

Opinion

An editorial

An open SGA is a turn for better

Until now, Penn State's Student Government Association may have seemed to some students a secret society. There was no interaction between the SGA and the students, leaving most students unaware of who was representing them.

Not any more.

The reorganized SGA has opened its meetings to include both faculty and the entire student body. This is the first time in our memory that SGA is being run truly democratically. And why not? Each individual at Delco should have the right to express his ideas concerning topics that may affect him. Now is your chance.

This is terrific news, for the SGA, for students, for the faculty and for the campus. The issues that are usually addressed about our campus for all too long had been decided among a select few, who, theoretically represented the entire student population.

Now anyone can attend meetings, voice opinions and just simply feel included in the decision-making process. The meetings follow a precise agenda, and are conducted in a respectful manner, ensuring that no one can speak out of turn.

By opening up these previously unattainable meetings, the SGA enables students to feel more involved about decisions concerning their campus and make them aware of how certain things get done. For example, have you ever wondered who decides if we need a gazebo on the campus, or if smokers should have to stand at least 20 feet from building entrances, or where to go if you are interested in participating in an upcoming event? Well, you need not look any further. You may now simply attend a meeting to voice an opinion or inquire about a issue which you never even knew existed.

Believe it or not, there are a lot of students who are clueless as to what goes on within their own school. SGA has become an excellent vehicle to allow all students the opportunity to know what takes place, and give them the position to speak, for or against an issue.

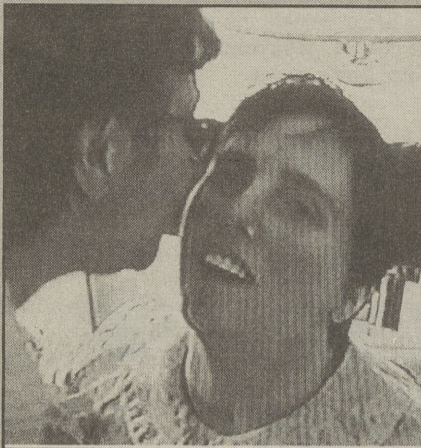
It displays great character to allow an open student government meeting in which students and faculty alike may debate openly about certain topics concerning the campus as a whole, instead of allowing only a select few to do so.

As great an idea as it is, it will only work if it is taken advantage of.

Come on, how great would it be if you were ever given the opportunity to state your opinion on, let's say, which clothes end up on the discount rack at your favorite store, or why the government insists on taking half our paychecks. OK, although those opportunities will probably never come along, at least you are able to have a say as to what goes on within your own campus. So let your voice be known, and your ideas told and attend a meeting.

People Poll

Staff writer Craig Stonis asked:
Should Terri Schaivo's feeding tubes have been replaced?



TERRY SCHAIVO
... Florida accident victim

No, let her go peacefully. She shouldn't have to live in a vegetative state her whole life.

Katie Ott
Freshman

Yes, if that's what her family wanted. It shouldn't be up to the husband.

Mary Larkin
Junior

Yes. The fact that she is still alive shows that she has fight and the will to live. No one should take that from her.

Steve Jones
Freshman

The government shouldn't have been involved. It should have been handled between the doctor and family.

Dante Fabrizio
Senior

I don't think we have the right to make a choice for an unconscious person.

Jake Lucas
Junior

Losing Battle of Bulge? The blame lies within

In 2001, lawyers took on Big Tobacco companies such as Philip Morris, claiming they were selling death. Since 2002, the same vultures have been preying on another kind of game, fast-food chains like McDonald's. And they could make billions just like in the tobacco lawsuits.

McDonald's has already settled a \$12.5 million lawsuit for not disclosing the beef fat in their french fries. Children's obesity in New York is the subject of another lawsuit. Pizza Hut has been sued because its Veggie Delight Pizza also has beef fat. Big Daddy Ice Cream has had a class-action suit brought because it failed to disclose the amount of calories and fat in its products.

Obese Americans have baited their hooks for eager lawyers in these lawsuits by reasoning that fast-food chains are responsible for the obesity of many Americans. And in this Battle of the Bulge, lawyers and their clients will attack junk-food advertising and gimmicks directed at children, like they did Philip Morris and Joe Camel.

Lawyers are truly ravenous to attack companies whose products are perfectly legal. Tobacco and fast food are bad for you, but people have a choice how much tobacco they consume, or what food they eat. Money is the only figure in this new debate.

Whatever happened to tried-and-true discipline? Children need a helping hand when it comes to inappropriate behavior, but lawyers are not the right parent. Obese Americans are letting lawyers hold their hands. Adults need to be responsible for their own actions. Of course, eating four times a week at McDonald's isn't healthy, but biting the hand that feeds you is not the answer. Try a moderate diet and fitness

routine like the ones suggested by such programs as Atkins' Diet, ediets.com, or Weight Watchers.

Bob Greene, a fitness expert, has been retained by McDonald's to market the Go Active Meal. This menu item comes complete with a healthy salad, an exercise manual and a pedometer. Greene has an even better idea than this adult Happy Meal. He believes people need to take "personal responsibility" in choosing the food that they eat.

Personal responsibility. What a unique concept!

At least half of the money that came from tobacco lawsuits went to lawyers. A good amount of the rest went to states' general funds instead of the health programs that were promised. Thankfully, fast-food lawsuits are being thrown out of court. U.S. District Judge Robert Sweet has found that McDonald's did not mislead consumers that burgers and fries were healthy.

To prevent legislators from controlling what we eat, let's protect our liberty and pursuit of happiness and support U. S. senators like Mitch McConnell of Kentucky, who wants to pass the Commonsense Consumption Act, which would prohibit lawsuits in which plaintiffs say food companies and restaurants have made them overweight or obese. What goes on our plates should be our choice, and not lawmakers'.

But exercise a little self-discipline and don't over-hear that plate.

And stay off that couch. We don't want the lawyers going after the furniture manufacturers.

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THE LION'S EYE

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We are the newspaper of the Penn State Delaware County campus, serving the students, faculty, administration, staff of, and visitors to, our campus. We vow to entertain and inform all of our audiences, and we will strive to make each edition better, so that we remain a vital part of the Penn State Delco experience. We also strive to be professional, and follow the highest standards of good journalism.