

A View From The Lighthouse Why SGA elections have no turnout



idea as to how unorganized this process was. Here are some ideas for future SGA elections.

1. Appoint at least three people to take care of the planning and publicity of the elections. These three people should be named and working at least a month before the election.
 2. Have a detailed press release sent to the *Beacon*, with information about the date, time and place of the election. It would also be beneficial to have the *Beacon* print the information that students would need if they are interested in running for a position on SGA. This might at least open up SGA to the entire student body, not just the students that attend SGA meetings.
 3. Work with the *Beacon* throughout the process so that as much information as possible can be printed in Behrend's only source of student media.
 4. Hold the debate between the candidates running for president/vice president a week before the elections, not the day of the elections after voting booths have been opened. The debate could then be covered in the *Beacon* the Friday before the elections. This will give students a better idea of the platforms of the candidates.
 5. There should be voting booths at more than one location. Engineering and science majors rarely make it to Bruno's for lunch, which is where the one voting booth was held this past week. There should be voting booths in several locations throughout campus. If you can't get the booths, then just do the voting by paper ballot.
 6. When voting is over, hold a press conference where the results are announced in front of the candidates. This offers a good front page photo for the newspaper and makes the announcement seem important. See front page.
- This year's process for SGA elections was more confusing and unorganized than Florida's election laws. Let's just be thankful that there were no hanging chads to deal with. That would have been a mess.

Behrend's Student Government Association has come a long way since last year's unorganized mess that the *Beacon* often times criticized. Last year, the organization found a way to make a mess out of stipends, operate under unorganized procedures, and silence students who couldn't speak at "student" government meetings about issues of concern to them.

This year, there's no question the leaders of SGA earned their stipends. Jen Miles, with a couple of very dedicated members, found ways to reach out to concerned students on topics that needed to be addressed. SGA has yet to hit the front page of the *Beacon* with controversy.

But... Yes, there is one problem that continues to be of note year in and year out. And that is elections. SGA continues its struggles in getting good turnout for elections that decide which Behrend students will represent the voice of the student body.

This is a big thing, whether people like to admit it or not. We hear students complaining almost all of time about what is wrong about Behrend. Yet when there is a chance to take advantage of choosing people to represent the students, SGA and the students on this campus take the issue lightly.

Last week, a *Beacon* reporter contacted SGA in hopes of getting information on the elections. The reporter was given two names. One was Jen Miles, SGA's president who was going to be out of town from Thursday to Sunday before the elections. This is of concern.

First, why is Jen Miles in charge of elections? As if she doesn't have enough to take care of. It's obvious that SGA isn't taking elections seriously if they don't have more people planning this event. But wait. The reporter was given another name, of which we will not mention.

When Miles was away before the election, this senator was said to have been in charge. The *Beacon* reporter was told by the "senator in charge" that the elections were to be held the second week of April. If that appeared in the paper, students would still be waiting to vote on April 10 and 11. When the senator was informed by the reporter that the elections were on the 3rd and 4th, there was some confusion to say the least. Some more inaccurate information was given, but we will leave it at that.

That story should give you some



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Looking too hard for diversity?

I, like a lot of students, was surprised to find out that Shaggy was coming to our campus. I was even more surprised, while reading the *Beacon*, to discover that this is, apparently, not just a concert, it's Behrend Cultural Diversity Day. I'm sorry. I guess I missed that announcement. Apparently the school has been looking, searching the ends of the Earth, to find a way to break down the cultural barriers that have plagued our school and make the world a better place for all of us. Please. The idea that anyone would look at this as anymore that just a concert is ridiculous. Would you like to know why the campus decided to hire a "black" music artist? It didn't have anything to do with solving racism. It was because somehow, our school conned a successful musician into believing that Erie, the town that looks like its name, is one of the most exclusive concert venues in America.

Undoubtedly my favorite comment came from Kamilah Gordon. She felt that the school, "Should have found a better African American." Who exactly were you looking for, the second coming of Martin Luther King Junior? Shaggy is only one of a few African American music artists that the music industry and media do not attempt to portray as profane, illiterate or a bad influence on children. You're right. Behrend should have found someone better.

Next, I wasted five minutes of my life reading Jason Snyder's column. It was about his mission to determine who was excited that Shaggy was coming to Behrend, who listens to Shaggy, and who listens to Fuel and Our Lady Peace. I'll save you some time. Almost any listener of Star 104 or music off/similar to Shaggy is probably excited. Those same people, along with anyone sick and tired of concerts by Pittsburgh's saddest excuse

for rock bands (the Clarks and Buzz Poets), may possibly attend. Who listens to Fuel and Our Lady Peace? Well, that would be you and Mike Mitchell.

Look, everyone just has to realize a few things here. In this country there are still poor excuses for life that believe that blacks are inferior to whites. In the same respect, there is a racist television network (Black Entertainment Television) and scholarships given specifically to the most intelligent African American student of a graduating class. Besides renaming BET, getting rid of these special scholarships and sending all the rednecks that think they are so superior to live in Wyoming by themselves, all anyone can do is try to practice some humility.

