

Departing words from your editor in chief

by Hall Penn
Editor in Chief

Adam Beeson, next year's Editor in Chief of *The Clarion*, told me that I should write a farewell column for this last issue. I decided that I would love to have a dedicated space for my blathering and then I realized I had to fill a lot of white space and promptly stressed out.

The other day, as I gave my senior project presentation in front of the audience in a filled room, I realized that once I finished with the speech, I would basically be finished with college. Something, it seemed, clicked in my head and I felt like I was about to be free.

But to be realistic, I'm about to be less free. I'm about to enter a world of bills and deadlines and responsibilities. I have years of work and "adult" life ahead of me. Somehow I'm not worried though. Through all of the schools and jobs and people I have met, I've learned to adapt and create and I've learned to learn.

In my girlfriend's apartment there are posters all over the walls. Her roommates have pinned up everything from James Dean quotes to Led Zepplin to a map of the human impact on Africa's ecological sys-

tems. And as I sat in her apartment wondering ok, Hall, what exactly do you say in a farewell column, I made a connection.

When I first got to Brevard back in 2001 (yeah, I've taken five years to finish college, get over it) I noticed that the town was like blank walls. It seemed to me, someone who'd never really had to work to have fun and could get by in classes without too much extra work or studying, that this town was dead. It seemed like there was never anything to do. Someone actually told me that Brevard should make its slogan "Brevard: a good place to take a nap."

But I realized (after transferring out and then back in) that you have to make your own fun here. I realized that you have to put up posters to fill the empty space. It can be a challenge sometimes, but if I learned anything at all from *Back To The Future*, it's that you can't let anyone call you a chicken; you can't back down from a good challenge.

Since I came back to Brevard, I made my own fun; I studied what I wanted to study, and realized that I was only going to learn from a class if I put in the effort. I hate hearing about how we as a younger generation or we as Americans have a sense

of entitlement and that we feel like we should be handed everything. But I think that sometimes it's true. We expect things to come easy or to be handed to us.

What I've learned as the Editor in Chief of a reborn newspaper is that you have to dig and grab and yell and joke and sometimes be an asshole. You have to make people do the work, you have to make yourself do the work. I was never the best person for the job, but I like to think I was the right guy at the right time to be that asshole, to be that guy that while maybe didn't have the exact mindset of a great journalist, could gather a small group of people and turn out a product on a somewhat regular basis.

Almost everything I've learned here at BC has gone into my role with this newspaper at some point. And I've been

thankful to have had the opportunity to latch on to a project and throw myself into it. I worry that once I'm done with college I might not have these opportunities. I worry that when I move away from Brevard I won't have that constant challenge to create something of my own.

So challenge yourself while you're here. Find a project to throw yourself into. Give yourself the opportunity to bring all of your talents and interests together in building or creating or playing. Don't get discouraged if others don't think what you're doing is any good, or if they try to censor you or undermine your work. Do it for you, and enjoy it. Don't stand by and wait for someone to hand you something to do or something to write or something to learn. Go find those things, go make and create and act out. Don't waste your time, or mine.

On the Record ...

"I can look you in the eye and tell you I feel I've tried to solve the problem diplomatically to the max, and would have committed troops both in Afghanistan and Iraq knowing what I know today."

—George W. Bush, Irvine, Calif., April 24,

"I aim to be a competitive nation."

—George W. Bush, San Jose, Calif., April 21, 2006

"I'm the decider, and I decide what is best. And what's best is for Don Rumsfeld to remain as the Secretary of Defense."

—George W. Bush, Washington, D.C. April 18, 2006

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