

A View From The Lighthouse

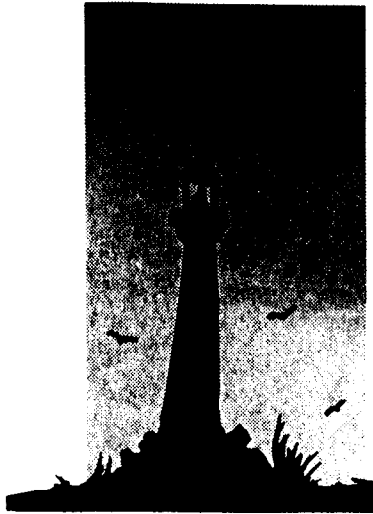
Voting's important!

Well, mad props to all those who went out and rocked the vote this Tuesday. It certainly seemed like those Gen Xers were a bit more enthused about this year's election than they have been in the past. The *Beacon* witnessed a lot of student participation over the last few months, and we would like to take this opportunity to give a shout out to all those who made this election one of the most interesting in recent history.

First and foremost, kudos to all those over at the College Republicans and College Democrats. Who knew - there really is some student involvement at Behrend! And just think, all it took was two guys whom none of us would want to hold a five minute conversation with if given the chance! But anyway, the efforts these two organizations made in getting students to register, and to actually get out there in the trenches and vote were above and beyond. Manning those registration booths, especially during that last week, was pretty dangerous. Many students tired of looking at literature and posters for unfavorable candidates were getting pretty feisty. And we all know how youth today reacts when somebody tries to suggest that they do something good for the country. Oh, the horror! So, getting several hundred of Behrend's population registered was a massive accomplishment.

Also, the College Republicans and College Democrats provided easily accessible transportation to the polling booths on Tuesday for all those who couldn't find a ride or didn't know the way. Yes, those vans covered in campaign posters were there to take you to Brookside so that you could be a part of history. Hope you took advantage of it.

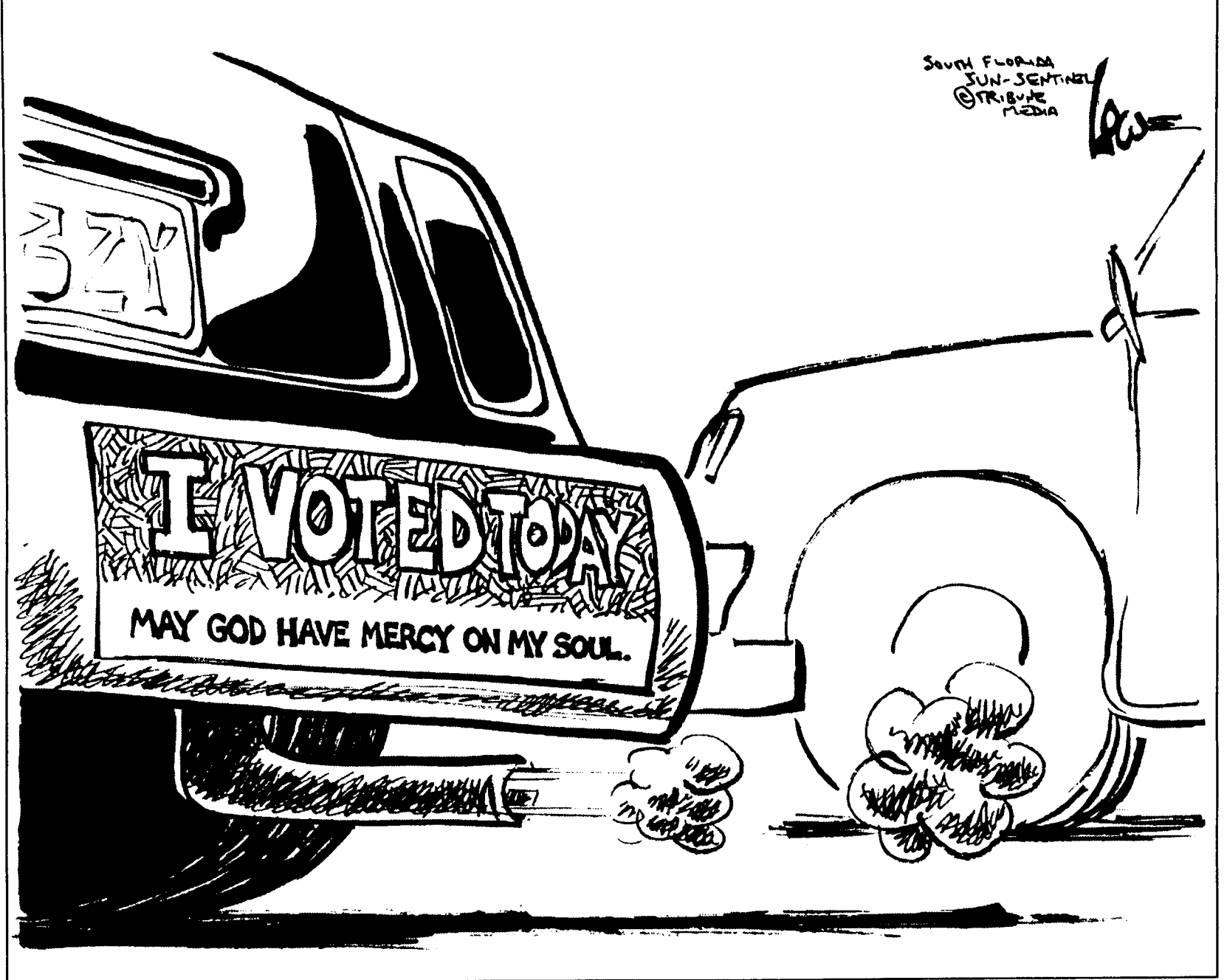
Hopefully everyone out there realizes what this means. If you didn't get registered to vote, you really don't have an excuse anymore - these organizations made it easy enough for Bush to understand (sorry, had to get that in). And if you were going to use the



