

Growing up in a day

By Kate Kennedy (KRT)

In one of their legendary songs, the Beastie Boys summed up what a fair portion of college life is all about: "You've got to fight, for your right, to party." Fight? Well, maybe not literally. But partying - that's why some students choose a school more than a few miles from home. Such was life before the date that now lives in infamy.

The booming '90s fed college students the notion that money was paramount and our economy would be perpetually programmed to a breakneck speed.

Life was good and the future was bright. Being young, carefree and innocent was a guaranteed right at the proverbial Ivory Tower.

But then came Sept. 11, and the nation took a collective punch in the stomach. No one was immune from the aftershocks. Not even college students, as expressed in a just-released poll by the Independent Women's Forum.

It should come as no surprise to learn that students are still essentially liberal in their politics. In fact, according to the IWF poll, college students may be the most liberal constituency in America - 55 percent - when compared to the U.S. electorate, which ranks 33 percent liberal.

And yet, President George W. Bush enjoys unprecedented support from this segment of the population. Gone is the nasty aftertaste of the 2000 election and the infamous Florida recounts. A full 75 percent of students approve of the President's performance and 70 percent approve of him as a person. While not the 80 percent-plus numbers Mr. Bush enjoys from the general public, it's still a striking number given the student population's taste for liberal traditions and policies.

What's more, only 18 percent wish Al Gore sat in the Oval Office today.

So much for the accidental presidency; George Bush is clearly their commander-in-chief.

We're looking at a generation of young people in the formative years of life when everything changed in one day. Now, they've been forced to grow up fast in a world that's no longer so idyllic.

The two biggest concerns topping the students' list were terrorism and the economy, sentiments that mirror the focus of the Bush Administration and the general public. In some ways, it's comforting to know they've been affected, moved. And maybe not in drastic, seismic shifts, but a full 32 percent now spend more time praying and 22 percent have decided to hit the books a bit harder.

Could it be that we're witnessing the re-birth of values in a student population that leaves many guessing what it treasures? It appears that, almost overnight, Sept. 11 clarified what college students truly cherish. Ninety-four percent value personal responsibility and family and 63 percent value patriotism.

All this coincides neatly with the call to arms issued by President Bush. On Sept. 20, the nation expected marching orders from the President during his address to a joint session of Congress. We had been prepared to expect sacrifice, but we were told by our president to take to the skies and charge up our credit cards. Fair enough, the economy needed consumer confidence. There was criticism that the President didn't ask enough of us in that primetime speech. That changed during his State of the Union address.

"For too long our culture has said, 'If it feels good, do it,'" said Mr. Bush. "Now America is embracing a new ethic and a new creed: 'Let's roll.'"

Are college students ready to answer the call? Fifty-eight percent of those polled value volunteerism. It will be interesting to see how many translate that value into real action. The opportunity is there. They can sign onto the President's initiative to commit two years, or 4,000 hours, to a cause greater than themselves. Sept. 11 has taught us a lesson in the value of time; how we choose to spend it should be an issue of utmost importance.

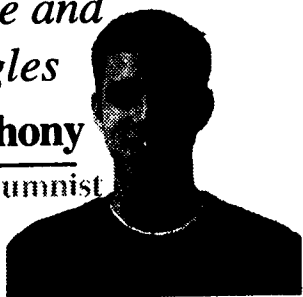
And yet, Sept. 11 has also provided a tutorial that no college textbook or tenured professor could hope to duplicate. Peace and prosperity are not guaranteed and should not be taken for granted. War and tragedy do not take place on distant continents. Evil can wreak havoc on the most unsuspecting public, in the greatest country on earth.

College students have an answer to this wake-up call. Intangible qualities are suddenly back in vogue. And it couldn't have come at a better time.

Encompassing every editorial ever written

G. Love and Bojangles

Ryan Anthony
editorial columnist



It's getting down to the nitty-gritty here at Behrend for me. Spring break is just around the corner and I'm still scrambling to make plans. Likewise, graduation is just around the corner after that and I will doubtless be scrambling to put the finishing touches on my thesis. But what would college be without essential landmarks like these? As an editorial writer, I have realized that there is a sort of landmark for writers that I have yet to accomplish. Well, it's not really a landmark, I guess, it's more of a requirement. From reading bits and pieces of the Beacon since my freshman year, I have realized it is my duty as an editorialist to write about a handful of specific topics.

