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'No Excuse to Vote' program aimed to make voting easier

By Joy Roseboro
Argus Reporter

This year's presidential election was one of the most influential and most important, and the Forsyth County Board of Elections took it very seriously. It wanted to make sure that everyone had a chance to vote.

"There is absolutely no excuse for anyone not to vote," said Cindy East, the board's secretary.

Consequently, the "No Excuse to Vote" program began. It designated absentee voting sites for people to vote ahead of time.

"This is something that makes voting convenient for people who have busy schedules or for students who go to school and work," said East.

Many Winston-Salem State students didn't know about the program until its last day.

"Now that I know this program, it would not make sense for me not to vote," said WSSU senior Sheree Hall, before the election.

For the first time, Forsyth County residents were able to vote as early as Oct. 16, and up to Nov. 3, under the program at the Anderson Center on Martin Luther King Jr. Drive.

"I think that this program was a good idea, because I plan to vote, and now I can go ahead and do it and get it out of the way," said Vivian Moore, a Wachovia Bank employee.

However, some felt that the program had disadvantages.

They wished that the hours could have been longer, which were from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

"It was quite a crowd, the line was out the door and around the corner. I wish the hours were longer because some people don't get off work until 5 p.m.," said Arnette Hauser, a nurse at WSSU's Student Health Center, during the last day of the program.

Its process also takes more time. "Since this is a new thing, we have different guidelines to follow that makes the process a little longer," said Cooper.

Many local residents thought that the program was aimed at minorities to help increase their voter turnout rate.

"At this point we are not able to analyze if the percentage of minority voting has increased, and that is not what we are looking for. We just want to make voting a little easier and more accessible," she added.

GATES

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Though the department has considered building more parking lots, the department needs to further review the parking situation, Bell said.

"Before you can increase and tear and pull down pretty green grass and put up asphalt, you need to make sure you need to do that," he said.

The department will assess the effectiveness of the gated parking lots from November to January before moving on to phase two: installing parking gates in Hall-Patterson and Colson Hall parking lots.

"Truly that will cover a majority of faculty and staff lots except the infirmary," he said.

Bell said that the department notified students of the operational date of the R. J. Reynolds gate by generating memos to students in residence halls and campus buildings.

Monetary increases of \$20, added on to their \$90 parking fee, came to faculty and staff who chose to trade-in their traditional parking decals for cards used as an entrance pass to the gates.

Rowland Chidomere, an

associate professor of business, said that the convenience of being able to park in the parking lot outside of the building he works in outweighs the extra parking fee.

Since the gates became operational, Chidomere said, "I haven't had a problem with any places to park," he said.

Before the gates were installed, Chidomere said he sometimes searched up to 20 minutes for a parking space.

Though faculty and staff see the gate as a parking assistance, some students differ.

"It's an inconvenience to me if I'm coming to class (from off-campus) and I have to walk all the way to Wilson to park and then come all the way back over," said Keisha Satterwhite, a senior.

Student LaChia Armstrong, also a senior, said that the time when the gates were installed is a key factor in her disagreement with the system.

"They put it into effect in the middle of the year. Why couldn't they wait until the beginning of the year?," she said.

The parking lot is gated from 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., after which time it will be open to students.



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SHOW

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meetings," said Stephens.

In addition, Stephens said that KK Psi rehearsed the same performance in front of the Panhellenic Council that, according to Ray Epps, also a KK Psi member, agreed to send the fraternity an apology for not giving the group guidelines for the show. It has not been received.

"You put all those factors in, and tell me if the punishment fit the crime," said Stephens, implying that other organizations have done worse things.

"If we would have known it would be controversial, we would not have done it," said E. Bennetts, KK Psi's president.

KK Psi was not allowed to step for competition during the show, only for exhibition. If they had been allowed to compete, Stephens said that another routine would have been performed.

Though many agree with the suspension, "It is an unfortunate situation, but KK Psi has done many great things to

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— E. Bennetts,
KK Psi's president

support the WSSU band, and they are great supporters throughout the community," said Emory Jones, KK Psi's adviser.

"We can't help the band how we want to during the suspension," said Stephens. "If we had to do it again, we wouldn't have done it."

Art Malloy, the vice chancellor for student affairs, said, "KK Psi is taking the necessary steps to demonstrate the seriousness of their action. Sound moral judgments guides my life, and I hope that it guides the lives of WSSU students also."