excuse that you couldn't get to the polling booths, that excuse is gone too. Were you going to say you couldn't afford to get there? Sorry, these two groups made sure that more than just the wealthiest one percent could go (that hopefully evens things up).

And how about giving a round to those voters! Here's to keeping the American Dream alive. For all those who like to say that your vote doesn't count, you might want to think again. Just imagine how you would feel if you lived in Florida right now. You know there are dorm rooms, pool halls, and bars filled with students just waking from the fallout and realizing that if they had voted, the course of history might have been recognizably altered. They are driving around, wishing they could jerk the wheel into the next bridge abutment because they screwed up. Hope that isn't you! It must really suck to know that you are personally responsible for all that will go wrong with the country in the next four years.

Regardless of who wins, it will be a bit of a relief to get it over with after the past few days of witnessing zombie-like candidates, news anchors, and diehard political science majors wander around, bumping into doors and such. But at least those of us who did take advantage of our rights can be sure that we can still show this world a thing or two, even if we did eat a few too many paint chips and spend a little too much time puking off of balconies. Remember - the only way to get people to listen to you is to speak!



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Why the base cost at Behrend?

Dear Editor,

I recently received the meal plan prices, and was appalled at the increase in base fund. At minimum, we are forced to pay an \$830 base fund. What is this money going to? Why the increase? On top of the \$830 base fund, we have to pay for the actual food! This is highway robbery!! The food on campus is normal food, salads, chicken wraps, cereal - it isn't gourmet. So why are

we paying these inflated prices? Had I a car and a place to park it (which is a whole other issue) I could drive down to McDonalds and for \$2.10 get a chicken sandwich and a medium pop.

Some math: \$2.10 X 2 meals + \$.20(for gas) X 64 days = \$281.60 a semester to eat with. Whereas, at Bruno's we pay \$2.35 for a chicken wrap (if you consider 3 strips of chicken a wrap) + \$.79 for a small pop X 2 meals X 64 days = \$401.92. Oh don't forget the \$830 for base fee.

Penn State needs to realize that eating is a necessity not a privilege-we need to eat, and they use that need to drain more money out of us. What does Penn State care about— its students, or its pocketbook? With the increase in meal plans and tuition, you tell me.

Sincerely,
Wendy McGaughey
03 English

Defending of heritage

Dear Editor,

[This letter is addressed to Mike Frawley.]

I read your column "Mike's two cents worth" in which you mentioned that everybody is "Something - American (African American, Italian American, Mongolian American...) but no one is just American." In case you haven't noticed, this country contains more people of different ethnic groups than any other "developed" country in the world. Perhaps people identify themselves as "Something American" because most of us are not completely Americans (I am hoping that the name Christopher Columbus rings a bell or shall I

say Kinta Kinte) or maybe because they don't want to get lost in the crowd. It is quite unfortunate that because you don't address yourself as "something American," you oppose to others doing so. I am a Nigerian American (Yes Mr. Frawley NIGERIAN AMERICAN). I am proud of both my heritages and I am not willing to let go of one for the other. I and many others will continue to showcase our heritage for as long as we can. If you have a problem with it, I'd advise you to deal with it or better yet move to Europe!!!

Matilda Akinyemi
06 BIO

Kudos to the jazz band

Dear Editor,

I am writing to extend my congratulations and applause to the jazz band. I really enjoyed their performance in Bruno's last week. Everyone did a wonderful job, especially the small ensemble. The theme of the selected songs was perfectly suited to their style. I had no idea there was so much talent on campus, and I wouldn't have if I didn't happen to be in there for a late dinner. I wish there was a better way of announcing these events to the campus. I look forward to hearing them perform again, and I hope I know about it when they do.

Sincerely,
Rachel Reese, 07 BIO

Here's your presidency...just kidding!

