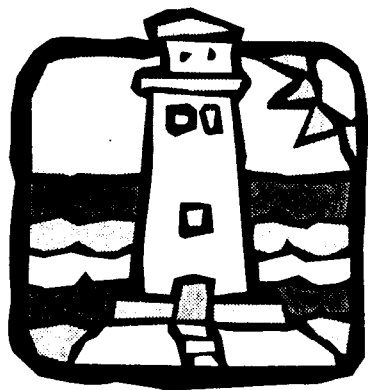


## A View from the Lighthouse

### Let's pick up the pace

Have you tried dialing-in to campus lately? Not very fast, eh? Although the Behrend link boasts access through a 56K connection, the website does explain the fastest speed is around 48K. Behrend is all about computers and technology, right? A lot of majors on this campus depend upon the latest computer technology. It seems that there is always some kind of upgrade in the works. The point of this editorial is to let students know that there is light at the end of this tunnel somewhere, and no, there won't always be slow Internet access on campus, we hope. Yes, it is slow, but there are many issues involved in making access quicker.



handles with the Office of Telecommunications (located at University Park), and it is due for installation during the summer.

Maybe now that U.P. let up its big foot on computer control, things will happen a bit quicker around here. More control makes it easier for the Behrend technicians to monitor equipment and make necessary modifications.

What else are we getting?

In addition to the T3, Behrend may become involved with the "Internet 2 Initiative." With only 96 other universities on this system, this super cool improvement runs at optical cable speed through a super computer center at Carnegie-Mellon. It's quite expensive — we're talking about \$24,000 a month! Wow, that's a lot of money! This system will allow for extra bandwidth when using the internet. And yes, more and more people are using the internet, so we're definitely going to need that extra bandwidth. Behrend is also upgrading from a 100 megabit ethernet to a gigabit ethernet, which will make response time between lab computers quicker.

What's my machine hooked up to?

If you're a residence hall student, don't come to the computer center asking for assistance. Housing and Food Services administration is in charge of you guys. However, the administration, academic, and student networks are all tied in a CISCO router. The problem with the slow connection is what the technicians call the "pipe effect." Some people have very fast computers, but the connections are only 10 Megabits. So whatever extra speed your computer can put out doesn't fit through the current "pipes."

The size of new programs also has a lot to do with the current slowness. New applications are requiring more gas to run them, and what results is a continuing battle between technicians and the new programs. Who will be faster?

Behrend vs. University Park

Amazingly enough, Behrend doesn't have complete control over the way technology is handled here on campus. Rather, University Park has a lot to say about what new equipment to buy, and who to buy it from...if there is money to buy it with. It's been recently rumored around campus that there should be a T3 Internet connection (which is three times the bandwidth of the T1 Behrend currently has) for faster access. This T3 unit would provide quicker access by replacing the current slower T1's, and Behrend will be getting the T3 upgrade in the near future. This is one of the matters that Behrend

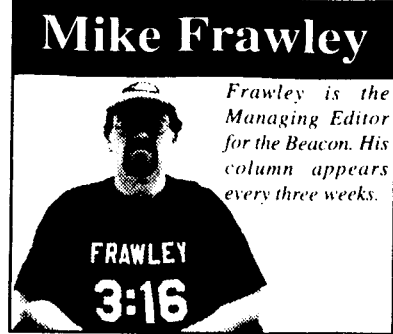
## The Voice of Reason

### What's the point?

Well, another semester is off to its usual stumbling start. And of course it is time for me to start writing editorials again. Maybe this time around I can be a little less controversial, but somehow I doubt it. Anyway, politics is always good for a laugh, so let the fun begin!

Well, it's a Presidential election year, and even with the pitifully low voter turnout among people in the age group of the average college student, it still should be very important to us. Whoever is elected will have a major impact on our lives, and for some reason very few of us seem to care. Shouldn't we be paying attention to how the race is shaping up and what the candidates stand for, or have we been so flooded with political crap for so long now that an American Presidential election has become one more media sideshow that we just breeze by on our way to see what episode of South Park is on (Oh my god, they killed Billy! That Bastard!)?

Isn't it a little ridiculous that the election doesn't take place until this November, but we've had to put up with this crap since the day after Clinton was elected in '96? I'm a po-



**Mike Frawley**  
Frawley is the Managing Editor for the Beacon. His column appears every three weeks.

litical science major, and I still find it hard to care. Now don't get me wrong. I go out and vote in every election, but it is getting to the point where one candidate is blurring into another. You don't see things like this happening in other countries. Many other countries even have laws that state how long the campaigning process can be. With the circus that our elections turn into all the time maybe this is something that our government needs to look into.

