

PERSPECTIVES

The First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution:

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

It happens on the same day every year

By Jennifer Juncosa
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My mom has a theory that there is no excuse to miss a birthday, Mother's and/or Father's Day, anniversary, or Christmas. She says that if a holiday that deserves a card, present, or phone call lands on the same day every year, then the excuse that you forgot isn't valid.

I personally have never missed any of

these holidays. But there is one thing that needs to be done every year at the same time, and every year at the same time, I forget. Why do I forget to stop writing the old year once New Years passes, and why does it take a whole month to do it?

Every year, after Christmas, I set an hour or so aside to write thank you cards to my relatives that sent me Christmas gifts, and this year, I had about seven to write. As I wrote the last one and signed my name, I realized that I forgot to write

2009 on every single card.

Now, I am a perfectionist when it comes to thank you cards because I know they will be put on my grandparents' refrigerators, so I try to make sure they are perfect. I wrote each card at least twice and I was not about to redo them all, so I simply wrote "I'm sure I meant to write 2009."

I know for a fact that I am not the only one who forgets to write the new year, because I asked. It's one of those tedious things people forget, but how

embarrassing. In most cases, people go to parties to celebrate the new year. People stand in freezing temperatures and buy glasses with the new year making up the lenses and yet, by the next day, it's like nothing changed.

Some might say that if you drink at the party you just might not remember and that's why you forget to write the new year. Well, I'm still not 21, and for the last 20 new years of non-alcoholic parties I have been to, with friends or with my parents, I wake up the next

morning forgetting to write the new year. Alcohol has nothing to do with it.

In psychology, you learn that it takes up to 20 days to form a habit so it might just be that simple. It's just amazing how you can forget something that happens every year on the same day.

Luckily, I wrote my thank you cards in January and caught my mistake early, so in February I am still not writing the wrong year. I guess that's the perk of writing thank you cards in a timely manner.

Help Wanted

Who: Anyone. Students, Faculty, Alumni, etc.

What: Write for *The Behrend Beacon* or train to be an editor for next year.

When: Weekly or in your free time. Deadlines are 2 p.m. Thursday afternoons.

Where: You can express interest by stopping by the *Beacon* office in the basement of REED or through email to any one of the editors.

Why: Being a part of your school paper says a lot about you. It helps develop your writing skills and is fun. Being a part of the *Beacon* staff will give you a step ahead when applying for jobs or internships before and after you graduate. Most writers that have worked with us move onto paid positions by their second semester. Not only does working for a college paper look impressive on a resumé, but it gives you the opportunity to meet with, interview, and have special privileges such as getting into sold out events. The *Beacon* staff has had the opportunity to write about and/or interview Bill Clinton, Ted Danson, Soledad O'Brian, Tom Ridge, and Lynn Swann. The staff last May went to the Barack Obama rally on campus and the Sarah Palin rally at the Bayfront Convention Center in November of this year.

contributed by Jennifer Juncosa

OHIO HALL



The average guy's guide to poetry

By Neil James Peters
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There comes a time in every man's life when he, driven by some unearthly need (possibly to increase his level of sophistication or to pick up chicks), settles himself into the local coffee house and flips open a brand new book of poetry. Upon losing his poetic virginity, he typically leafs over a few pages of work while sipping a fresh mocha frappuccino. However, the poor man inevitably looks up, drooling from confusion, with his cerebrum on the verge of collapse and utters, "What?"

It happens to every man on his first time. We get a little over confident because we listen to Led Zeppelin and think we can handle anything. The fact of the matter is, like everything else in life, it takes practice and patience. For example, if one wishes to ask a girl out on a date, he does not just go flailing in there, unprepared with his pants around his ankles, blowing bubbles from a plastic pipe. He must approach calmly and confidently, with gentleness and grace, pull back its cover and observe the goods.

The next time you prepare to read a poem, try to think of it as an attractive woman and try to assess it in the same manner. How big is it? How tall is it?

Why is it arranged the way it is? Is it harsh? Is it gentle and loving? Does it slap you in the face, call you an obscenity and make you feel bad about leaving the toilet seat up? If so, then you have just taken the first step in hacking your way through the briar patch that is poetry.

Now, don't get too confident. You still have a long way to go before you are a full-fledged Liberal Arts major. Shake off those training wheels because it's time to actually read the poem. It is a big world, and there are a lot of poems that you may stumble upon; odds are that the one you randomly flipped to while on the crapper is a bad one that doesn't make any sense. It may even

seem as though the poet simply threw a fistful of Scrabble tiles against a wall and only used whichever ones fell into the tray of hash brownies. Don't get discouraged. It is going to happen more often than not.

A more astute reader may query, "Why do poets do that?" It is a well-known fact that many poets, and artists in general, eventually suffer from what I like to call Aging Rock Star Syndrome. This sad ailment is caused when an artist puts out a few good albums, compilations, or books and establishes themselves as a recognized person in their particular field. After this establishment occurs, the artist is able to put out mediocre albums with only one decent

song and the rest are filler. This leaves the devoted fans with nothing but disappointment and confusion.

After reading all of this and seeing how much work can be put into reading poetry, an even more astute reader may think, "What's the point?" The point is that reading poetry will make you smarter. It can maybe give a man something more to talk to a woman about than how cool her cell phone is and how it matches her eyes. It also may help a gratuitously macho man seem gentler, or an engineer look well-rounded. Just remember that poetry is not a replacement for good hygiene. So make sure you remember to shower every day. Just a heads up there.

In my opinion:

We need some underground tunnels.

I live in Rochester, New York, and most schools in the area have underground tunnels for when winter throws wind chill and snow in our face.

Out of all the places and schools to not have these tunnels...

Beacon Thumbs Up



- Syllabus day
- A clean slate
- Cashmere
- New computers

Submission Guidelines:

Letters should be limited to 350 words and commentaries 700 words. The more concise the submission, the less we will be forced to edit it for space concerns and the more likely we are to run it.

The Beacon does not publish anonymous letters. Please include your major, faculty or administration position, and semester standing. Deadline for any submission is 3 p.m. Thursday afternoon for inclusion in the Friday issue.

The Behrend Beacon reserves the right to edit any submissions prior to publication.

Please keep complaints as specific as possible.

Email submissions to jjj5061@psu.edu or drop them off at the Beacon office.

Beacon Thumbs Down



- Negative temperatures
- Wind chill
- Full classes
- Salt rings on jeans