

OP-ED

Voice from hell...

Robert Caton
Cap Times Staff

Birthdays. They suck.

Yes, campers, I have recently (January 18) turned 21 years of age, and the celebration was approximately as many giggles as wearing a "God Save The Queen" shirt to an I.R.A. meeting.

When I was younger, birthdays were annoying, but they at least guaranteed that I would rake in some serious loot from the assorted family members that my Mom wasn't mortal enemies with that week. The gifts could get a little ridiculous... "Gee Aunt Brunhilda, thanks for these golf pants, they should really go over well at high school!" Everybody has received birthday clothing that you know had to be sewn in a dark room so the fabric workers wouldn't see the pattern and go blind and insane, but it was a regular occurrence for me. But, I could always count on a "cool" uncle to come through with a Farrah Fawcett poster, or a carton of Luckies, so it averaged out.

Didja ever wonder what twisted satanic maniac came up with this surprise party slop? Oh yeah, nothing like having the cast from the road show of "Deliverance" leap out of your closet at you on a major personal holiday to "pull your ears" and give you "one to grow on" while playing fun party games and trashing your house. Why don't these people just dump the check on the table, grab a piece of cake, and get out so everyone else can talk about how cheap their gift was!

Do I sound bitter? Good, then I haven't lost my touch over break.

Do you want to talk tragic? On my 21st birthday, I didn't have a single beer. I was home at 11 P.M. (I had to work until 9). To listen to my press releases, I'm supposed to be some wild demented animal, but lately I've become an inadvertent spokesperson for "Get high on life."

Oh well, maybe on Jan. 18, 1992, things will be better.

A few belated New Year's resolutions before I go.

1. Stop procrastinating, and do these stupid things BEFORE January.

2. Root for sports teams that aren't the worst in the universe. If I wait for the Seattle Seahawks, Orlando Magic, New York Yankees, and Philadelphia Flyers to become champs, I'll be doing "Life Call" commercials.

3. Buy my books at least before the end of Drop/Add.

4. Stop dating women who ask the question "How much money do you get paid?"

5. To either lose weight, or forever live in fear that Richard Simmons is going to burst into my living room singing "You're the Top" and beat me to death with "Deal-A-Meal" cards.

6. To try not to be so bitter, dammit!

7. To realize that my problems are a load of nothing when Americans are dying for Mobil, Sunoco, and Exxon.

Until next time...

New Year's resolution exercised

Karen M. Putt
Capital Times Staff

Well, New Year's has come and gone and once again, I've made my share of "sure to be broken by February" resolutions. One of my resolutions is a carry over from 1981! That infamous "I'm going to exercise and eat healthy" resolution that everyone makes but no one ever completes. Stand back America, I, Karen "devil dogs for breakfast" Putt, am making an honest-to-God attempt to exercise and eat right.

I've started off with a bang, I've been to aerobics twice in two weeks! Call Ripley's! Before you Jane Fonda juniors erupt with remarks of disgust, show a little compassion. I can't just throw myself into this, I might have a heart attack! But I do have a special motivator to get me to go to aerobics, my mom. She ties me to the bumper of the car! Ok, she doesn't, but she does inspire me. She's 60 years old and in the same class as I am. Before I started aerobics, I copped the attitude "if she can do it I can do it," only to discover I was wrong.

My mom may be 60, but she's healthier than all three of her daughters. None the less, my 23-year-old sister (an alumnus of this campus who shall remain nameless) and I decided to join mother on her weekly trek to aerobics.

The first five minutes were relatively painless. I registered for class and my sister and I took two spots on the floor as close to the back row as we could get. My mom, however, strutted to the front of the class like some award winning thoroughbred, and spread out her mat along with her supplies of leg weights, arm weights, sweat towel and water bottle. My sister and I slouched on the floor, two hills of flesh, as my mom began her stretching routine.

When the instructor arrived I thought I was having a bad childhood flashback, she looked like someone had stuck a Barbie doll head on a G.I. Joe body! She fired up the sound system and began calling out instructions to the first routine. I may as well have been in the front row of an Anthrax concert, I could have heard her better! This music was supposed to motivate us, not render us deaf for life! However, I made it through the first four "target area routines" (one

for the stomach, arms, legs and of course, the word that just screams Richard Simmons...BUNS!)"

Then came the dance routines. Luckily I've had enough dance classes to last me the rest of my life (and some of yours). I did well enough that I didn't look like a young, uncoordinated Jerry Lewis. I looked more like an old, drunken Dean Martin, puffing and sweating and stumbling! I managed to keep up with the crowd, UNTIL...we did a routine to Kathy Dennis's song "Just a Dream." Normally I might almost enjoy the song, BUT, this particular version was by Kathy and the Chipmunks! The song was recorded twice as fast as usual.

I started out fine, but all of a sudden I felt a gust of wind on my neck. Actually it was the breath of some leotard clad, Hershey version of Ivana Trump. Apparently I wasn't moving fast enough for her, she was dancing on my heels. We exchanged looks of mutual disgust. Mine for her need to wear gold and makeup to an aerobics class, and hers for my hot pink Virginia Slims t-shirt that reads "Sugar and spice and everything nice? Get Real!"

My sister and I spent the rest of the class smacking into one another while trying to avoid Ivana and others like her. Surprisingly I lasted the entire hour (applause, applause!) and felt I really earned the Big Mac I wolfed down on the way home. So I'm still working on the eating right part, big deal. With Veryfine fruit juices at 75 cents a can, who can afford to be healthy? Unit next month...

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Letters to the editor are always welcomed and encouraged.

Submit your letter in Room W-341 or place it in our mailbox in Room 212. Typed submissions are preferred. Please include your name...we cannot print anonymous letters.

Tarnhelm wants you!

Creative passions flow in arts magazine

What in the world is *Tarnhelm*?

For those of you who have never heard of, or have heard of but still haven't gotten the foggiest idea of what (a/the) *Tarnhelm* is, here is the story.

The word *Tarnhelm* comes from a Wagner opera. It is a symbolic winged helmet that, when worn, inspires the individual to soar to great heights of imagination. *Tarnhelm* is our own literary and arts magazine at Penn State Harrisburg.

All you writers and artists, do not despair, for your secret and of course not so secret creative passions can be

published in *Tarnhelm*. The literary magazine, with us since 1971, is published annually. Join us as we get ready to kick off our annual production for the 1991 issue, scheduled for May 1991.

We need all the help we can get, especially now since submissions for the publication have begun to come in. Those interested in contributing should attend regularly scheduled meetings (Dates and times are announced in *This Week*). Or drop a note to the *Tarnhelm* editors, either Lori Graby or Laura McElroy, in the SGA mail slot, Room

216. *Tarnhelm* will accept submissions for publication between January 14 and February 15, 1991.

Detailed guidelines for submission are available in W-360. *Tarnhelm* accepts for review: poetry, short fiction, original scores of music, and black and white artwork (graphics and photography). Decisions of editors and staff are final. A SASE must accompany submissions.

Anyone interested in seeing the 1990 *Tarnhelm* may stop by the Humanities Suite, W-360.

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