And this digging into the personal lives of our politicians does not serve any purpose. Who cares who these politicians sleep with or what in the hell that they have or haven't smoked, snorted, inhaled, or absorbed rectally. As long as it does

not affect how they do their job, then why should I care? The only reason that things like this get any airtime to begin with is that we have become so obsessed with scandal, that like lemmings, we sit in front of the TV, mindlessly watching the parade of stupidity in front of our eyes. And I know that someone out there right now is gearing up to write me a nasty letter, saying that things like this can corrupt the youth of our nation. Well, news flash, kids don't give a rat's ass about what some 50-year-old, overweight guy in a three piece suit says, does or screws, all they care about is the newest Pokemon card and whether they can go beat the hell out of the little kid down the street for it. But we can't have politicians corrupting our youth, now can we? Half the adults in this nation don't know who their elected officials are, so why should little kids know or care?

So what do we have to look forward to over these next eleven months of Presidential campaigning? A lot of garbage television, that's what. Everything may seem to be somewhat calm and civil right now, but just wait until the primaries get

a little closer. Then we'll have the fun of seeing who can dig up what on whom. I am willing to bet that the *Enquirer* will have some front-page layout about a cheap hooker who slept with whomever the front runner is at the time. Oh wait, that already happened, didn't it? And why is this important to the Presidential campaign: because it's fun to read and sells tabloids. Will it affect our relations with China or Russia? Not likely.

And we know what we are getting ourselves into when we elect someone to office. I mean, really, did we all think that Clinton was squeaky clean when we re-elected him? We knew that he was scum, but hell, the economy was good, so why rock the damn boat? I have an idea that could clean up this entire campaign and election process. We can take all of the people who want to run for an office, toss them in a big pit, and let them beat the shit out of each other until only one is left standing. Hey, it might sound a little crude, but it would accomplish the same thing as our elections do now and it would get better ratings.

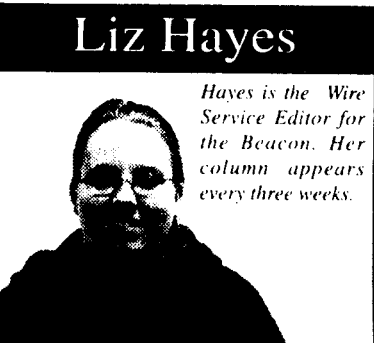
## This is Earth, have we met?

### Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.— American, not just black

I recently attended the MLK Forum this past Tuesday, during which I stayed pretty quiet. Not that I didn't have anything to say, but mainly because I was there not only as an interested student, but also in my "official" capacity as a *Beacon* editor and writer. And there is a slight ethical problem with reporting the news when you are a part of the news. Besides, while debating on whether or not to step up to the mic, it occurred to me that I could tell the whole student body what I thought in my new editorial column, and that is just what I am about to do.

For those of you who could not attend (just where the hell were you?), let me tell you that a majority of the comments/questions brought up by the audience were either directed at a certain panelist's views that affirmative action no longer has a place in American society, or at another panelist's statement that very few white people attended the MLK events, and those that did were mostly required to go for a class. It is the latter's statements that I would like to address.

This particular panelist was angered by the fact that the only white people who attended the majority of the events were those that were forced to go because they are in the RA class this semester or are current RAs. While I can certainly see the point that more people should have been at the events, I do not necessarily agree with the argument that one should be offended by the measures taken to get students to participate in campus events.



**Liz Hayes**  
Hayes is the Wire Service Editor for the Beacon. Her column appears every three weeks.

I have been required to go to several events on campus, such as organizational meetings, speaker series activities, student presentations, and so forth. While it may be true that I wouldn't necessarily have gone to these events if I hadn't been required to do so, it doesn't mean that I didn't enjoy them or learn from them.

I do agree that participation in general on this campus, and probably on many college campuses around the nation, is sorely lacking. I don't, however, believe that the cause of this particular lack is only a racial issue. If the All-College Celebration had no racial connotation whatsoever, would the participation have been any better? I don't mean to sound naive, I am sure that race relations played a part in the turnout of the MLK events, but I'm not so sure that it is the only cause.

I think it is rather sad for all of us, especially those who were kept away from this week's activities because of racial or ethnic issues, that Dr. King's holiday is always considered as a "black" holiday. While he certainly

was instrumental in the Civil Rights Movement in our country, he stood for so much more. He was an activist for humanity, not just for racial equality.

Perhaps, in the future, when planning MLK celebrations, those in charge should concentrate on portraying Dr. King as an American personality, not just as a black hero. I don't mean to strip him of his ethnicity so that he will be more accepted by the mainstream, but to try and show people that his dream encompassed so much more. Perhaps it is the "blackness" of his portrayal that is keeping white students away, simply because they believe that King is not "theirs." Sure, if people came to the events they would hear all about what King stood for, but if they are under the impression that it will be an event that only blacks can appreciate, an event in which whites will be sorely outnumbered, they will never go in the first place.

Campus integration was also mentioned in the same context, with the examples of how white students stick together and only allow a select few minority students to enter their cliques. While I'm not denying this is true — it is probably more prevalent than most of us think — doesn't it also happen the other way around? I walk past the MCC suite at least a dozen times a day. I could probably count on my two hands the number of times I've seen a white person inside. Yes, this is in part because of prejudice on the part of a lot of whites on campus. I like the to think that a lot of prejudice exists

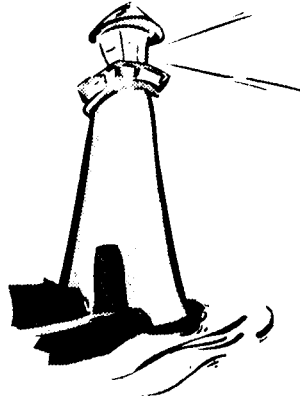
more out of ignorance than from true spite, but the fact is that it exists.

