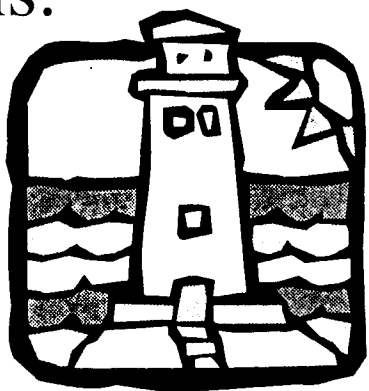


A View from the Lighthouse

By the way, we're having SGA elections.



Ah yes. Another year brings forth more elections for some kind of office. Whether it's for the presidential primaries, some local government seats, or an election here on Behrend campus, one factor seems to remain constant. Not a whole lot of people vote. Naturally, the next question that comes to mind is "why?" Why are so many people uninterested in politics today? Does everyone have enough issues of his or her own to worry about? Just getting by from week to week is a difficult enough task for some people, especially college students. Trust us, we at the Beacon realize the value of one day. No one wants to worry about more issues than they have to. Is this the major problem, or are you thinking to yourself, "I didn't know about the elections!"

The staff of the Beacon believes that lack of promotion was a major problem with the recent SGA elections, among other things. We also believe that better decisions could have been made had the student body been more informed. So now, the moment you have all been waiting for, we would like to give our take on the recent elections.

Let's start with the facts. SGA had 3 seats to fill. Now, usually SGA itself fills any seats that it needs during the semester, but it so happened that this was a large number of seats to be filled. Therefore, SGA made an attempt to get more of the student body involved in the selection process. This resulted in a voter turnout of about 200 people. And although the SGA says that this is the average number of voters, we think a lot more people would have shown up if there was better promotion. There weren't too many signs around campus, and there was only one voting table operating for just 3 hours. Is that really enough to spark some interest in our happy campusers?

So, where does bad promotion come from? Bad organization. Granted, there was a situation that arose. The Public Relations chairperson had a death in the family, and therefore she couldn't put forth as much effort as she might have otherwise. Now, while this sounds like a reasonable argument on the outside, should a governing body cease to function due to the absence of one member? The remaining officers could have bonded to fill the gap during such an important time. Picking up a few additional PR tasks

could have resulted in a better turnout of voters.

What tasks? SGA had that one in the bag. As the SGA president explained, there were a number of things that could have been done but weren't. These ideas included a mass e-mail, papers in club mailboxes, and notifications to teachers. Is this all that had to be done? The voter turnout might have been better had these simple tasks been implemented. SGA president Andrea DiPlacido agrees. She says, "even though the elections this year had the same turnout as previous ones, it probably would have been better if it was more publicized."

Also, the president said that there was a lack of manpower to run the elections. She agrees that 3 hours in front of Bruno's may not be enough, but it was the best they could do. Essentially, there were no volunteers. We believe that increased voting locations would encourage more students to vote. True, Bruno's during lunch hour is a high traffic area, but come on guys, there were 4 members running one table. What about the large number of students involved in an engineering or science program? We're willing to bet that some of those students don't know there's more to campus beyond the Hammermill building.

Another interesting point to ponder - what if SGA had given something out for free? Many students showed up for free pizza last semester, should they be bothered for another 2 minutes to be asked to vote? Come on students, where are you when the SGA needs a little help?

Here's the bottom line. You probably didn't vote. Why? SGA didn't tell you. Why? There were a few situations that arose that could have been taken care of, but weren't. So, if you're not getting involved with your student government, your student government has a hard time helping you. A couple of big signs would have been really nice though guys.

The Voice of Reason Smoke 'em if you got 'em!

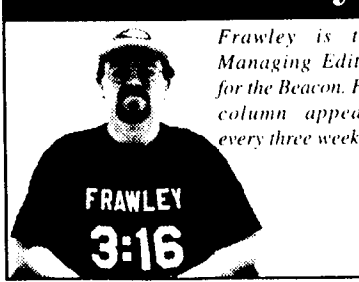
So what interesting things have been happening around here lately? Oh yeah, a big drug bust out in Edinboro. So while we all get a good laugh about how stupid those people were to get caught, I thought I would take some time and put this whole thing into perspective.

Now I'm not naive. I know that there are drugs on campus, hell, you can show up for any class and play "pick out the pothead," but does anyone ever really think about the consequences of what they are doing. I doubt that those students at Edinboro did, or maybe they would have rethought things a little. Then again they were Edinboro students, but hey that's another story...

Is a quick high really worth ruining the rest of your life. Who really wants to go to jail for having one joint on you? And if you happen to give one to a friend, you get 'distribution' added on to your possession charge. That's a great two for one special.