Man oh man, was Tuesday night insane! I was up until 4:30 in the morning watching the presidential election...or whatever you want to call it. I am not sure if 'election' is the right word because no one was actually elected on Tuesday. But that's ok, a great time was had by all. Especially me.

This was the first presidential election that I was actually qualified to vote in. And I almost didn't get to because of the crazy absentee ballot system, (go 12th district), but in the end my vote counted...sort of.

I am not going to go through and explain the electoral college in this newspaper again. We have had about four of those articles this semester. Just trust me when I say that even though Al Gore swept Pennsylvania in electoral votes, my vote for the 'other guy' (and I am not coming out and saying who that 'other guy' is. I have to keep you on your toes), counted. I swear that it did. And maybe the only reason that I was so willing to stay up and watch all that coverage instead of studying for Spanish, or even sleeping for that matter, was because I voted.

I know that we have all heard the hokey, "Choose or Lose, Rock the Vote" crap. I was getting sick of it. Until this week that is. After I cast my vote, suddenly it all became important. Maybe it was the extremely tight electoral vote count or the "network giveth and the network taketh away" attitude of Tuesday night, I still don't know. All I do know is that I was simply entranced in this whole process. And I had no idea what I was missing while I was sitting there, unregistered and uneducated about the government and

Detours and Small Potatoes Katie Galley

Column page editor



politics. And I implore all the people reading this that are unregistered to get registered. Why not? There is nothing to lose. And here are some of the great things about Tuesday night that you missed by not being 'part of the club'.

Loopy reporters: Between the crew at MSNBC and the crazy kids on NBC, it was a circus. As the night grew later and later and morning started creeping up, the crew got weirder and weirder. Katie Couric's hair got more disheveled and bird's nest like. And by the time that she left around 2:30a.m., she couldn't even get out of her chair. She needed Tom Brockaw to help her get her microphone wire out from around her legs. The best part was when she arrived at the set of the *Today Show* a mere four hours later. As the race for electoral votes got tighter and tighter, so did Brockaw's face. By the time I went to bed, his face was the size of a mango. His eyes were part of his forehead!

Crazy late night antics: Tim Russert writing Florida-Florida-Florida over and over again on dry erase boards while causing the behind the scenes crew to laugh hysterically was one of the most surreal moments in government coverage television. Or it might have been the set fire that occurred somewhere around 5a.m. That is a race that's 'too close to call'... sorry, had to do it. My final vote goes to Forrest Sawyer suggesting the

late night sing along to Frank Sinatra tunes.

Mumbling and slip-ups that would have made Gore proud: The main anchor at MSNBC at one point asked a political analyst to recount the remaining 47 electoral votes, so the man did. And the anchor started mumbling, "I'm sorry America, I should have never asked that question. Now he will never stop, never never." I'm almost positive that he was still aware that his microphone was on, he just didn't care by that point. They were all too tired and too stressed by the final count to even care that they were being watched by billions of viewers! Another favorite line of mine was "by the time we get out of here, there will have been thousands of people that died and will have been buried. Sigh."

Does everyone see what they were missing by not being 'in the club' now? Not only did I get to pick the next president of the United States, I got to see some of the most respected reporters on television make fools of themselves. It was too great.

As I sit here typing this, there is still no clear winner in the election. And I am just about as loopy as the reporters were last night due to my lack of sleep from watching them. So this editorial may not even make sense, and I may be talking in codes, I dunno. I just want to stress my point (or what I believe to be my point), to go out and vote. It's not hard, it's exciting, it's nerve wracking, it's heart stopping, it's great, and I loved ever minute of it. It's politics baby. Go out and get involved and join us on the other side. Adios for this week! I'll see ya'll in three weeks.

Galley's column appears every three weeks.

THE BEHREND BEACON

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

Editor-in-Chief

Jason Snyder

Managing Editor

Michael Frawley

News Editor

Liz Hayes

Editorial & Health Page Editor

Katie Galley

Features Editors

Karl Benacci

Jermaine Hardy

Arts & Entertainment Editor

Deanna Svoski

Sports Editor

Doug Smith

Abby Long (assistant)

Wire Service Editor

Rob Wynne

Photo Editors

Jeff Miller

Becky Weindorf

Associate Editor

Christine Kleck

Copy Editor

Paige Miles



Money Page Editor

Amorya Sinha

Calendar Page Editor

Dena DeCarolis

Advertising Manager

Kim Zuck

Business Manager

Kristine Harakal

Public Relations Manager

Ainslie Ulmer

Secretary

Melissa Proba

Advisor

Robert Speel

Postal Information: The *Beacon* is published weekly by the students of Penn State Erie, The Behrend College; First Floor, The J. Elmer Reed Union Building, Station Road, Erie, PA 16563. The *Beacon* can be reached by calling (814) 898-6488 or (814) 898-6019 (FAX). ISSN 1071-9288.

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.