

Editorial / Opinion

Voter Registration

College Students should be among the most well-informed, responsive, and involved citizens in our country. However, when students are asked if they vote or if they are registered to vote, the answer is often 'no.' Following this response are many reasons for their non-participation. SOME OF THE REASONS INCLUDE:

- 'I am registered at home and I can't get there on election day.'
- 'I haven't lived here long enough to register in this district.'
- 'I didn't know where to register.'
- 'I didn't know where the voting polls were.'
- 'Does it cost anything?'
- 'I had no transportation.'
- 'What election?'
- 'Who is running?'

College students have one of the lowest voter turnout records in the United States. And the preceding reasons for not voting are solved when these facts are considered:

◦ Absentee ballots can be applied for from the county courthouse in the student's hometown. These allow citizens to vote by mail. In Pennsylvania an absentee ballot can be applied for anytime until the Tuesday before election day. They must then be returned to the courthouse no later than the Friday before the election.

◦ If a student lives out-of-state, he/she can contact the county courthouse and inquire about that particular state's absentee voting procedures. Absentee voting allows students to vote in their hometowns if they can't get there on election day.

◦ In Pennsylvania, anyone who has resided at their present address for at least 30 days prior to the general election may register in that particular district. This makes voting relatively more accessible to citizens who move frequently, such as college students. Most college students who are living on campus have been there for at least 30 days prior to the election.

◦ Unfortunately, the Bureaus of Registration in many counties cannot afford to mail out voter registration forms to every citizen in their county. However, with little effort any individual wishing to register can do so by calling the county courthouse and asking for a form. Also, many organizations and campaign committees conduct voter registration drives to make it as easy as possible to register. Simply by checking the 'Coming Events' in the newspaper or contacting a specific campaign committee a student can register. The SGA officials at the school may also be of assistance.

◦ The exact location of voting booths on election day is another fact that can be learned by calling the county courthouse. Before calling the courthouse a student should check his certificate of registration for his name, his voting address, and his ward number.

◦ This is the information the courthouse needs to inform a voter where their polls are located. The local newspapers often publish a list of townships, wards, and precincts and the location of the voting polls for each so that the registered voters can see it in print. (Hint: A student can tear this list out of the paper so that the location will not be forgotten at the last minute).

◦ FREE? FREE! Yes, FREE! Register to Vote for FREE! It costs nothing but a few minutes of time and a 15 cent stamp to register to vote.

◦ Citizens who do not have transportation to the polls can call the county courthouse and ask for the names of the committee persons in that particular ward or precinct. These people should be able to inform a voter of various carpools that may be available to the voters on election day. Also, many of the campaign committees offer rides (Free!) to voters without transportation.

◦ If students are unaware of what elections are coming up or what candidates are running for office a newspaper may be of benefit to them. If a newspaper is too expensive or seems too repulsive, a student may feel more comfortable asking a professor in the political science department of their school. (These persons can usually give you some idea of what is happening. An appointment may be necessary). Another good idea may be to watch the news on TV - this is simpler than reading.

Questioning some of the reasons students often give for not voting or for not registering to vote is feasible. With minimal exertion students can be included in that group of citizens that are well-informed, responsive, and involved. It takes less effort than planning a 4-keg beer bash.

If the students in Pennsylvania would all register to vote, they would be widely recognized as a viable and forceful group of citizens. They would have the power of almost 366,000 votes. It only takes two votes to swing an election.

Note: Wrisberg Hall, Church Hall, and Meade Heights are all located in Lower Swatara Township, Ward 2. The voting polls will be located at Shopes Garden Civic Center, 2 Theodore Avenue, Middletown, PA.



GTMO BAY* CUBA 1971

He grabbed him by the hair
And smashed his head
Against the pavement
And he smashed it again
He was mad enough to kill
And it didn't matter who
There was a war in his brain
The whiskey wouldn't burn out.

The pavement was wet in the heat
Under a waring sun
Just as the fields
In the Mekong were wet
Through the slow motion heat
Of the afternoon.

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The C.C. Reader has the following four-fold purpose: [1] to keep students informed about their campus community; [2] to provide editorial comment on issues facing the campus community; [3] to serve as a forum for student poetry, photographs, short stories, graphics, and other creative endeavors; [4] to serve as a learning mechanism for all students interested in the journalistic process. This includes reporting, editing, layout, typesetting, and paste-up.

All students are urged to express their views by contributing to the C.C. Reader.