

Opinion & Review

Editorial

Is SGA a Faceless Group?

The new campus Student Government Leaders have been chosen for 1999. Our elected representatives that make important decisions concerning the fate and future of Penn State Delco are set to take office.

Do you even know their names?
Do you know anything about them?
Did you know they were elected?
Do you care?

On March 2, one hundred sixty-one students, about ten percent of the current undergrad enrollment, checked a box next to a familiar name on election day. The rest of the campus claimed indifference.

This low voter turnout cannot be chalked up simply to campus apathy. The blame rests on the process by which these students were elected, and on the candidates themselves.

No debates were held, no speeches were given, and no ideas were presented. Entire election campaigns relied on a piece of paper bearing such slogans as "The Happy Candidate," and "We're Not Phony." Candidates did virtually nothing to promote themselves via face-to-face communication. They certainly failed to prove to anyone why they alone should sit in a position of power on this campus.

As a result, the prestigious positions of the SGA offices have been severely diminished. Instead of being respected and admired persons elected by a diverse group of peers, the winners are merely the people who had a name that the voters might have heard at some point in time. How could the candidates take pride in winning when only a small number of students, ignorant of that winner's ideas, principles, beliefs and values, happened to walk by a table and voted that day?

The basis of a democratic election is voters supporting candidates who affirm common goals and values. Voters cannot support silence. Yet, this year's voters did.

The SGA election process must be changed. The Election Committee must institute a forum for student interaction, such as a campus Town Meeting. If there is no Election Committee in place, one must be formed. Candidates must make an effort to sell themselves to the students, and not merely sit back and hope people know who they are. A format needs to be instituted which includes, at the very least, speeches and a debate.

Without this change, the SGA will continue as a group of faceless leaders, elected by a very small minority, making decisions that could ruin our campus. Let us hope that we have not already made that mistake.



A recent workshop on Women of Color featured panelists (l. to r.) Dr. Cole, Dr. Harvell, Dr. Wyatt, Ms. Ramsey.

Delco's "Moveable Feast"

By B Ray

If you are lucky enough to have lived in Paris as a young man, then wherever you go for the rest of your life, it stays with you, for Paris is a moveable feast. -Ernest Hemingway

For over a hundred Delco students and their friends and families, March 7-14 served a feast that will stay with them, and feed their hunger forever.

Taking over three hotels and a whole city block in the heart of Paris, Delco students attacked Paris with wide eyes and plenty of energy. But it quickly turned into Paris taking over the students, as the travelers, still weary from a six-hour plane ride, commenced their journey around one of the most recognized cities in the world as soon as they could drop their bags.

With guidance available upon request, students were free to roam the great city to find whatever they could in six days. And find they did, everything from the Eiffel Tower to the Mona Lisa, and everything in between.

One of the first time visitors said it best; "There is just too much to see in that city to only spend a week there. You could probably spend a week in the Louvre by itself. So it was a matter of getting everywhere as soon as possible, taking the standard tour, and hoping to have enough time to get back and take it in deeper."

Among the highlights suggested from a host of students who can add "visitor of Europe" to their resume were Notre Dame, ("I didn't think there was that much stained glass in the world, let alone in one place"); Sacre Couer, ("For all the attention

Notre Dame gets, this is like the church that everyone forgot. But it was easily one of my highlights. It was incredible."); The Catacombs, ("Even the mass burial sights are artistically done here. You can actually touch someone who's been dead for 500 years."); the Louvre, ("That place would be incredible if it were empty it's so big. But the art work, to see it first hand, to be right in front of it, it makes you want to cry."); Luxembourg Gardens, ("I've never felt more spiritual. I could sit there forever and just write my thoughts and die happy.");

As if that wasn't enough for someone to experience in a week, that wasn't even half of the attractions. Others included Jim Morrison's grave, ("The whole cemetery is incredible. It's like you've been transported back in time. But to see the resting place of someone like Morrison, and to see all the attention he gets, and all the people who still come and leave him gifts really makes you think what we've missed for 26 years."); and of course, the Eiffel Tower, ("I'll tell anyone who has seen it on TV, or on a postcard, you have absolutely no idea how big that thing is until you stand under it, climb to the top, and look down and out. I think I saw the Mir spacestation cruise by.");

The trip was run in conjunction with and Celestial Voyages, (who did an outstanding job making sure everything was easy and accessible for everyone this year, as they have during past trips). While on the trip, students could take three credit classes which involved little more than keeping journals and taking pictures. Although many students took at least one if not two courses, some just went to experience one of the most astounding places in the world.

On return to the reality of college, work, and everyday home life, the people who added this trip to their life experiences basically summed it up with the same words; "I never wanted to leave and I'll go back this second. It was just fabulous. The people, the city, the atmosphere..., just incredible. Everyone should go if they can. You don't have to know the history or even speak French to appreciate its majesty. I'll never forget it."

A place that will stay with you forever. A moveable feast.

SGA Executive Committee

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THE LION'S EYE regrets it cannot guarantee the return of any material submitted. All submissions are subject to editing.

Letter to the Editors from the SGA

To the Editors:

The Student Government Association would like to affirm our commitment to the students of Penn State Delaware County.

This statement may seem irrelevant, especially considering that the end of the semester is nearing. However, we wish to express our continuing dedication to the campus and our intentions to work for the betterment of conditions for students.

We are not going to ignore the fact that there has been much speculation regarding the recent SGA elections. We have discussed this, and have remedied the situation by deciding to appoint an official election committee who will preside over the ballot boxes and organize candidate debates and platform discussions.

Another issue concerning the unity of the executive officers has been

resolved. Any misconception that students have voiced to us has been addressed, and has bred in us a new intention to work harder for student satisfaction.

We would like anyone with suggestions or concerns to call (610) 892-1240 or email als244 in order that we may be able to handle the situation promptly.