

Recent U.Park elections in controversy

By Jerry Trently

Student Government election turnout has increased by over 100% from last year's election, and still we only have 20.6% of our population voting.

But before I paint a dismal scenario about apathy and the like, I'd like to write about a student body that has been plagued



by election problems that make ours look tame.

The trunk of the massive tree we call Penn State University has been cut apart in recent years, from problems stemming not only from apathy, but with some down-to-earth movements

that have cracked the credibility of the University Park Student Government.

According to a report in the Daily Collegian, the 1981 elections were marked with controversy after a gerbil ran for the office of president.

"Wimpy," the gerbil, ran with running mate Fred Schiller, a ninth term business administration major. Wimpy and Schiller were backed by Froth, the now defunct humor magazine at State College, and the Monty Python Society.

The Collegian article quotes Schiller as saying, "We definitely are serious. We saw a growing gap between students and government. Students don't know what Student Government is up to. The only thing they know about is the movie ads."

As the controversy increased during the '81 campaign, the Park's Undergraduate Student Government Elections Commissioner, Robert Fanning, said that Wimpy could not run because he did not have a full time status.

Undergraduate Student Government Supreme Court Justice, Gary Kazmer, said that Wimpy could be elected by write-in votes but that his election could be disallowed because of his non-full time status.

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cern increased over whether or not the Student Government President could have two or four legs.

Election results were released, and Wimpy would have to wait

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for another election to become President. But the vote counts did show astounding patterns.

There were actually four sets

of serious candidates in the election, and Wimpy and Schiller finished a strong second with 1,432 votes. The winning candidates, William Chuck and Ken Reeves, gathered 2,299 votes.

If anything was proved by the Wimpy stunt, it was how non-seriously many students take the Student Government elections. Election of a gerbil would have been an embarrassment to the students of Penn State University.

Congratulations to our student government for the running of a fair, competent election at Capitol Campus. Let the future hold more involved elections, and let us watch to make sure our candidates grow hair and not fur.

Editor's Note: The feature article, "Study Effectively with proper training," published in the March 29, 1983 issue of the Capitol Times was written by staff member, Raquel Summerford.

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