

# Blues and bliss top 21st birthday list

Michael Stone  
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My mother always told me never run with scissors. I was a child, and she was trying to protect me.

Well, in a mere few days I will turn 21 years of age. Exciting, huh? I never thought this day would come.

The day marks a turning point. I am officially, by all people's chronological standards, an ADULT.

Can I really be 21 already? It seems like my seventeenth birthday was last week. I grew up in New Jersey (insert your own toxic dump, beach waste, driving standard, or "which exit?" remark here).

Seventeen meant getting the ol' driver's license. In the last four years, I've only had one accident (not my fault) and one speeding ticket (yep--definitely my fault on that one). Not bad for a "Jersey Driver."

Eighteen came shortly thereafter (yeah, Mike...365 days later). I could vote and die for my country. I never bothered to vote; and with last year's war, I'm relieved I didn't take that recruiter's advice in high school. I chose this holy land of a university instead.

At nineteen, nothing special happened. I still couldn't go into bars (either to drink or to see some good bands), or visit some of the finer porno theaters.

Twenty's the same as 19...except you

## ETCHED IN STONE

lose that annoying "teenager" nomenclature. Yes, another decade pissed away.

But why is 21 so mystical, anyway? Okay, the booze freaks are chanting "alcohol," but I'm serious.

Twenty-one is the door to freedom. No more restrictions. Loss of that foolish childhood thing.

Should I admit that I'm scared to grow up?

There are those fond memories of high school...homeroom, gym class, calculus, college pressure, and that vicious stress to "fit in." Okay, maybe that was a bad example.

I remember the two-foot snows we used to get every winter when I was around ten. It always managed to snow the week of my birthday. The greenhouse effect has decreased the amounts, but I still

love the snow like I did when I was ten.

When I was a kid, I never worried about anything. Now it's different.

Will I get that paper done? Will this column make it for the deadline? Do I look alright? How's my hair--or lack thereof? What will people think of me? Will I have enough money? Will I ever get a job?

They say Three Mile Island had no damaging effects, but why when it rains, are the worms on the Olmsted sidewalks so damn huge?

I think I'm a lot smarter now (with the tuition I'm paying, I should hope so) and I have more common sense. I've been through a few majors, and I worry to the point where I'm a manic depressive.

Maybe with maturity, I'm sacrificing sanity. Problems other than getting hit in the ear with an iccball during a snowball fight exist with me now.

Up until now, I've had a lot of dreams. Some have come true, others have vanished. A few I still hope for.

I've had a lot of fears. Some I've conquered (roller coasters, swimming, ballroom dancing). Others, I haven't (heights). A few, I live with (disco MIGHT come back, Billy Joel WILL retire someday).

I've had a lot of friendships. Many have dissolved, either due to new interests, lack of communication, or just distance.

I've been in love, and I've moped for weeks when it was over. And I have painfully learned that it is better to love and have to let go than to never try it at all.

Physically, I feel about 45. My hairline also makes me look like I'm 45.

Mentally, I'm either 12 or 60, depending which day of the week you catch up with me.

They say that these are the best years of your life. I think that means the future will suck.

I don't know...about turning 21. I'm really anxious. But I'm also scared of what experiences and responsibilities it might bring. My mind is telling me to trudge on into adulthood and act my age, but the kid in me won't let go.

Yesterday, without the presence of my mom, I took a pair of scissors out of my desk and ran through my house, just to have some juvenile fun.

I got half way down the hall and I stopped.

For God's sake, I could've hurt myself!! After all, it's only fun until someone loses an eye.

# SGA garners negative commentary

Terry Wolf  
Capital Times Staff

Well, we really did it this time. SGA had an open forum the other day, and we didn't show up. We had all these bitches and gripes, but we couldn't pull ourselves away and go to the open forum.

There are many possible reasons for this. I don't want to be redundant, but the biggest reason is that many of us just don't give a damn. There, I said it. That will be the last time I say it this month since that was last month's subject.

It follows then, that if we really don't... then do we really need the SGA? I think that at most colleges and universities, the answer would be a quick "yes." Things are different here. Why, you ask?

