

EDITORIAL

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Attend the SGA forum

For those who haven't recently taken a look at the Vol State events calendar, it would be fair to say that some months are packed with more activities than others.

While the student services division usually does a good job with these, there is one event in particular that cannot be overlooked.

That is the SGA forum – which allows you, the student, a chance to question those who were previously inaccessible to the student body at large – such as Vol State President Warren Nichols and other members of administration.

In short, it is a way to amplify your voice.

It is also helpful because many students may not even know where

to go or who to ask to get questions answered.

For example, the 2006-2007 Vol State catalog lists 248 people employed in the academic divisions alone.

Where do you begin?

The forum is a dedication of some time to ensure that students are given a thorough answer to what ever may be concerning them.

It is also a great starting point for discussion and dialogue between administration and student leaders and faculty.

However, there is one glaring problem.

While these forums are a great way for the student body to have direct communication with their student leaders and administration, the 12:15

p.m. start time is not convenient for some students.

Many don't have scheduled breaks on Tuesdays, and this is also the day when many science labs meet.

Perhaps if the meetings were to be held on a Monday or Wednesday, and later in the afternoon, maybe around 1:30 p.m., then there would be a higher student turnout leading to a better representation of the student body as a whole.

While the later start time would add extra time to everyone's day, the students who are inclined to go to such meetings likely won't mind the time added to their day.

At least it would be better than having students skip classes to attend.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

The responsibilities of Dr. Warren Nichols, president of Vol State, entail taking into consideration the needs of all the people.

If you want to look at the issue from a mere economic standpoint, we have the Noble Caudill Building estimated at almost \$2 million worth of repair, a shoddy art building needing some serious updating, and the college is redesigning a pond in front of the annexes.

Frankly, I do not see how smoking pavilions are on the budget.

As for the comment, "There is no way walking by somebody outside is going to give anybody lung cancer. It's ridiculous."

I know this uneducated statement is ridiculous. My best friend in high school belongs to a percentage of people who are allergic to cigarette smoke. Every time someone lit up, her throat began to close up.

I personally came from a smoking household long ago, and now if

someone smokes around me, it sparks anxiety attacks and feelings of suffocation.

Richard H. Carmona, the U.S. Surgeon General, said, "there is no safe level of exposure to secondhand smoke." The facts prove themselves since 49,000 nonsmokers died last year.

I agree that it is everyone's choice - it's their bodies - but you cannot deny the fact that the bad habits of smoking affect others.

I agree with President Nichols's choice not spend more money on the smoking issue than necessary. Exposure to secondhand smoke costs Americans more than \$9.5 billion a year in medical care, death, and disease.

We've already spent enough on smoking, and that statistic doesn't include how much is spent on the firsthand smokers.

And when we speak about smoking in the parking lot, inconvenience is an issue that arises.

Either way you cut it, someone will be inconvenienced. Smokers will find it very inconvenient to be forced to walk a little bit more and smoke in a parking lot (particularly in the cold).

Non-smokers already find it inconvenient to breathe in 11 known cancer-causing poisons and 250 toxins less than 10 feet from the entrances everyday.

When people cannot follow the rules, it is elementary knowledge that there will be consequences.

Although this is a community college, it is still considered higher education. Educate yourself and walk on it a bit.

--Michelle Moore
Vol State student, 19

Editor's note: the quotation, "There is no way walking by somebody outside is going to give anybody lung cancer. It's ridiculous," was made by William Edwards in the Feb. 12 issue of The Settler in response to a student survey.

THE SETTLER

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