That's what I want to have on my

Mike Frawley



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

resume when I try to get a job. Boy I can hear that conversation now:

"I graduated from Behrend with a degree in Engineering and a conviction for possession."

"Uhh...ok. Don't call us, we'll call you."

"Hey, at least I didn't get nailed for distribution too!"

"I'm going to have to ask you to leave now."

"It was just one joint, it didn't hurt anybody!"

"SECURITY!"

"Did I mention I was a member of

the Chinese checkers club?"

"God damn it! Where are those damn security guys?"

These conversations normally end up with you being thrown out on your ass, with everyone in the office laughing at you. Isn't that an encouraging view for the future?

You might not even be able to get a job ever with a drug conviction. Pennsylvania will not give teaching licenses to people who have a drug conviction on their record. There goes four years of education out the window for a one-hour buzz. Sounds like a great trade off to me! (can everyone hear the sarcasm in my voice, if not try putting down the bong for a second)

If you are going to throw your future away, I'm sure that you can find a more creative way than that, but for those of you who are a little slower than the rest of us, here are some easy instructions on how to throw your life away for under \$5.00:

Step 1 - Get a hammer, a claw ham-

mer if you have one.

Step 2 - Set up a video camera to tape yourself (trust me, this is important later).

Step 3 - Stand in front of camera with hammer.

Step 4 - Hit self in head with hammer (claw side is optional).

Step 5 - Repeat step 4 until you feel brain damage set in.

Step 6 - Send videotape to me so I can have a good laugh

Step 7 - Get job as frycook at McDonalds for rest of life.

See, now that wasn't so hard now was it? (I was going to do a 12 step program, but if your a stoner you'll be lucky to make it past step 1, "Hammer? What's a hammer?")

I know that my instructions might seem a little drastic, but it serves the same purpose as smoking up, and it gets the job done faster and cheaper. There's always one more option that seems to have worked well; try telling the cops that you didn't inhale. It worked once, maybe it will again.

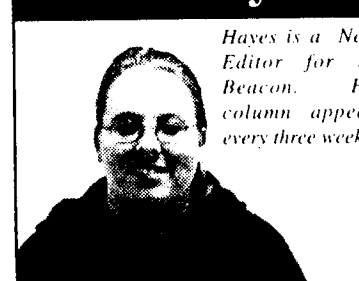
This is Earth, have we met? I see your lips moving, but...

"You are an absolute idiot - I can't believe you wrote what you did last week in your column!" "This school sucks. Don't they listen to the students?" "No one ever writes about what students really care about." If you are one of the people who have said one of the above phrases before, I have one little word for you: boohoo.

Yes, that's correct, I don't give a rat's ass what your particular complaint is. Why? Not because I am an insensitive, self-centered person (though I can be). Not because you are a blithering idiot (though you often are). But because you never say what it is you want to say!

I can't begin to count the number of times people have come down to the Beacon office when myself or some other poor, cornered editor is sitting down here, full of righteous indignation over the latest editorial in the paper. We sit here, watching your lips flap endlessly about the most recent way we have offended you.

Liz Hayes



Hayes is a News Editor for the Beacon. Her column appears every three weeks.

You then proceed to tell us how you will be sending in your letter to the editor for the next week's paper, and that we had better watch out because we will look like morons once you are through with us.

And we wait. And we wait. And we wait. And somehow, those letters never seem to get past the tip of your tongue.

Now, I am pretty sure that some of the things written in the editorial section of our paper have upset some people. I can list about a half-dozen campus organizations that have accosted one of the columnists over

something they've expressed over the course of the year. And I know that there are a lot of people out there who have an opinion on just about everything under the sun.

I also know there are a lot of people in this school who are not only capable of expressing those opinions, but they can also do so loudly!

So why the silence? We have had a sparse amount of responses this semester, and not that many more back in the fall. Is anybody awake out there? Is this thing on?! You have the perfect opportunity to spout off on just about anything, but you haven't seized the day.

Maybe some people think if they write a letter that disagrees with what an editor has written that it won't get published. If that is the case, let me reassure you that we love letters to the editor - they prove that someone reads these twelve or so pages that we slave over every week. Although we won't absolutely guarantee that something will get printed, we almost always do print letters... especially

when they disagree with us.

Please also keep in mind that a letter to the editor doesn't have to be a response to something that has already been written. Prove that you can think up an original thought and send it in.

Another popular excuse for not writing is that you don't have time. You have the time to bitch us out for 30 minutes in the office, you have time to complain to your friends 24/7. But you don't have time to type up a page? Come on. We both know you can whip out a page in no time flat - we do it for class just about every other day.

