

# Something funny about those guys

by Portia Priegert

First there was CRAP. Then the Democrats tries to liberalize everything.

Win or lose (mostly lose), joke slates have become a university tradition.

Some are in it for laughs, some out of frustration, and some claim they're the serious ones, and everyone else is the joke.

But whatever the reason, joke slates have provided SU elections with some of their funniest moments and have attacked student apathy at its source — students. (It's rumored that law students turn out *en masse* to vote for joke slates, and that's really saying something.)

The origin of joke slates is shrouded in mystery. This reporter scanned back issues of *the Gateway* until 1936 without discovering the germinal joke.

SU election candidates took themselves pretty seriously in the 1930s, 40s and 50s and even more seriously (though in a much different way) in the 60s.

But for some strange reason the 1970s spawned a lot of joke candidates.

1975 heralded the appearance of the first presidential prankster. His name was Wayne Chase, but his game was anyone's guess.



Wayne Chase

In his Gateway election blurb he outlined past positions he had held including vertical, horizontal and oblique. He had also served on the Committee to Feed the Cats While Their Owners are on Vacation and the Subcommittee to Study the Activities of the Standing Committee appointed by the Ad Hoc Committee of the Original Committee.

And his campaign promises were no more modest. They included printing and distributing \$400,000,000 in twenties creating massage parlours in Fine Arts. His platform, he said, was "a wooden structure built chiefly of two by-fours.

"Capability. Reliability. Accessibility. Personality. In other words, CRAP."

But the Conceptual Reality Alternative Party (CRAP) had other things going for them in their 1977 campaign.

Led by Napoleon look-alike Rene Le Larke, they gave the victorious Spark slate a run for their money.

Milfred Campbell, candidate for vp academic, who had boasted that his intake of beer could exceed 48 ounces per hour, rallied within 11 votes of his "serious" opponent.

But, heck, winning isn't everything. And for the joke candidates it's next to nothing.

And finally, there were the Liberal Democrats (circa February 1979).

Contesting the presidency was Fraternity, who popularized the election slogan *platitudes without action* and said he would only promise to deliver what everyone else had already done.

Dressed in a toga, he and his cohorts Liberty, Justice, Equality and Vote for Me campaigned vigorously on a platform so ambiguous that it could put the upcoming federal election candidates to shame.

If elected the Liberal Democrats said they would take office and "begin to make their policies flower into full scale problems in a competent and capable and accessible manner by working together."

Other proposals included providing a university education to everyone, even to those who have no interest in learning, placing HUB on end and heating it with hot-air from the political science department and implementing courses in Suburban Guerilla Warfare.

The Liberal Democrats didn't win, but they did make a strong first-ballot showing at most polling stations.



Fraternity

No joke candidates are running in this week's Students' Union election, though attempts were made to pull a slate together.

That's unfortunate because joke candidates, unlike many of their "serious" opponents, serve a valuable purpose.

Not only do they promote student interest in the election, but by satarizing the election and the candidates, they increase awareness of their weaknesses.

And in an election like this, that's something we really need.

## Just fooling around

Students' Union elections aren't the only ones to bring joke candidates out of the wood work.

In a 1973 election for an arts representative to General Faculties Council (GFC), candidate Peter Horne (see photo below) surfaced from parts unknown.

His campaign platform is reprinted in full below:

*You may have seen me hanging around campus. I'm Peter Horne and normally I'm a fairly private person, but I feel it's time I became prominent on campus. Before I came to U of A I was a member of several Greek fraternities. Though not familiar with GFC affairs, I plan to edge myself slowly into the main channel and then penetrate every nook and controversy. Although I don't normally like to blow my own horn, you're safe with me because I'm not the sort to withdraw prematurely until all issues have been thoroughly exposed. If erected, I plan to promote rhythm and harmony and am more than willing to come together with all members of GFC. I'll also promote social intercourse between campus groups. You might consider me a little testy, but I'm lucid on all*

*subjects from nuts to shooting your bolts. Above all, I'm approachable.*

Horne, contesting the position against two opponents, must have had a disruptive effect on *Gateway* production editor Loreen Lennon on press night however.

The written submissions from the other candidates were transposed and the election was delayed for six weeks.

But by then Horne had lost his electoral support and the 123 votes were split between the other two candidates.



Peter Horne

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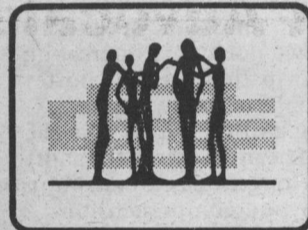
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