

Editorial opinion

Penn State proud

'Take A Stand' rally a success; must be used as a stepping stone

They said it couldn't be done. But in less than one week, a handful of student groups organized the "Take A Stand" rally against racism and pulled it off so successfully that it was covered around the state. The rally proved, finally, that the students, faculty and staff of Penn State do care and will take a stand when they need to.

But the real measure of the success or failure of the rally Friday is not the 2,000 people who showed their support. As one of the speakers said, "talk minus action equals zero."

The rally is not the culmination of the efforts to end racism at the University, it is the first step. Now it's up to the students to take the second step.

The groups that can coordinate the second step are already here — they are the groups that organized and supported the rally. They must now use their newfound power and respect to con-

tinue leading students against racism and other problems in the area.

But if joining an organization is not your style, learning about other cultures is another way to take the second step.

The activities taking place as part of Hispanic Heritage Month offer an opportunity to do that. The upcoming Kwanzaa activities and Black History Month in February can also provide insight into other cultures.

Too often our age group is defined by one word: "apathetic." As several speakers said on Friday, the rally is one of the first times in more than 20 years that students have joined together to fight for a common cause, and they had never felt more proud of the University.

If the rally is used as a stepping stone to further action, perhaps there will be some more reasons to be Penn State proud.



Letters to the editor

Best wishes, good luck

This is in response to Kevin Gorman's, Nov. 9 column concerning his father.

This is by far the most touching, moving article that I have read in quite some time. I've known Kevin (through a mutual friend) for about two years, which makes this story a little more personal.

I've always known him as a strong individual, but the situation that he's been placed in far exceeds the word "strong." There is no way to describe what he must be feeling.

I thought that I knew what this disease was like, for my grandfather is currently suffering from it. Kevin's father's situation is ten-fold in comparison to my grandfather. I never really knew how powerful diabetes could be, but more importantly, how strong any son could be in the wake of such a tragedy.

A story like this really opens your eyes. It makes you realize how trivial things like sports are, or the fact that you are fighting with your girlfriend. This is reality... this is life... this could be me, possibly sooner than I could ever expect.

I commend Kevin, and every other son and daughter, brother and sister, mother and father and spouse, who may be experiencing this. I think that I speak for the entire University when I say: Best wishes Mr. Gorman, and good luck.

Adam N. Hornyak
junior-telecommunications

Dropped the ball

Of all the rationales the Collegian has given as to why student turnout was so low and why students' candidate Mike Burcik lost there is one you missed. I would like to present it to you now — a shameful lack of publicity by our own student newspaper.

Mike Burcik was a legitimate student candidate, but the student newspaper barely took notice. You 1/4 inch endorsement of candidate Burcik buried in the bowels of the paper on Election Day was far too little, far too late. I hear you right now screaming "journalistic integrity" and trying to raise the spirit of Edward R. Murrow.

I do not suggest that Mike Burcik should

have had an outpouring of false admiration from the Collegian. However, an impressive amount of effort went into get-out-the-vote drives and increasing awareness of Burcik's candidacy done by student groups. But when the student newspaper had the opportunity to report these efforts back to the general student population the paper balked.

Wake up Collegian, you go to this University too! While we all appreciate the service you are trying to provide, giving students unbiased and objective reports at no charge, you had that opportunity on Nov. 7, and you dropped the ball.

Adam Black
freshman-liberal arts

Unsurprising turnout

I am not surprised at all by the low voter turnout here at Penn State.

1. Monday's Collegian predicted that there would be a low turnout, which makes me wonder what would happen if they would predict a high turnout.

2. I've only used the HUB a half-dozen times this semester. The place I frequent other than my classrooms is Waring Commons. Why couldn't the poll booths have been in each of the Commons?

3. Other than freshman who are voting for the first time and State College residents, most Pennsylvanians should be registered to vote in their hometown or voting ward, not here. How many students used an absentee ballot?

4. Weather is not an excuse. Veterans fought to protect our right to vote in weather much worse than Tuesday's. My home state of Maine had over 40 percent of registered voters turn out.

Tom Wolford
senior-geography

Where were you?

Saturday, Nov. 11, I was on the steps of Old Main in honor of the veterans who have served our country. As I looked around at the small crowd of people who had assembled, I remembered the enormous group of students, faculty, and administrators who had assembled for the rally on Friday.

This rally took place in response to

swastikas being placed around campus along with other forms of intimidation and intolerance. I was at this rally because I abhor these acts. However, I am also aware that this is the 50th anniversary of World War II. The very symbol that generated so much outrage in so many could easily be part of our flag were it not for the soldiers who served. I am sure all of you know at least one veteran, a fellow student, friend, brother, sister, parent or maybe it is you who is a veteran. Veterans are soldiers, the men and women who served, fought and often died for the very ideals you rallied for. These men and women are the ones who have made it possible for you to demand tolerance. They fought and continue to fight for your freedoms.

Saturday morning there were no classes to walk out of, no chemistry lectures to miss, the mail didn't come and the banks were closed. I can't believe that all of you were too busy to attend. Did you not recognize the parallel between the rally and the Veterans Day ceremony? One for peace, the other honoring those who died for it.

ROTC, you are our future leaders. Couldn't you take the time to honor those who have gone before you? President Spanier, I saw you and heard you speak at the rally. USG? Student body president? Do you know that there are approximately 2,000 veterans on campus? Do you know that WWII veterans made up 75 percent of the population after the war and are largely responsible for the expansion of this University? The veteran population is the most diverse population on this campus. Have you forgotten? Have all of you?

