

## CAMPAIGN CHRONICLES

### Millennials in need of a cause, job



We are the Millennials, and we have more power than we know.

Together our generation — which is composed of people born between 1981 and 2000, according to the Pew Research Center — utilizes the technology and social media which we created to further the activist causes that we find favor with.

In 2008, that cause was electing Barack Obama as president. And now, almost four years later, we are being asked to do the same again.

But do we want to?

Alec Tyson, a Pew Research Center researcher, does not think so.

"Some early signs suggest that enthusiasm is not as high in this current election as it was in 2008," Tyson said in an NPR interview.

There are likely many reasons for this shift in enthusiasm.

The War on Terror is not a defining issue this time around. And it has seemingly taken a back seat to the faltering economy, the lack of available jobs as another round of Millennials graduate college, and the U.S. involvement in civil wars around the world.

Another thing that might have a hand in just how pumped our generation gets about casting their votes: Obama is not the newest thing anymore.

News, social media and take-out Thai food is no further than our smartphones. And everyone is on an endless pursuit for the newest, the best, the most revolutionary thing.

In this world that we have created for ourselves, Obama may have lost his new car smell.

Add that to the fact that Obama's job running the country has taken away from his potential for the face-to-face, grassroots-feeling campaigning that won him so much favor, and it's a wonder that anyone is as enthused this time around.

This is not meant to call the Millennials, of which I myself am included, superficial or hyper-consumers.

On the contrary, in the process of redefining communication, news, and most everything as previous generations had known it, we also managed to cut away some of the crap.

When you only have 140 characters to make a point, there's little room for fancy footwork or euphemisms.

So in cutting away the crap, some of the Millennials have realized that Obama is yet to deliver on a lot of the promises that he signed with fist bumps.

More than the unfulfilled promises that are all too common in politics, though, this generation is actually faring the worst at the hands of the Obama administration.

According to the Pew Research Center, "Fully 37 percent of 18- to 29-year-olds are unemployed or out of the workforce, the highest share among this age group in three decades."

Whether Obama is directly to blame for this great unemployed generation is a matter of personal opinion. But with less time and money at their disposal, will the Millennials be as gung-ho this go-around?

That is yet to be determined. But if the bumper stickers on hybrids and vintage road bikes are any indicator, it is not likely.

## ALCOHOL

### Alcohol is not a necessary part of college, life

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of kids to the hospital, and I wonder how they're doing now. I was never as far gone as they...."

What has stayed with me about that ten-year old letter is the reality that 1) not much has changed in the intervening years on campus: students still drink to excess; stodgy old grunts like me still lament it to little avail; 2) discussion of, and learning from, the experience of the typical college attitude about alcohol too often waits until after graduation; and 3) folks continue to make mistakes and, we can only hope, learn from them; but is there a way to speed up the learning process and avoid the most serious consequences of those mistakes?

I have re-visited this correspondence and these questions as I sadly observe a creeping culture of making the campus more "alcohol friendly." Alcohol now seems to be de rigeur at alumni, parent, and other receptions on campus — even in

academic spaces; we came very close recently to having alcohol served free at a community-wide event; students tell me that the

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**Max Carter, director of Friends Center & campus ministry coordinator**

use and abuse of alcohol has grown to levels disturbing even to the non-stodgy.

What concerns me, along with the negative effects of alcohol on personal lives and the life of the community, is that we have come to this level of acceptance of alcohol among us without much, if any, discussion. Central to Quaker culture is the asking of queries — not stating categorical beliefs and creeds but asking questions that effect an inner search for truth, integrity, and authenticity. Two traditional queries related to the issue at hand are cited above.

What queries are we asking ourselves at Guilford related to alcohol? How do we view the impact of alcohol on community life and personal lives? Is alcohol necessary to "lubricate" social functions? Can Guilford model a more creative culture than one which merely conforms to societal norms?

I would welcome such a conversation on campus. We pride ourselves on being a questioning community about almost every other societal norm. Why not on the issue of alcohol?

## If I can help somebody

By Barbara Lawrence  
GUEST WRITER

According to the Bureau of Justice and Statistics, more than three women a day are murdered by their husbands or boyfriends in the United States. On Oct. 14, my 30-year-old niece Jannette was one of those women.

The month of October is designated as National Domestic Violence Awareness month. It is a time when advocates, organizations and groups all over the United States speak out in solidarity against family violence and support survivors.

I, too, was an avid advocate for domestic violence victims for many years in New York City while I worked for the New York City Police Department.

During my stint in the force, I played a key role in creating and implementing the Department's first domestic violence unit, which led to the establishment of domestic violence units in each of the NYPD's precincts and housing police service areas.

It was an all-out city-wide effort in New York City to effectively institutionalize domestic violence prevention within the criminal justice system and we were at the center of the fight to end the vicious cycle of violence.

During this time, I constantly educated my family and friends about available resources and the types and cycles of domestic violence for their awareness. This went on until 1999 when I retired from the NYPD.

Once retired, I stopped advocating until it hit home on Oct. 14.

After murdering my niece, her husband killed himself in their Bronx apartment. My family and I are very grateful that my niece's two young children were not home, as we would have lost three that day.

Although I can still effortlessly recite statistics relating to domestic violence, create training manuals, and train individuals on any level, I was not able to help my niece. With all of my education, professional experience and background, I was completely powerless in assisting my niece in her last days.

Instead, I was only able to write her obituary and showcase the bright light she left my family and the world. It is in times like these that I am reminded that the struggle for justice and solidarity is still my life.

We have to stand against domestic, dating and sexual violence that persists in this country as it causes victims, family members and witnesses in every community to suffer incalculable pain and loss.

The Department of Justice reports women are much more likely than men to be victimized by a current or former partner. The data shows, in many jurisdictions, 25 percent of felony assaults are domestic violence related and most homicide victims do not have previous police reports on file.

The reality of these tragic figures is not only mind-numbing but almost too painful to describe. My heart is broken for Jannette, but also for other women, children and men who cannot seem to stop the violence or get away safely in time.

My niece would encourage me to fight on and press forward. Her message was to keep on loving, keep on living, keep on learning and dreaming. Keep on smiling when you are going through and crying when you need to. But, no matter what, never give up.

Victims need to know they are not alone. You can help make a change in a person's life by letting them know that somebody cares.

If you or someone you know is in an abusive relationship, create or help them create a personal safety plan that will allow for a safe exit. Let trusted friends and family members know your situation and develop a plan or visible signal for when you need help. If possible, hold a spare set of keys, clothes and alerting system in times of emergency. In all emergency cases call 911 for immediate assistance. However, there are national hotline numbers: 800-621-HOPE (4357) that will provide information on local organizations, shelters, and advocate groups available to assist wherever you are located.