Rather than use up the rest of my columns addressing these mandatory issues written

about countless times by editorialists before me, I choose to cover all of them in one article. Plus, since they have all been written several times already, I'll spare you the boring details and give the Spark Notes versions instead. Keep in mind, the following is not at all a list of my own ideas; it is, rather, a summary of repetitive editorials written year after year by former enlightened Beacon writers.

First, Behrend sucks. There is nothing to do here on weekends or weeknights except drink and drink some more. There is nothing within walking distance, so we are all stuck here with nothing better to do than sleep. Once we have slept all we can, we wake up and start drinking again. Therefore, Police and Safety and RAs should take that into consideration before they bust us.

Secondly, snow removal here sucks. How hard is it to shift a truck into drive and lower a plow? Why wait until it stops snowing before you even think of beginning to clear the walkways that get students to class. It's no wonder so many people skip their 8 a.m. classes. They should never have scheduled them in the first place because everyone is too hung over to get up at that time (see above paragraph). I love how maintenance throws

down a pile of salt in one spot and then expects people's shoes to track it across the entire snow covered campus.

Erie sucks. We get to see the sun from about August until October and not again until May. I wonder if that's why you never see any tour groups going through during those months. The only thing we are left with to do is go to the bars. I am not positive, but I think aside from Millvale down by Pittsburgh, Erie has more bars per capita than any other town in the world. Anyone out there from Shaler knows what I'm talking about.

Let's see here. So far I have covered Behrend sucks, snow removal sucks, and Erie sucks. I can cross those off my list of mandatory topics and move on.

Food on campus sucks. Dobbins offers such a huge variety of foul items that I feel like I'm lining up at a smorgasbord piled with socks that have been fermenting inside students' wet shoes after they've had to trek through a foot of snow (see above paragraph) to and from class all day. Bruno's does a little better. Since they only offer three products, they at least know how to make a bacon cheeseburger. It's like they take three students' sweat and snow soaked socks and

manage to cook one of them up pretty well.

Next on my list here is my job. My job sucks. I am miserable everyday because I wake-up, go to school, drop my socks off at Bruno's (mine are the bacon cheeseburger of socks), go to work, do homework, and go to bed. Then on the weekends I go to work, sleep and do it all over again the next day. I'd go to the bars, but I'm underage and I've already had my license suspended (I found out that this is a requirement if you want to one day call yourself an "Erieite"). Anyway, my job sucks and people are sucky tipsters. Tip your waiter or waitress. They really work hard for you and their job is not as easy as you may think.

Wow, I've reached my word limit and I still haven't covered graduation. Greeks, athletics, getting a real job someday, housing, my classes, homework, and parties. I'll have to cross all those off my list next time. Until then, remember nothing above represents my own ideas. My superiors forced me to write about those topics or else I would lose my position as a Beacon editorialist.

Anthony's column appears every three weeks.

Young people still making black history

By E.R. Shipp
New York Daily News

The thing about Black History Month is that it's too short - February is the shortest month - and it's too often a simplistic display of what might be called black trivia. Who invented the traffic light? Who came up with the plan for Washington? Who came up with empty-hundred uses for peanuts?

But the other night I saw, and, more importantly, felt a reason to celebrate. It was an occasion to remind us that it's often young people who spur us to reform. These young folks, ranging in age from the teens to the 40s - were blacks, whites, Latinos and Asians who were being honored for their activism. It was, as the Rev. James Forbes put it in his inimitable style, an affirmation "that it's the people who make the difference when they learn to walk together."

The honorees represented a continuation of the "Long Walk to Freedom." An exhibit of that name is on display at Riverside Church, giving recognition to 16 people, black and white, whose efforts during the civil rights movement made a difference but went largely unrecognized. History student that I am, I didn't know, for instance, that Roberta Yancy, now a public relations specialist at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, first made her mark as a high school student in Pennsylvania. She challenged the "whites only" snack bars in her hometown and was charged with disorderly conduct for doing so. After she graduated from Barnard College in 1962, she went on to a leadership role in the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee. Who knew?

And I certainly had not heard of the younger

generation of men and women honored Sunday night. Folks like Rachel Lloyd, whose organization, GEMS - Girls Educational and Mentoring Services - deals with the sexual exploitation of young women.

