of people are in favor of ending the government shutdown caused by the debate on the Affordable Care Act. The spending bill is now being passed back and forth between the House and the Senate, and a compromise has yet to be found.

Male Helper Policy Decoded

Katy Koop, staff writer

Although Meredith College is not a co-educational institution, it cannot be escaped that all students in fact live "co-ed" lives. Whether it is fathers, brothers, lovers, or just really good guy friends - men are a fact of life. Whether explaining Meredith College policies to other students or venting about it to their significant others, it is not uncommon to hear the words "Boy Hours" and "Male Helper policy" tossed around campus.

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Lately there has been some usual confusion about Open House Hours and the Male Helper policy. Rose Turchi, Class of 2014, remarked that as an RA she has "had to reinforce the male helper policy a few times this year. We have had girls have male helpers to "carry their books" or "bring up bottled water." In those cases, a male helper is completely unnecessary." Heidi LeCount, Residence Life Director, said on the matter, "students seemed to not be aware that Open House hours didn't start until the second week of the semester." The Residence Life section of the student handbook states, "Residence Directors may grant special permission for men to carry heavy items to or from a student's room. Men should not linger on the halls after they have completed the task."

While the policy is the same as it has been for years, it can be appreciated that even the friendliest of Zac Efron and Justin Timberlake posters can be confusing to students. Whether students are violating policy by accident or with intent, it is important to remember to consult boy hour times whether by planner, contract, or those charming posters in all the residence halls. If a male helper is actually needed, residents should contact the RD on Duty to get permission. Turchi remarks that this policy "[is

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not] here to annoy girls or to make their lives difficult. We have these rules so everyone can be comfortable in their living space and free to do as they please. When a male is in the residence halls during times when girls are not expecting them, it needs to be for a special purpose and the RD on Duty must be notified and aware of the situation." LeCount concludes, "a tip for students would be to not call and ask if a male friend can bring up a bag of groceries or a case of water. These are things the students can do themselves." Residence Life feels that knowledge of the Male Helper or the Open House policies may make Meredith College feel that much safer and help students flex those "going strong" muscles.

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