

EDITORIAL

Letters to the editor:

Being ridiculous about profanity

No justice for the lobby-goers

Dear Editor,

After reading the "School sponsored profanity letter" in the March 17th edition of the *Beacon*, I felt a letter to the editor was necessary. It is hard to believe that Daniel Barnard felt that it was of importance to write a letter to the *Beacon* about a stupid mistake. I totally agree that having a basketball warm up tape with any type of vulgarity is inappropriate, but to bring it to that type of exposure was nothing less than being ridiculous.

The basketball player responsible for the tape recognized his mistake and wasn't going to use the tape again regardless of any complaints or letters, so there was no reason to blow something out of proportion like Mr. Barnard chose to do. My biggest complaint about his letter was when he sent it to the basketball player. It was after the AMCC tournament and right before the NCAA game that was played at Behrend. If Mr. Barnard is so into making a good impression like he said in his letter, then maybe he should have used more common sense than to bring something with such a negative impact into one of the most memorable times at Behrend. So instead of one of the players worrying about the biggest game of his life, he's faced with a letter threatening to expose his mistake for everyone to read in the *Beacon*. Nothing like causing tension between a coach, the athletic director, the dean, and a basketball player the week of the school's biggest game ever, huh Mr. Barnard? Well, things luckily were taken care of properly because that is the type of person the basketball player is. He

messed up, took responsibility, and moved on. Reading Mr. Barnard's article made me laugh when I noticed that there was a much larger article right next to it telling how the entire Behrend Men's Basketball team had showed tremendous pride and represented our school so well. Not to mention another article saying the same thing on the page right next to these articles.

Oh yeah, I forgot about the front page and back pages of the very same *Beacon* that was telling how the team represented Behrend so well while making school history. That makes four articles going on and on about how the team had brought spirit, enthusiasm, and a sense of pride to all the students and community. Right in the middle of these was Mr. Barnard's article about a hit song by Limp Bizkit that was inappropriate, and how one player should be penalized. The same player that helped the basketball program gain the respect, positive exposure, and bring something to Behrend that has never been here before to such a degree. As Mr. Barnard said, "it certainly does not project a standard of excellence for our institution." No, it didn't but neither did Mr. Barnard when he rained on the players' and school's parade on their march to making school history. Next time if you chose to deal with an issue by exposing it like you did, you may want to go about doing it a different way or risk sounding ridiculous again.

K. Ebner
Behrend Student

Thanks for the memories Behrend

Dear Editor,

On March 11th I stood in a locker room at Cortland State trying to console a group of young men who had just completed an incredible basketball season. Like most teams our season ended with a defeat and it was a difficult moment. Emphasis was put on the journey not so much the end result. Looking outside the group was something that was also discussed. We had much help along the way and many people to thank who made this year one to remember. So that is what I am going to try to attempt here.

I would like to thank Brian Streeter whose tireless work in organizing every detail helped create an exciting atmosphere each night for the games. People would be amazed at the amount of work it takes, Brian and his staff (set up crew, ticket takers, time keeper- Joe Henderson, SID-Paul Benim and his stat crew, concessions, entertainment and maintenance) make it look easy from the beginning of the season to the very end.

The Cheerleaders, Dance team and Band helped bring a fun environment that made Erie Hall a great home court advantage. I can't think of a place we play that has the same feel. It was the people inside Erie Hall that made it

so special. My hope is that we can carry the excitement to the ARC next year.

The Behrend *Beacon* covered our athletes with great energy. The exposure was a big help in creating interest on campus. Matt Buser was always working hard to get game stories and results to print. Behrend pride was everywhere during the year. We owe much thanks to the paper.

Finally I would like to thank the fans. We won't forget the moments with administrators, faculty, staff, parents and friends. Last but not least our students - the crowd energized the team all year, particularly in the post season. I don't know if we would have made it past Alvernia if it was not for the terrific support.

It is an honor and a privilege to wear a Behrend uniform - our players understand that from day one. The students and all of the groups mentioned above deserve our best, be assured that we will continue to try and do that.

Sincerely,
Dave Niland
Head Basketball Coach

Dear Editor,

I am very disturbed about an event that took place on campus this week. It all began when a group of minorities were in the lobby of Niagara watching a Christian tape. We were all there enjoying the video, when someone interrupted us. The person was not even in their home; she was coming in off the street! As soon as she looked around, she just told us to turn it down. Out of respect we did it, but I don't feel that just because you want to put your baby to sleep early one night, the whole building should have to suffer!

This is a college campus, and yes there are quiet hours, but certain levels of noise should be expected! So a funny part came in the video, and we all laughed. Then she came out with an attitude holding her baby in her arms calling us high school students, as well as cursing, saying that we have no respect. Then one of the students that were there brought up a good point. They said how are you going to tell us that we have no respect for people when you don't even have re-

spect for yourself or daughter, cursing in front her. She didn't even say a word. All she did was get even more upset, and she went to the television and yanked out the VCR cord. She is lucky that the VCR is working because if it was not she would be paying for it.