Matthew Sudak
Senior, PLET

Making lists is the coolest!



Beyond the Cheap Colored Lights

Liz Hayes
news editor

note that this is a list of things you can do with the beer bottles, cases, and so forth. I decided not to make a list of things you can do while drinking beer, because are there really any limits to that list? It would never be finished! And not only is this a great list to make, but I seriously encourage all to attempt the fun things here proposed! So here goes:

Imagine: you are sitting in that wonderful Tuesday/Thursday class that falls right after lunch. You are getting very, very sleepy. The class takes place in one of the rooms in the Academic Building that have been inexplicably hot lately. You sit way in the back, and the professor has never looked at you in two and a half months, let alone called on you. You have never read the supplementary text, and you have absolutely no idea what is going on. You have even forgotten what class you are in - is it Intro to Western Civ, Intro to Psychology, or Intro to Eating Paint Chips? How the hell do you keep from falling asleep?

Make a list! As several of our editorialists have demonstrated this semester (and I am in no way knocking the efforts of my comrades), lists can be quite useful. And though it may sound odd, this sleep prevention method has proven infallible. It also may expand your ego a bit, as you may find that you know more than you think you do. Next time you are in danger of nodding off, try making a list of something. List the states in alphabetical order, then add in the capitals. List all the Led Zeppelin songs you can think of, then arrange them in order that they were released. List the number of times your professor stutters or the kid in front of you sniffs really loudly and grossly. And to get you started, following is a fun list my friends and I made last week.

Fun things you can do with beer list (please

1. The Fridge O' Beer: Just imagine it - a refrigerator filled with nothing but beer. The shelves, the lunchmeat drawer, the crispers, the butter compartment, the egg holes, even the freezer (this beer will need to be consumed first) - all filled to capacity with bottles of beer. And to make it even more picturesque, use all the same brand of beer and make sure all the bottles are facing the same way. It would almost be a shame to drink any. Almost...

2. The Beermobile: Get a station wagon or hatchback. Get several cases of beer. Put as many cases of the beer in the car as possible. And voila - beermobile. Note: probably any car could be used, but the boxier shape of these cars, plus the extra windows, will make it all the more fun. Also, trying this with a pickup truck might be rather enjoyable as well. Disclaimer: I am in NO way encouraging drinking and driving; that would be stupid. Use closed or empty cases only, please.

3. The Beeramid: You know how there is that one detested RA that always seems to be on duty during your late-night activities? Or that one neighbor that always calls the cops to your parties? Well, it's payback time! At the next party, get beer cans instead of bottles (you technically could use bottles, but there is a high potential for breakage here). Save the empties all night. After the party (preferably once everyone sobers up), go to the hated person's door and stack up the cans in the doorway. Be careful - one slip and you're busted! That way they will get a fun surprise in the morning! No need to set the alarm clock to catch this one - you'll hear it!

4. The Beer Can Raft: You always wanted to

go sailing on the lake, but you don't have a boat and can't afford to rent one. And you always wondered if it would be quicker to just sail to Canada, rather than drive there. The solution? The Beer Raft! Beer cans sorta float, right? So tie a whole bunch of them suckers together and make a raft! You might want to stop up the spouts, though, or you might be crawling along the bottom of the lake with the hypodermic needles long before you make it to Canada. Duct tape some flattened beer cases together to make a sail. And Canada, we're on our way, eh?

5. The Fish Bottle: Think of all the empties you've thrown away recently. Isn't there something more worthwhile that could be done with those bottles? Maybe some of you more environmentally-conscious luses have recycled your bottles in the convenient bins in the hallways, but how do you know they are actually being reused? Maybe they are being tossed into the lake to join the needles and the unsuccessful rafts? Instead of tossing them, why not use them as fish tanks? Get a fish for every bottle. But you might want to get small fish so that they don't get stuck when you clean them. And don't stop at fish - you can fill bottles with sea monkeys, shrimp, crabs (not those kind of crabs!), snails, etc. Now you can assure yourself that your bottles are going to good use by using them as habitats.

And that's just to get you started. Have some more fun ideas to get your \$16 worth outta that case? Send them in - we can always use letters to the editor that aren't criticizing the columnists, the paper, or the school. What better way could we use this space than to dedicate it to the full enjoyment of twelve-ounce nutrition? So, next time you are in class trying to oh-so-subtly hide the fact that you are really sleeping and not resting your forehead on the palm of your hand, think of me and add to the beer list. Or make your own. You never know what you know until you make a list of it!

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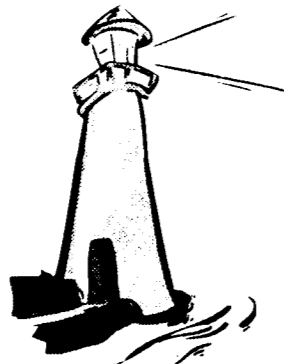
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Do you have an opinion about something going on around campus? Or do you have an opinion about everything? Think you have what it takes to write editorials? The *Beacon* is currently looking for new editorial columnists for this fall. Send an original sample editorial of at least 500 words to behrcoll2@aol.com. Deadline is April 13 at 5:00 p.m.