I think a good place to start might be understanding why only three people showed up at the SGA open forum.

First of all, many of us are "older" students; we have jobs and families. We don't have time for high school stuff like SGA. Therefore, we don't have time to go to, or even worry about an open forum, whether there's free pizza there or not.

Secondly, many of us are busy with other extracurricular activities that we feel closer to. I'll give you three guesses which one mattered the most to me. My club affiliation has a lot to do with my major. Enough said.

Let's not forget that there are many of us who actually belong to two or three clubs. I don't think these people need to make any excuses for not showing up at the SGA open forum, their dedication speaks for itself.

Almost all of us who did not show up at the open forum have one thing in common. We are all full time students. So are the people on the SGA. They should

understand what that means without my going into it in any detail.

So, we didn't go. We don't give a... and the SGA open forum was a flop. I imagine sitting in the auditorium that day

## WOLF'S DEN

must have felt like being a pimple on the world's ass. You really try to make an impression, but you know you're going to get popped.

What actually got popped in this case was the collective ego of the SGA. I can understand their frustration. They really try to do something around here. But, as I've said before, we don't give a... you know, and no amount of work on their part is going to change that, ever.

So what's my point? I'm getting to that right now. Do we need the SGA at Penn State Harrisburg? I'm not so sure we do.

The clubs might think they need the SGA. The SGA is like a bank to them. Every semester they apply for a loan and wait with nervous anticipation until a decision is reached.

Why do I use the word loan? The SGA gives them money and in return the SGA expects payment in the form of participation and volunteer help in SGA-sponsored activities. Members of SGA were upset that no members of any clubs were at their open forum. The clubs never get the amount they ask for, but they sometimes ask for too much, or do they?

Nowhere else is there a situation where those who control the members' funds for a given situation are allowed to do so without having any knowledge of that situation. I remember submitting a budget for WPSH that included \$24.00 for two Stanton D6807A phono styli.

I also remember someone in SGA saying, "I don't even know what that is." That's my point. The clubs should be financed, or at least be under supervision of the academic divisions they are most aligned with. The Capital Times, for example, should be under the humanities division.

But, you retort, the SGA does other things besides funds clubs. Let's examine that. They form various committees to address some of the issues on campus. Members of the SGA also sit on various faculty committees as student representatives. First of all, any student can sit on the faculty committees; being in SGA is not a prerequisite.

Second, the committees formed by SGA itself seldom do more than serve SGA's own interests. The exception is the Awards Banquet Committee. I think the Awards Banquet is essential to those students, faculty and staff who deserve recognition, but where does it say the SGA has to control it?

Then there are the many activities funded by SGA. I talked about Autumn

Fest last month, so I'll leave that alone. There's no sense in beating a very dead horse. The Spring Fling is coming up. More of our tuition money is being blown so a handful of people can have a good time. I'll be there, of course. I want to get my money's worth.

Then there is the Dance Marathon that won't happen. Why? The SGA thinks it's because most of the clubs didn't want to help. There is, after all, a lot of work involved and they needed help. The same reasons apply to the Dance Marathon that applied to poor attendance at the SGA open forum.

No, we really don't need the SGA at Penn State Harrisburg. We are Penn State, but we are mostly older students, mostly commuters, and mostly don't give a ...

I imagine I've rubbed quite a few people the wrong way. I think I have a few friends on SGA, and I hope those people can understand there's nothing personal in this column. Those who are friends will, I hope, appreciate the honesty and value of the friendship more than they will be insulted by my humble opinion.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Reader implores 'Buy American'

Editor,

I would like to address the issues raised in your Jan. 20 editorial regarding the purchase of Japanese products over American-made products.

Funny, how something such as choosing a product you like best could affect our economy.

Americans tend to not think about issues until they have to deal with an

issue that directly affects them--it is always somebody else's problem.

The economy and the unemployment rate are now staring the American people in the face. The unwillingness of the American people to change from buying foreign products has contributed to the loss of American jobs.

I question the extent to which

See American, page 10