People shouldn't touch what doesn't belong to them and just because you are the wife of a RA coordinator, that does not give you the right to do what you please by touching other's property. We all know that there is a bias in this situation, seeing that she is an authority figure's spouse. We know that there will be no justice in this situation, so the only thing we could do is let the whole campus become aware of what is going on. I have witnessed many other culture groups in the lobby late at night. Past quiet hours doing their thing, and no one says a word. Why all of a sudden do you want to start speaking out? Can "we" get together on a positive note without people trying to bring us down?

S. Brown
Behrend Student

So much unprofessionalism at the *Beacon*

Dear Editor,

Being a former staff writer last semester for the *Beacon* and after reading the majority of the issues this spring, I can no longer refrain from voicing my opinion about the quality of your weekly publication. In high school, I spent four years working on our award-winning newspaper and through that experience, I found a passion and talent for journalism that I will always have and miss being part of today. However, I decided not to rejoin the *Beacon* staff for this spring semester because I did not want to be responsible for producing such an unprofessional, immoral and unpublished student newspaper.

I completely believe in the First Amendment's right to freedom of speech and freedom of the press, but in my opinion, the *Beacon* lacks their own set of professional standards for their articles. It was Mike Frawley's editorial "Another Election Down the Tubes" in the March 17th issue that put me over the edge. (Now, I know in the past, Mr. Frawley has been highly criticized for his negative opinions about campus organizations and other matters, but I couldn't care less what opinion he chooses to take. As long as one can solidly support an opinion, there is no reason to fuss. After all, it is just one person's viewpoint.) However, it is not the topic of Mr. Frawley's article that disturbs me, it is the constant use of profanity throughout his writing. There was absolutely no need to use eight "swear" words and numerous insults to further emphasize his point.

Even though the *Beacon* is a college newspaper, I would think that the

staff would like to illustrate a bit of professionalism in their work. Frankly, I was embarrassed to be part of this publication for that exact reason. I could not believe that a column appeared called "Bitchin' By Mike." What exactly are you trying to accomplish with such immature, unnecessary words? Is it the intention of the *Beacon* to continuously remind its readers that it is just a student newspaper? That is exactly what it does when articles are printed of such poor quality.

I know the *Beacon* has vastly improved from last year, but it obviously has a long way to go to reach technical perfection. Yet, in order for the *Beacon* to achieve a respectable status among Behrend students and its faculty, I highly suggest you start from square one and contemplate the reasons your staff and editors spend long hours producing a weekly newspaper. After that, I sincerely hope that your work will reflect that motivation. As of now, the *Beacon* portrays careless efforts to achieve a top quality newspaper.

Jennifer Primerano
COMM 02

P.S. Isn't it ironic how a box appeared in the March 17th issue under the Letters to the Editor section encouraging writers to refrain from profanity in their letters? Well, Mr. Editor, I think it is time the writing in the *Beacon* obeys their own message!

National Commentary

Journey of a Lifetime: The Peace Corps

by Alberto Ibarguen
Knight-Ridder Tribune

It was the middle 1960s, and most of us still had John F. Kennedy's call to service freshly ringing in our ears, pulling us into the Peace Corps. Many of the male volunteers felt, too, the push of the military draft and Vietnam War. Some just wanted something different.

My group gathered in Tucson, Ariz., at the university for our first brush with bureaucracy. A dentist, retired from the Bureau of Indian Affairs, was our training director. He had never been to Venezuela, believed dentistry south of the border was risky business and insisted on pulling all four of my wisdom teeth.

We were poked and prodded, vaccinated against virtually everything (except malaria, which I managed to contract after a year in the Amazon), met weekly with a psychologist and in small groups with a psychiatrist.

We studied Spanish, talked with returned Peace Corps volunteers who had served in Venezuela and trained to help start savings-and-loan cooperatives under the guidance of the Arizona Credit Union League, none of whose teachers had ever been to Venezuela, either.

My wonderment at how large bureaucracies worked only increased when we got to Caracas. I had been told to bring extra suits because, since I spoke Spanish, my assignment was to be the liaison between the Ministry of Development and the Peace Corps' head office in the capital.

Just days after arrival, I saw my name on a list that said Puerto Ayacucho. It was the capital, all right. The capital of the Amazon Territory. "Amazonas? But, that's jungle; they can't send me there!" said this boy raised in South Orange, N.J., with the B.A. in modern European history from Wesleyan University. Of course, they did, and I am forever grateful.

Eloy Avendano was the governor, and he decided to send me up-river with a guide to evaluate the program developed by the ministry in Caracas. We traveled by speedboats and dug-out canoes, and I returned 1 1/2 months later to agree that the ministry plan just wouldn't work.

Chiquichique is a fiber that grows on certain palm trees. It is strong and durable in water and used for brooms, brushes and snow-cleaning equipment in Europe. Venezuela was losing market to Brazil because Venezuelan fiber, shipped in 30 to 50 kilogram conical bundles, arrived full of grams and wet, rotted fiber, heavy and unusable.

