

Parking at Behrend

Is parking that big of a problem?

by Liz Hayes and Mike Frawley
news co-editor
and managing editor

Talk on campus recently has been centered around all the development coming to Behrend — the Athletics and Recreation Center, the Chapel and Bell Tower, the Research and Educational Development Center, the Eastside Access Highway, and the revamping of the residence areas. However, one topic of discussion that seems to be concerning students is parking for both commuters and residents.

On-campus residents have various concerns regarding parking availability and costs. Of these concerns, the most frequently expressed include the fees residents pay to park on campus, the lack of parking locations, the distances students are often forced to travel to find spots, and what many residents feel is the administration's lack of interest in the concerns students

have.

"I've gone to so many forums on this issue and the only thing that has changed is that the price [of parking] has gone up," exclaimed Tanya Deats, an eighth semester student at Behrend.

Residents have various suggestions for improving the parking conditions. One almost unanimous suggestion was to lower the cost of parking — residents feel that the \$75 a semester is too expensive. Another request is to inform the student body what the parking fees go toward.

Residents also have suggested that specific resident halls have specific parking lots assigned. "Parking lots should be coded by building," commented Meeghan Trumbull, another student at Behrend. For instance, allow only the traditional halls — Perry, Niagara, and Lawrence — to park in the S Lot; let only people park in the East Apartments Lots; save the Ohio Hall Lot for only Ohio and Almy Halls; and, finally, allow the suites to park in BFE.

Another suggestion offered was to revert to not allowing first year students to have vehicles on campus. Deats suggested that when parking passes are given, first priority should be given to seniors and then on down the line.

Commuters also expressed dissatisfaction with the parking situation on campus. The addition to the Erie Hall Lot two years ago greatly improved things, but while it is not as bad as in past years, there are still problems. If a student does not arrive on campus early in the morning, they end up having to park at an extreme distance from their classes. "If I pay \$65 dollars a semester to park, I shouldn't have to park miles away from my classes," said Behrend student Melissa Proba.

Ken Miller, Dean of Students, said that he was not aware of any major problems with parking on campus. He said that the building of the ARC will provide another parking lot for student use.



Fighting your tickets

by Katie Galley
editorial page editor

Parking in the wrong spot at the wrong time here on campus can leave a student with a hefty parking ticket. The Traffic Appeals Board can help though. The Appeals Board is run through the Student Government Association on campus, which collects all money from traffic fines to be used for student activities. The Board listens to student's arguments about a parking ticket and gives the students a chance to voice their opinion about a ticket.

The Board is chaired by the SGA vice president and also consists one Senator from SGA, three Commuter Council representatives and two JRC representatives. Once a week they meet together to hear the appeals of students.

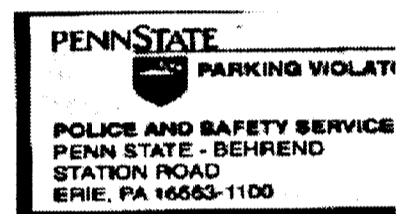
People who receive a parking ticket can lessen the price of that ticket by going to the Appeals Board within two days and they will receive a two-dollar reduction off the price of their ticket. However, once the ticket makes it to the Appeals Board, it is

only a very minimal amount of those tickets that will get waived.

The Appeals Board will listen to the arguments of everyone who appears in front of them, but most tickets given here on campus are very straightforward and hard to grant absolute to. The Board has to go through University policy, so they can't waive the ticket if someone is parked in a handicapped space. The Board will give students the benefit of the doubt whenever they can though.

For example, if a person appears in front of the Board with a complaint of a ticket received when they were parked in the upper lot of Reed at 4:55p.m., the board will take special consideration on a case by case basis. Another exception might be if someone has been parked in an unloading zone for 18 minutes, instead of the allotted 15 minutes.

SGA vice president George Leshnock thinks that Behrend students are lucky though. "The fines that the University charges for violations are very minimal compared to some of the other colleges I know."



TICKET #
00200190

License: H2S207 Pi
Permit:

Vehicle: MHT HYUN CP

Violation:
UNREGISTERED VEHICLE

Fine: 20.00

Location:
LOWER REED LOT

Comments:

Officer: 258

Date: 01/28/00
Time: 14:59

PLEASE INCLUDE THIS TICKET
YOUR LICENSE PLATE NUM
WITH PAYMENT. MAKE CHE
PAYABLE TO THE PENNSYLV
STATE UNIVERSITY. (CN

Local schools show contrast in parking regulations

by Douglas Smith
features co-editor

Penn State Behrend has a well-known policy on parking for commuters and residents. However, you may be wondering exactly how the other local schools face the large task of satisfying all those with vehicles. Mercyhurst, Gannon, and Edinboro all have pretty set rules on parking, and some are changing with an abundance of cars on campus.

Just for a review, Behrend has a 75 dollar to 85 dollar price range for parking permits, with these being available by the semester. There are spots for residents, with some spots reserved for faculty and staff.

Edinboro has a lot of information on their parking policies on their web page, but it may take a little time to navigate to the right place. In order to receive a permit students must show a driver's license and the vehicle owner's card. Students receive a set of decals for \$15 and must display them on the front and rear bumpers. Additional decals can be bought for \$1 in case other vehicles are going to be registered. Edinboro contains four lots for

commuters with the McComb and Lakefront lots being shared with residents. The letter "R" on signs around the lots denotes all residents' lots. Each lot has different hours of enforcement. The McComb lots do have a sort of reserved parking place for those with "M" decals, but these students usually have 0 to 59 credits.

Residents at Gannon must park in open-air lots owned by Gannon at a cost of \$35 per semester. This is on a first come, first served basis. There are about 180 spots available. For commuters the parking war is a little tougher. They must park in a limited number of spots in limited downtown areas at 7th and Peach, 8th and French, 10th and French, and two ramps on 8th Street. The cost is \$82 dollars per semester and may be renewed for the next semester. In order to settle who gets these commuter spots, they hold a parking lottery for full-time commuter students and those who do not get a spot go on a waiting list. The employees of the school park in Erie Parking Authority ramps.

At Mercyhurst freshmen cannot have cars unless there is a powerful

reason that they must have one, and a letter must be written to the Dean of Housing. There are 15 parking lots that cost nothing to park in, but are color coated for certain students. However, there are a couple of lots that are mixed between the small number of freshmen who have cars and commuters. There is reserved parking for faculty and staff for a fee in a closed garage, in case they would like to have their car protected from the weather. Mercyhurst is now facing a problem where the number of cars on campus may be more than the number of parking spots.

The cost and restrictions to parking at other campuses are a bit different from policies here at Behrend. It seems like Behrend treats everyone with a car the same, while Gannon charges more for commuter students. Mercyhurst offers a nice piece of protection for faculty and staff with the closed garage, but it costs a little bit extra. However, a number of the complaints we hear at Behrend have probably been voiced at all four local college or universities.