So, come on, I dare you Behrend. Send something into us next week. Imagine the hassle it will be for us when we have so many letters to the editor that we have to go to five pages just for the editorial section. Hey, if I can write an editorial about editorials, anyone can come up with something!

Hey, are you talking?

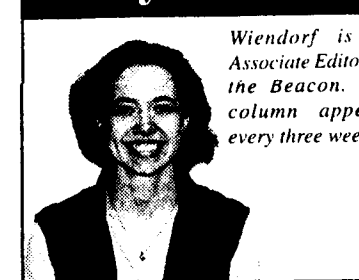
The View From Up Here Living the Behrend life, Commuter style

All right, so I'm that girl you see in the halls with car keys jingling in her purse and with luggage for books, pens, pencils, a calculator, change of clothes for work, money for food, and a snowbrush for my parents' red van that I drive to school every day. I'm telling you, the commuter life isn't as smooth as it gets - sure, I get home-cooked meals every night, and my job doesn't involve preparing food in Bruno's, and I have a car at my fingertips whenever I say, but the commuter life is much more than that. Allow me to present the commuter day, typical of the Weindorf household:

I have a 9:30 class today, but I set my alarm for 7:15 a.m. because my dad needs the hot water by 8 a.m., and supposedly use all the hot water in the twenty minutes it takes me to shower (I don't, really!). So after I grumble a few injustices about having to share the shower (hey, there's little sisters all over the place - I have to grumble everything now), I walk in the bathroom and find that the toilet, is, well, backed up (I am not kidding.)

So I grumble a few more curses

Becky Weindorf



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

about how my 12-year-old sister can't take one second in uncluttering it, but luckily, I don't have to because it soon clears. I then remember my dog, who needs to be thrown in the snow (she's a big baby when it comes to going out) before I can jump in the shower, shivering. It is now 7:25 a.m., another five minutes of hot water shaved off my dad's shower.

So I kick the dog back in the house, run upstairs, and jump in the shower, and to my dismay the stupid drain in the shower is clogged, too, and I grumble more injustices.

Then I'm done with my shower, jump out, smear some lotion on my legs, and walk over to the sink in the

next half of the bathroom to dry my hair, and my six-year-old sister walks in with a purple sweatsuit, and asks me how I am doing. I say I'm doing good, and she goes downstairs to wait for mom to make her breakfast. I walk back to my room to change and feel perturbed at the sight of my room, since I just cleaned the damn thing two days ago and now it looks messy again. More injustices mumbled.

I make my way downstairs, deciding to toast a bagel and peel a tangerine to eat on the way to school, and my mom asks if I can take some videos back to Wegman's since they would be overdue today. I say fine and fill up a bottle of water, carefully avoiding my dog, my little sister, and my dad, who just got up and turned on the cold shower upstairs. (No injustices mumbled from him, he's allowed to shout them 'in his house'!)

So I leave ten minutes early and find that I have this to carry out to the car: my bagel, tangerine, bottle of water, keys, parking permit, coat, gloves, purse, bookbag, and three rental videos plus boots that I haven't attempted to put on yet. Time: 8:37 am, an hour before my first class. I

sigh and dump my luggage in the red van and start to head out of the subdivision, sliding off the road and spinning my wheels to Wegman's. (Not that I have anything against Wegman's, since I work there, but come on.)

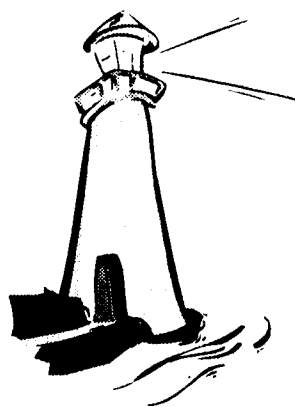
I drop off the videos and slip and slide my way to Behrend, avoiding huge trucks and snowdrifts that decided to form in the middle of the highway, spit out the seeds from my tangerine while driving with one hand, manage to find tracks on Exit 9 to get off the cursed highway, and I mumble more injustices over the blasting radio.

As soon as I make it to a parking spot on the ice rink we call a parking lot, I pull in the spot and belt out some tunes by Celine Dion on the radio. I get out of the car with my luggage and you see me, wondering why I carry so much crap to school instead of leaving it in my room.

And I grumble more injustices, ones you cannot hear, since my six-year-old sister would repeat them if I got out of my routine.

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Jason Snyder

Managing Editor

Michael Frawley

News Editors

Liz Hayes

Karl Benacci

Editorial Page Editor

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