However, I as a white woman personally have not really ventured through that door simply because I feel I would be so outnumbered and ostracized. In reality, I am little different than any of the people who do sit in that office. But I still don't feel welcome. Maybe that is my own misguided perceptions, and I hope that is true. Maybe I am a latent racist, though I don't think so. Regardless of my thoughts, I am segregating myself. However, I don't think I'm the only one doing the segregating. I don't think it is intentional, but I'm not so sure that the diversity-focused organizations on campus always portray the aura that they protest to. While MCC may be for all cultures, and there are a hell of a lot of white cultures out there, it seems to be predominantly for minorities.

Maybe it is a backward type of justice that such a segregation exists. Maybe it is sort of appropriate that whites feel the other side of the burden. However, it certainly isn't going to help us form a more equalized society. Regardless of who is doing the segregating, the end result is still the same. I am not trying to offend anyone, and I truly don't believe that MCC or any other of the related clubs on campus are doing this maliciously, or even intentionally. However, it is still the end result, and it might be a wise move to try and correct the situation before it becomes impossible to do so.

## THE BEHREND BEACON

published weekly by the students of Penn State Erie, The Behrend College



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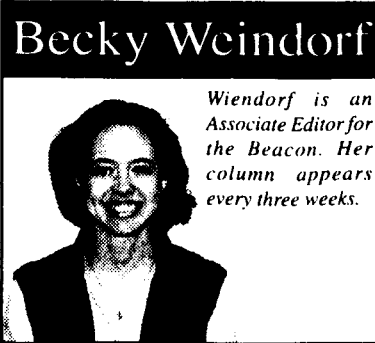
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## The View From Up Here

### Defining the laws of physics

If you're wondering who's writing this, I don't blame you one bit. I'm a new face around here at Behrend, but you'll probably be hearing plenty more about me if you keep reading the *Beacon*. If you really care about my background, I'll give you this much: I'm an 02 ENGL major. Generally, I'm an easygoing and somewhat tactful person, which is why my column may be too demure for an editorial. Hopefully that will change through the semester; but, as I see, you're still reading, so I'll go on.

Rumors of starting college ran as rampant as fire through the halls of McDowell (a local high school, and from where I graduated) about everything from the "all-nighters" to gaining the freshman fifteen (or losing fifteen, whichever fit you worst). These were, in general, called the physics of college — a scientific view that had specific rules that could not be broken. So, what kind of expectations does one get from entering college with all



**Becky Weindorf**  
Weindorf is an Associate Editor for the Beacon. Her column appears every three weeks.

these thoughts running around in your head?

I'll tell you this: I have a friend who is complaining about gaining weight (no, it's not you) and a friend that is ecstatic about dropping twenty pounds in a semester. What's the secret? Well, the latter is in a culinary school and has paid attention to what goes in her mouth, even if it is three in the morning with an English test waiting for you at eight in the morning. And she's also decided to give up that black sludge (coffee, Pepsi,

whatever it is) in exchange for some clear, wet water. If it's a good day, make that carbonated water.

And so, like all the other freshmen-in-training here at Behrend, we find ourselves wincing at the scale every morning or throwing a shirt over the mirror every time we walk in the room. But the difference is that I figured those Twix bars and Pringles cans start to get real old, real fast. It's a fast fix for the sudden hunger attack, but let's face it, why are you still staring in the mirror and complaining about your newfound love handles? Have you recently popped a piece of a tangerine in your mouth lately? They taste really goo-ood!

And another thing I've realized: I've been sitting on my butt for too long. That's all I did last semester, and about the only good it did was leaving indentations on the couch that could engulf my 6-year-old sister. Winter is a time for the human body to store up some insulation (read: in-

sulation is spelled F-A-T). I've decided that, because I've already got a winter coat, I should put that extra insulation to good use: burning. Burning calories that is. I've decided to take up the sport of skiing, which gives you a high that can defy gravity, as well as a sore ass to match. But that's not the entire point either.

Something I've discovered from my first semester here is that there is a little secret to getting through the monster syllabi you get for many of your classes. The body needs play time, too. And let's face it, any physical, strenuous activity clears the mind and will make that term paper type up real easy, all it takes is a little bit of your time for 2-3 days a week, and that work load you're carrying will be lighter.

And since you're still reading, I suggest you take up skiing too. I know my sore ass will be thanking me someday when I can still fit in my college jeans when I'm forty years old.

**Letter Policy:** The *Beacon* encourages letters to the editor. Letters should include the address, phone number, semester standing and major of the writer. Writers can mail letters to behrcoll2@aol.com. Letters must be received no later than 5 p.m. Tuesday for inclusion in that week's issue.

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