The Caracas ministry wanted to organize the river merchants into a cooperative to improve the quality. But what Avendano and his development director, Manuel Henriquez, knew ... and I would find out ... was that the river merchants were the problem. When they weighed the bundles, they'd cheat the worker; if a bundle weighed 40 kilos, they'd jot down 30, and when adding up the list skip a few. The workers, who couldn't read but were not stupid, would cheat right back, stuffing their bundles full of stones and heavy, wet fiber. Everyone lost because Europe turned to a better source of quality fiber.

With the governor's blessing, Henriquez and I went throughout the

territory, village to village, accessible only by water. In that magical place with names such as Orinoco, Atabapo, Caciquire, Rio Negro, our groups were normally weeks away from Puerto Ayacucho, itself accessible only by Aeropostal's DC-3, which reliably flew in three times per week.

I was a "co-op extortionist," an organizer. I went from village to village figuring out that the co-op first had to make the workers believe that they would be fairly paid and had an interest in the enterprise. We stopped accepting bundles; loose fiber couldn't be stuffed. Quality, therefore, was guaranteed.

We introduced cash instead of barter, and folks started walking away from their deliveries with armfuls of goods ... radios, batteries and shirts to coffee, salt and sugar ... bought in the co-op store with their newly earned 700 bolivares per ton. Within nine months, we had more demand than we could supply, and the groups were beginning to run themselves.

There were times when I spent weeks at the bow of my 13-meter dug-out, exchanging only a few words with the motorman/guide at the end of a hot day of counting the number of gnat bites on the back of my hands as we slowly traveled the jungle rivers. I ate all manner of game, some insects and learned to feel nature's power.

My friend Humberto Carreno, a schoolteacher, would kid me about growing one of the world's biggest mustaches, just so I would look old enough to work with people such as Manuel Henriquez, 20 years my senior. I was proud to be godfather to Manuel and Ligia's 13th child, Jairo.

It was a man's responsibility, and I grew into it. When the URD left the government coalition, the governor was immediately replaced. The new governor from a different party took over the co-op, distributed its assets to political friends and in months disassembled what we had spent 1 1/2 years building. It was another part of the extraordinary lesson.

Nothing in my background prepared me to go to the jungle to organize a successful business or for the sudden, politically motivated failure of the enterprise. But I learned to believe there. I learned to believe that with good, common-sense plans, things that others can't even see are possible. I learned the power of treating people fairly and with respect. I learned the negative power of greed and partisan politics.

I also learned to love Venezuela and Venezuelans. I learned about the Liberator, Simon Bolivar, and his living influence to this day. I was taken in by Venezuela as if I were one with it, and I have never stopped feeling a special warmth for it.

Tens of thousands of other young Americans had experiences like mine. We now are businesspeople, teachers, senators, newspaper publishers. We are in positions to tell others about the wonderful places and wonderful -- and not so wonderful -- people we met when we lived modestly overseas. And we are in positions to apply those lessons.

The Peace Corps was an inspired concept. It has ennobled participants and enriched our country. Thank you, Mr. Kennedy. And thank you, Venezuela, yet one more time.

National Commentary

Campus should be safe place for pedestrians

The Echo

University of Central Arkansas

Be careful the next time you drive on campus. UAPD may be watching. This month, UAPD started a campaign to crack down on speeding, seat-belt violations, crosswalk violations and other traffic offenses on campus. In four hours, they made more than 50 stops and issued 17 citations.

This effort comes after two recent incidents in which people were hit by cars in crosswalks and a recent incident in Fayetteville in which a woman died when she was hit by a car while running.

This kind of effort is good for the

university, because this is a largely pedestrian campus and students need to be able to get where they need to go without being run over.

Knowing the police are watching people and giving citations to people who don't stop for people crossing the street gives us all a little more feeling of security.

It's often hard to trust people to stop at crosswalks, especially at night, but maybe if people know that the police are cracking down, they will be more careful and more conscientious of walkers.

A lot of the stops made by the police during this operation seem minor. A few people speeding, not wearing seat belts, not stopping at crosswalks

and not using their turn signals may not seem like a very big deal, but these are laws that people should know they can be stopped for violating. Sometimes it's the stops for minor traffic violations that scare people straight and make them start obeying those laws a little more.

It's a reality that most people speed, and a lot of people don't stop a crosswalk every single time there is a person waiting. But incidents like these, where people have been injured or killed, should make us all think a little more about how we drive on campus, and how we walk, as well.

It's also a reality that not everyone stops to see if the cars are going to stop before they step into the street.

Some of the injuries to people in crosswalks occur because the pedestrian walked out from between parked cars and may not have been easy to see.

These stories provide lessons for everyone. We all have to share this campus, and because most of us are at times a pedestrian and a driver, we need to remember to think about other people and that they might not always be paying attention to what we are doing. People often get distracted while driving, but they shouldn't allow themselves to forget they are driving a potentially deadly machine.

**Have an opinion about something?
Tell us!
Send all letters to the editor to:**

behrcoll2@aol.com