Perhaps future ceremonies should take place at the mall. At least we would have a crowd of shoppers taking advantage of "Veteran's Day Sales." I do acknowledge that the economic power of the United States has enhanced its abilities in wartime. Commercialism and the finances it generates have given us the privilege of supplies, superior training and the most technologically advanced equipment. However, on Veterans Day, who should we honor? Those who have bought or those who have served? All of us lead busy lives and tend to get wrapped up in our own secure little world, still I must ask...

WHERE WERE YOU?

Billie Cartwright
member-PSUVU

the Collegian

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Students' letters should include semester standing, major and campus of the writer. Letters from alumni should include the major and year of graduation of the writer. All writers should provide their address and phone number for verification of the letter. Letters should be signed by no more than two people. Names may be withheld on request.

The Collegian reserves the right to edit letters for length and to reject letters if they are libelous or do not conform to standards of good taste. Because of the number of letters received, the Collegian cannot guarantee publication of all the letters it receives. Letters may also be selected for publication in The Weekly Collegian. All letters received become the property of Collegian Inc.

Collecting like crazy leads to some abnormal species

Let's talk about obsession. My roommate likes to collect tapes. To say that he likes to collect tapes, actually might be an understatement. He loves to collect tapes. I think I've caught him a few times gazing with religious lust at the rectangular wood cassette case that is mounted like a shrine at the center of the wall in our room. It's quite possible that he was praying, but I better not speculate.

But still, these are not just tapes he likes to collect. In fact, he buys them blank and later records on them. He doesn't buy new albums, though. No, he much rather prefers tapes with poor sound quality, blank, non colored labels, and a wicked hissing capable of driving any man insane. (sane man = me!) His tapes contain "live-in-concert" recordings, but most people prefer the term "bootleg." The great thing about them is, they're FREE! This is quite advantageous for my roommate, because like most college students, he doesn't have a lot of money. So how do they get these tapes, you ask? They trade.

It's very cool to watch him in action. If by chance he ever hap-

My opinion

Rustam Kasad

pens to meet a fellow tape-collector, he goes crazy that week.

Our room becomes submerged in a bizarre arrangement of empty tape cases, unlabeled cassettes, and labels with what I noticed to usually have only slightly altered song lists when carefully compared from tape to tape. He definitely has some sort of psychological problem.

This animal that I refer to as *phishus flakyus*, exhibits what seems to be an extremely intricate system of behavior. There are other similar species that I have also observed in the very local habitat of State College, Pa.

I recently petitioned the Centre County Wildlife Cataloguing Society to give recognition status to *gratefuldeadus collectivis* as the legitimate genetic variation of the human species. It is interesting to note that the majority of the population are actually hybrids that easily take on numerous characteristics of both species. In addition to this, one must realize (of course this is still in its theoretical infancy) that the *phishus flakyus* most probably evolved from the *gratefuldeadus collectivis*. Oddly enough, members of both species vehemently and sometimes bitterly deny any such connection. I'm not implying that some kind of evolutionary conspiracy is taking place, but the whole scene smells kind of phishy... uh, I mean fishy.

They are mainly known as gathering animals. They gather and then they store. And then they go out an gather some more. Then they buy shelves to sort and divide what they gather. And then they listen to their tapes. Over and over. Then they buy stock in Maxell, Inc. Very high quality tapes, I've heard.

"In addition to this, one must realize (of course this is still in its theoretical infancy) that the *phishus flakyus* most probably evolved from the *gratefuldeadus collectivis*."

But I am for some reason pleasantly baffled by the state of mind involved with this group. For some reason or other, the ability of people to remember the most obscure details of concerts they've never attended truly fascinates me.

I have actually witnessed a few of their informal gatherings where groups of them listen to their tapes. They function within an extremely sophisticated barter system, and where there's sophisticated bartering going on, you are bound to hear sophisticated bartering terminology being spoken.

Strange lingo like "sick jam," "heavy groove" and "gamehenge" are exchanged at a rate of what I would describe as mellow turbo.

There's even a little bit of occult mystery at work here. I have heard numerous references made to a

sort of higher status of the species called Trey, "Fishman" or even one referred to as "Jerry." My limited observation has led me to deduce that this Jerry identity seems to carry a lot of weight within this informal community. There seems to be a subtle authoritarian structure through which standards are maintained.

I figured, if you want to understand the *phishus flakyus* and *gratefuldeadus collectivis*, then you go to the head dude. I decided to seek out and discover the mythical nature of this Jerry identity. Unfortunately upon requesting meeting with him, I was only laughed at. Later though, I received some cold stares and one guy tried to hit me.

A unique aspect of the hierarchical figures within the species is

that they are not expected to collect tapes.

Upon doing a little investigation, I was informed that they were responsible for the actual production of the tapes, thus alleviating their duty to collect tapes, instead substituting it with the obligation of playing instruments and hiding any blatant evidence of their drug use.

To all those who have never had the good luck to observe these squirrel-like creatures at work, I suggest asking around. One of your good friends might be a rare pedigree of either of these fascinating species. I highly recommend that you go out on the weekends and observe these fascinating creatures do their thing. But all kidding aside, I wouldn't suggest living with one.

Disclaimer: This column was conceived prior to the passing of a Jerry Garcia (a.k.a. "the head dude"). No comments made here were intended to offend.

Rustam Kasad is a junior majoring in English and a Collegian columnist.