

OPINION

WHINES & GRIPES

Why are there eight t-shirt sales going on right now?

The gym is gross. Why are my hands covered in dirt every time I get up from doing push-ups?

To the girls walking slower than they do outside on the treadmills -- get off my machine.

Students don't do anything around campus unless there is an incentive attached to it. You're in college, take control of your life, learn and experience as much as you can.

There are 2 doors to most buildings; why are people only using one at a time?"

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

Dear Editors,

I am writing to respond to a Whine & Gripe in the September 12th issue of the Meredith Herald.

I'm tired of people whining about things which they do not even know what they are talking about. For the record, Meredith might have upped the tuition, but they did not harm your printing money. Yes, they went from giving \$15 to \$10 for printing. However, they also cut the price per page from 8 cents to 5 cents, and if you did the math you would realize that before, we had 187 pages of printing, and now we have 200 pages worth of printing. Meredith has given us 13 more pages for printing.

--Hannah Thornton

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Should Twitter Be an Influential Part of the Voting Process?

Lizzie Wood, staff writer

Twitter is being taken over with political tweets--whether by a candidate himself or by over-zealous voters--and these tweets are inevitably influencing the users of these technologies. A tweet is only 140 characters, and those 140 characters are influencing the election of the future leader of the free world. This November will be my first time voting in a presidential election, and I am constantly berated by political tweets and posts on Facebook, I, and other voters using technology, need to decide how influential we will let these 140 characters be.

The appeal of Twitter is obvious: it is like having a direct line to a celebrities' thoughts and activities. Both Mitt Romney and Barack Obama use Twitter to campaign. Barack Obama has 6,099 tweets and 19.8 million followers. Romney has tweeted a mere 1,158 times and has only 1.1 million followers. While Romney has some catching up to do when it comes to followers, both men seem to have figured out the technology of Twitter, most likely in order to reach younger generations of voters. A recent article by Stephanie Mlot on PCMag.com mapped out voters' tweets concerning Obama's convention speech. Setting a record for tweets-per-minute (a new method of measurement), there were 52,756 tweets about Obama per minute during the duration of the convention and a staggering 9.5 million tweets in total regarding the convention (compare this to the 2008 election where the entire campaign process only produced 1.8 million tweets globally). Twitter's

head of government, news, and social innovation, Adam Sharp, said that "Obama delivered a great collection of tweetable lines this evening, and Twitter responded accordingly." What's even more interesting is the subject matter discussed in said tweets. There were 43,646 tweets quoting the President saying "I'm no longer just the candidate, I'm the President," and 38,567 tweets discussing the President's views on Medicare. Twitter provides the public with a way to connect in ways which have never before been possible. Total strangers can compare views, retweet each other and even tweet to President Obama.

While Twitter, I feel, has allowed voters to feel a more personal connection to the candidates, it has also generated some controversy in the election, most recently, regarding Sept. 11. Upon scrolling down my Facebook newsfeed, an absurd number of my "friends" had shared a picture of Obama and Romney's first tweet of the day. Obama's first tweet at 7:07 a.m. read, "The election is in eight weeks. Sign up to volunteer." Romney's first tweet at 6:10 a.m. read, "On this most somber day, America is united under God in its quest for peace and freedom at home and across the world." It's safe to say that Obama's team has taken quite a bit of heat for their Twitter-blunder. As a Fox News article entitled "Obama team tweets campaign message on 9/11 anniversary, day bodies returned from Libya" suggest, many were critical of the topic of Obama's first tweet and his second

was no less controversial - a tweet about the sale of Obama campaign apparel sent out 30 minutes before he arrived at Andrews Air Force Base to meet the bodies of the victims of the Libya attack. Since we all know Twitter is no private discussion, Paul Lindsay, the communications director for the national Republican Congressional Committee, released a statement saying "You would expect nothing less from a president whose priorities have been misplaced ever since he came to office." Of course, Obama is not hand-typing each tweet (we would hope), he has a team for that, but the fact remains that the tweets are under his name and therefore influence his campaign negatively. Hence, the president experienced the downfall of having a Twitter for the public to scrutinize.

Twitter does have some great aspects, and some of the conversations are fascinating in content. Twitter has even capitalized on the political tweets by introducing the "Twitter Political Index," a tracker of Romney and Obama's tweets and their current popularity. Obama is currently ahead in the Twitter polls, but as is Twitter's nature, it is constantly changing. As the Huffington Post tweeted, "The real winner in both conventions for the past two weeks has been Twitter." I follow both Romney and Obama, but I take the concept of Twitter with minimal seriousness--the question is, will voters be minimally influenced when reading the candidate's words? Let's hope so. After all, it's just 140 characters.

Rookie NFL Referees Deserve Ridicule

Maitlyn Healy, staff writer

At last it is once again the most wonderful time of the year. No, I am not talking about Christmas. I am talking about the heart-pounding, voice-bruising, sweat-inducing football season. The NFL kicked off Sept. 5 with the loss of the 2012 Super Bowl champions, the New York Giants, to the Dallas Cowboys. And week one only got better from there. The grotesque Pittsburgh Steelers lost to the lovable Peyton Manning and his new team, the Denver Broncos, and the Baltimore Ravens kicked the snot out of the Cincinnati Bengals in a 44-13 victory. Week one, however, was not entirely full of joy. It was also composed of infuriating yet laughable blunders made by the replacement referees that the NFL has employed until who-knows-when. The NFL Referees Association was locked out at the beginning of the summer over, you guessed it, money. A new agreement has yet to be reached with the regular referees because NFL commissioner Roger Goodell refuses to pony up the \$16.5 million dollars that this association is asking for. What

the NFL is saving in money, they are losing in the patience of their players, coaches and fans. The gaffs made by these refs are inexcusable and have elicited several chuckles from viewers and players nationwide. These refs are coming from lower division college teams and even the Lingerie Football League, which is completely ridiculous as neither of those leagues come close to the pressure, pace and intricate rules of the NFL. Following are some of these refs' blunders:

--A referee in the preseason game between the Cardinals and the Saints mixed up the names of the teams during the coin toss.

--In the preseason game between the Ravens and the Falcons, a referee continued to call them the "Arizona Falcons" instead of the "Atlanta Falcons." They were playing in Atlanta during that game.

--The Giants received an extra play during their preseason game against the Bears when the quarter should have in fact ended before that play.

--In the week one game against the

Cardinals, the Seattle Seahawks received four timeouts in the second half due to a lack of knowledge by the referees that an injury within the last two minutes of play in a game costs the team a timeout.

--The 49ers' Aldon Smith was penalized for unsportsmanlike conduct for simply taking his helmet off after sacking Green Bay quarterback, Aaron Rodgers.

--The Viking's Lex Hilliard lost control of the ball without being touched down, and the ball was recovered San Diego. The refs, however, called Hilliard down by contact even though he was upright when the ball came loose.

It is apparent from the list above that these referees have no clue what they are doing in the NFL. Although fans were not always happy with the regular referees, I think I speak for everyone when I say that we need them and their knowledge back.