Gessy Nixon, who grew up in an abusive home, works through Voices of Youth to train those who manage the foster care system, providing the perspective of young people who've come through that system.

Hosea Givan is humbled by the notion his work carries on the legacy of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. and others we revere in February. But he also sees his role as different from theirs: "If I can save 20 lives a year or can redirect 20 lives a year, that's a major contribution. I don't have to lead a march to make an impact."

He and the others - Isis Sapp-Grant, Jane Bai, Chhaya Chhoun, Sayu Bhojwani, Oona Chatterjee, Andrew Friedman, Jason Warwin, Susan Wilcox, Khary Lazarre-White - are there "in the biting cold and the searing heat," as Forbes put it. As their mentor, the Rev. Alfonso Wyatt, vice president of the Fund for the City of New York, made clear, they often operate not on shoestring budgets but on "wish budgets." And they're tackling issues that many of us older folks don't spend our days dwelling on: gentrification, welfare benefits, immigration, domestic violence, sexual abuse, racism, economic inequality.

"Struggle," said Wyatt, is what people do when they "care so much for others that they are willing to inconvenience themselves."

I can't think of a better way to observe Black History Month, that time of the year when we focus on all that black folks have contributed - and still contribute - to the making of America. The struggle does continue.

NEW YORK TO OFFER CORPORATE NAMING RIGHTS AT CITY PARKS



'I SEE THE NEW WINTER OLYMPICS COMMEMORATIVE BOXES ARE IN...'

Why do American snowboarders wear such baggy pants?

By Mark Patinkin
The Providence Journal

Thoughts at Large:

-Truth-test for everyone who watched Olympic downhill skiing: Admit it, in some dark part of your psyche, you were hoping someone would wipe out.

-And you thought the same thing during ski-jumping.

-In their testimony to Congress, Enron's top executives insisted they were dimwits kept so in the dark they could barely find their own offices, and certainly had no clue how their company was run. Gee, I guess they were mistaken all those years they passed themselves off as the most on-top-of-it, in-the-know business geniuses around.

-I've got nothing but applause for the Americans who won us snowboard and mogul medals, but why do they wear such baggy

pants?

-By the way, now that they have snowboard events in winter, can the street luge and the skateboard half-pipe be far behind for the summer games?

-Before you dismiss such sports as odd, take a moment to watch curling, where people slide a heavy granite teapot down the ice, while frantically sweeping brooms in front of it.

-I voted for Al Gore, in part because it seemed Bush and his team were a bit mean, which is exactly why I'm now glad Gore lost - Don't you prefer having your war run by a crowd who's a bit mean?

-Why doesn't anyone take the top newspaper when they choose one from a pile?

-I hereby decree that Olympic journalists be fined \$100 if they describe competitors as "mining for gold" more than once.

-I see that Barry Bonds stands to make \$90 million over the next five years, which brings up a critical cultural question: Why did I join

my high school newspaper instead of the baseball team?

-If Arthur Andersen auditors had worked for the Nixon White House, they'd have erased the tapes.

-Why do women always talk about men as being "a good catch." What are we? Fish?

-Word to prima donnas: Remember Terry Glenn, the talented but misbehaving New England Patriots' wide receiver who was suspended long before his team won the Super bowl? Did he miss the ride of his life or what?

-As one who only watches football at season's end, I'd forgotten how stressful it is. Is there another sport where you shout at the television as much?

-Then again, if you think football fans are diehards, how about Olympic downhill ski buffs who hike up a mountain to spend hours in the snow watching 70-mile-per-hour racers zip by for a half-second each.

-Why do women who walk around in pain-

ful, pinching, high heels have scorn for women logical enough to wear "sensible" shoes?

-Before the people of Eastern Europe decided to break up their countries, shouldn't they have thought about how hard it would be for the rest of us to follow such competing Olympic hockey teams as Kazakhstan, Slovakia, Latvia, Belarus and Ukraine?

-Given how many of the accused need to be prosecuted, I think military tribunals are the only logical choice.

-For Enron executives, I mean.

-Meanwhile, is there room for them at Guantanamo Bay?

-And a final question: What happened to all the roaring '90s day traders who greedily, and foolishly, tried to play the market like a casino?

-Final answer: They went to work for Enron.

Do you have something off your chest?
 Write letters, both positive and negative, to the editor!
 Email: ryan@krt.com