

OPINION

SGA Gets Its 'Report Card'

Sandy Sasse
Lion's Eye Staff Writer

The final week of classes is a good time to evaluate the Student Government Association's performance during the fall semester. Averaging the response of students and actual members of SGA, the final grade is a B.

Vice president, Dasa Kelly and Treasurer Jen Scocca both gave SGA an A minus. They both feel their goals were pretty much met. For example they have given the SGA more structure than before by appointing committee chairs for various organizations. Delegating these jobs has caused faster and more effective results, such as an increase in student involvement, more representation in the Commonwealth Campus Student Governments, more faculty involvement, and success in programs such as THON and FAST. Planned activities, which include the SGA Lock In and the Costume Ball, have succeeded beyond expectations according to Secretary Mary Beth Quattrochi.

Senior April Best think SGA needs to be more visible on campus. Freshman Aaron Mc Bride gave SGA a B instead of an A because he has not "seen anything on campus to prove they deserve an A." Best did notice that since she has been here SGA is better than before.

SGA is aware of their shortcomings and Treasurer Jen Scocca did mention continuing "efforts to beautify the campus." Some problems do need compromise on both sides: more student involvement would encourage more activities.

New \$50 Textbook	\$	%
1. Publisher	\$33.50	67%
2. Author	4.50	9%
3. Freight Company	1.25	2.5%
4. Revenue given to college or university for academic programs, student activities, capital improvements, systems automation and/or reduction of school operating expenses	4.50	9%
5. Bookstore		
a. Employee salaries and benefits	5.00	10%
b. Earnings and other direct expenses including taxes, equipment, maintenance, repairs, supplies, etc.	1.25	2.5%

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Winter Ball

Friday, December 10

9 P.M. - 1 A.M.

Concordville Inn

Rts. 1 and 202

Semi-Formal Dress

Food Buffet

DJ Kris Bonocore

Tickets:

\$8 Single - \$15 Couple

Available in the Lion's Den

Christmas Light Hassle

By Scott Troyan
Lion's Eye Staff Writer

Thanksgiving eve, 1999. Woodlyn, Pennsylvania. Driving down Fairview Avenue, I pass on my right, a travesty. It is a simple twin house. Left side, already lit up for Christmas. Complete with mismatching, badly strung lights and a completely decorated Christmas tree inside by the front window. Right side, still done up for Halloween with scarecrows, pumpkins and spider webs.

Clearly, something is wrong here. No, it's not the absence of the quick pass-by holiday we call Thanksgiving, whose only noticeable effect is the increased number of turkey farm raids by PETA. I am talking about a more serious topic. Christmas lights.

About this time every year, my father and I engage in deep conversations about Christmas lights. We talk of the few houses that are done well and when icicle lights will finally go out of style and criticize those who use chasing lights in tones normally reserved for speaking of pedophiles and Jeffrey Dahmer.

I can't believe how ugly some people make their houses. They are under the misguided idea that if one little plastic Santa looks good, so will 12. More is not better, folks. The Tim Taylor look is not necessarily the right look. Most of the truly impressive houses are the ones with minimalist setup, by people who realize multi-colored and clear lights do NOT mix.

Putting up lights is an art. Everybody

has their unique vision, which I respect, but some people, when trying to actualize their vision, are obviously not wearing their glasses.

Here are some pointers to better decorate your dwelling. Use miniature lights on trees and bushes, and large and medium lights on houses. When lining roofs and whatnot with lights, make sure you keep them straight, especially since you have a straight edge to follow.

Mesh lights are ugly. They look too perfect; people can tell you put no effort into placing them. Conversely, do not place lights too far apart; that just looks half-assed. If you are going to light a tree, finish all the way to the top. Nothing looks worse than a tree that is only done half-way.

Here's a quick, handy checklist to tell if you have too many and/or tacky lights:

Do any of your lights chase each other? Are any of your decorations motorized? Do airplanes routinely try to land on your front lawn? Do you have a light-up baby Jesus and/or Santa Claus? Are any of the figurines described on the box as "Amazingly Lifelike?" Did you spend less than five minutes setting them up? Did you spend more than three hours setting them up? Does PECO give you a bulk discount for the month of December?

As for timing, light up no earlier than December 10, and take down right after Little Christmas.

As for what you do on the inside, I can't see it, so I do not care.

Editorial: Book Debate

By Lion's Eye Staff

About this time each semester, bookstores try to whip students into a frenzy about book buyback—"Get cash for books!" In reality, buybacks are nothing more than bookstores making big bucks while students go broke. Generously, they will re-purchase for a pittance the book you paid handsomely to use. This turns bookstores into mega-expensive libraries where you pay hundreds for the privileges of an extended loan.

Delco's bookstore carries a pamphlet titled "How Textbooks are Priced" by Barnes & Noble in an attempt to quell students' fury at spending small fortunes for books they will never use again. Although the pamphlet claims books are necessary "tools of the trade," it fails to admit that after class is over, most students no longer need or want these "tools" they were forced to pay so much for. Last semester, Michelle Rizzo received only \$25 for a biology book she originally paid almost \$120 for. This semester, after paying approximately \$90-100 for two more science texts, Rizzo plans to wait until next semester and sell her books to friends, recouping some of her huge losses and also saving her friends a lot of money.

Another publisher's trick to squeeze money out of the student market is the "flavor of the month" book editions. Every year another edition with slightly different pagination and minor corrections appears, forcing students to purchase that new edition, while making their old edition obsolete. Forced by the publishers, professors have no choice but to require students to purchase new editions, contributing to the vicious circle. For a statistics class during summer session, Delco students purchased an \$80 textbook that could not be sold back to the bookstore because a new edition was coming out that fall. Students in Math 4 ran into a similar problem, paying \$70 for a text they could not sell back because the edition had changed, again. Bob Dugan discovered that textbooks his brother used for the same classes only two years ago were now out of date. These constantly changing editions waste paper and students' money. The biggest puzzle is why history books change editions every year. Are they perpetually coming up with new slants on the War of 1812?

Students are a prime target for greedy publishers who care little, if anything, about education. One of the poorest groups in society, students are already working part- or full-time, as well as taking out thousands upon thousands of dollars in loans, to finance their educations. Yet, every semester students get coerced into pouring another couple hundred dollars down the textbook drain. Sources here at Delco say that since Barnes and Noble got a contract for the bookstore, money has become the prime objective.

To fill general education requirements, students are compelled to purchase extremely expensive books on everything from the evolution of trumpet playing to an exposition on English Romantic poetry. Many times professors passionate about their subject fail to realize that all these books add up and are costing more than many students can afford. This fall, English 050 students paid \$27.50 for a used copy of the *Creative Writer's Handbook* that the class hasn't looked at yet.

With the vast amount of information available, why can't students use information from websites? Or from newspapers, libraries or other shared resources? Why must each student go into debt buying individual books? If universities really wanted to help students, they would create better libraries where students could "borrow" and return books year after year (just like we did in high school), as well as pressure publishers to refrain from printing superfluous new editions.

Betting that students will be too lazy to look elsewhere, publishers will continue their textbook scam. To force publishers and Delco's bookstore to offer more competitive prices, students need to take action. Buy books online. Borrow from a friend. Visit local libraries or use interlibrary loan. Scrounge around in used bookstores. Why should the publishers and bookstores make a profit off your education? If you are tired of the sky-high book prices, write the Association of American Publishers, at 71 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10003, and let your voice be heard.

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