

What parking problem?



Caught in the 'Spyder' web
Jason Snyder
editor-in-chief

"I'm so sick of having to walk the length of this campus to get to class just because I can't find a parking spot within 100 meters of my classroom." Yes, the parking "problem" at Behrend has been the hot topic for discussion this first month of the school year. And students aren't shy in expressing their anger over the huge injustice they deal with everyday in finding a parking spot suitable enough for their needs.

But let's break down that parking problem and the huge injustices that we are forced to deal with on this campus because of the shortage in parking spots. First of all, we have to walk far. Second of all...

Well I guess that's it. But it's still a major problem, right? I mean, how unfair is it that the faculty get to park in more convenient lots than the students? I'll answer that for you. We are, for the most part, young and healthy adults. (I realize I would be politically incorrect and uninformed if I didn't make an exception for the returning adults and handicapped students that might not be young or healthy. Not to say that all returning adults are old or that the handicapped are "unhealthy" depending on your definition of health, but mostly, the students that complain about a parking problem are young and healthy.) And for us students, it's a little something called "respect for faculty."

We will someday be in charge and will someday be able to have our own parking spot really close to our office. But for now, have some respect and decency towards the faculty and give them their perks that they have earned after years of education that they went through where they were the ones parking long distances from their classrooms.

A couple more inconveniences that I hear all the time...

1. I don't have anywhere to park my car in the middle of the day.
2. I live in Almy Hall and I have to park in the Ohio lot.
3. I am late for my 8:00 class because of the big traffic jam going into campus.
4. Police and Safety direct me to the lot across Jordan Road when the lots "on campus" get full.

Now, some advice for the students that have the overwhelming urge to pout about the aforementioned problems.

1. If you time it right so you arrive on campus exactly ten minutes before your class begins, spots open up. Surprisingly, for every car you see leaving campus as you are entering, another parking spot opens up.
2. Almy Hall is about one football field distance from the Almy entrance. I know the Penn State football players have trouble covering that distance, but I have faith that Behrend students are capable of making the trek.
3. Wake up at 6:50 as opposed to 7:00. I know it might interfere with your eight hours of sleep a night, but it beats joining the Beacon editorial board and not leaving the Reed Building until 1:00 in the morning.
4. Technically, the lot across Jordan Road is "on-campus." And if you are anywhere on the Behrend campus, the longest walk you will have to make to another destination on campus will be 7 minutes.

So, before you start cussing me out in your heads for daring to say that parking isn't a problem and that students' attitudes are, think about it for a minute. How ridiculous is it to ask able-bodied (see disclaimer above for definition of able-bodied) students to walk 7 minutes? Make adjustments in your schedule to make up for the inconveniences.

Now, I do owe an apology to students that live in the Niagara, Perry and Lawrence Halls. You have the right to complain for the simple reason that there is not space for parking anywhere near you. But think of it this way...the distance you are forced to make up in walking from the upper lots to your dorm is made up with the distance saved in your short walk to classes. Just think about having to walk from Ohio Hall to Erie Hall for an 8:00 class. Hopefully that gives you some satisfaction.

For anyone else that is still cussing my name, take a drive to Mercyhurst College and Edinboro University and find some empty lots there. Believe me when I say, we are well off.

And if everything else I have said has failed in satisfying your parking rage, then I will start a petition for the one thing that has saved many campuses' parking problems. Simply ban freshman from having cars on campus. Oh, maybe reality has set in now. Instead of making that seven minute walk across campus, maybe you can make that nice hour walk to Buffalo Road for a burger. Hmmm, the Jordan lot doesn't seem so bad anymore, does it?

Snyder's column appears every three weeks.



Tell us what you think!

Send a letter to the Editor!

Send all letters to:

behrcoll2@aol.com

No more hiding...I stand out from the rest

Last summer, I got a promotion on my one-year anniversary at Wegman's. I jumped from being a cashier/Wkids employee (Wkids is the daycare we have for customers) to becoming a front end coordinator. It was one of the best things that happened to me, not only for the substantial raise that I received, but also for increased responsibility of running the busiest part of the store - the front end.

Granted, it can be a real pain to herd the people with their overflowing carts to a shorter line, or having to deal with four missing cashiers on a crowded Friday night. Not only do we deal with the customer, we have to deal with the cashiers too, who are essentially the major power behind our business. If we didn't have the cashiers, we wouldn't have our talented front end (but we'd have a lot of angry customers).

Which brings me to a curious point: the cashiers on the front end see us (the front end coordinators) as the people in charge. The front end manager, who is essentially "in charge," does run the floor at times, but she's in charge of scheduling the management team (us) and the cashier team (the cashiers). With over 100 people to schedule for one week, it keeps her extremely busy. Not to mention the meetings and the load of other duties she must meet to keep the front end running smoothly.

My duties as a coordinator, on the other hand, are somewhat easier than the front end manager's, but a lot more difficult than a cashier's. Every coordinator is given an



Return to Reality
Becky Weindorf
cashier and photo editor

override key to put through unauthorized checks, WIC checks, etc. The only thing about being able to override an unauthorized check is that your employee number goes on that check, and if it bounces or comes back denied, you're the one that's responsible for explaining your actions.

And then there's the customer. The majority of customers are very polite and understanding when it comes to slight inconveniences in the store (for example, running out of a product on sale). But I'll tell you this much: customers are impatient, selfish, and want everything done RIGHT NOW. I mean, they expect you to drop everything that you are doing to help THEM RIGHT NOW. I don't care how nice you are outside of a grocery store, if you're shopping and you need something, you want it now. Believe me, I had the same mindset until I started working on the other side of the counter.

But despite all the hardships, it can be an exciting job. We're the ones you see running around, helping out newer cashiers, getting customers out the door and making sure that their experience at Wegman's is a pleasant and friendly one. (Yeah I know, I'm the

'The Hot Debate of The Week'

What's the deal with the oil?

*Should I Buy Oil?
Petroleum Reserve?*

Earlier last week, Clinton authorized the release of 30 million barrels of oil from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve to help curb the price of oil for families this winter. In his view, he doesn't want America's families to "freeze" this winter and wants to help families bring down gas and oil prices for this winter. Please. Give me a break 30 million barrels of oil will sustain this country for a whole two days.

There is absolutely no reason why Clinton should have done this. For one reason, the nation is in no "oil" emergency - a crisis would be, just for an example, a war. Those barrels are purposely put away for national crises when the U.S. decides to stop buying internationally. We have enough oil for about two months to sustain the whole country on its own - and this country is so filthy rich, we shouldn't be worrying about climbing oil prices.

Second of all, isn't it a coincidence that Al Gore just "happens" to mention that the United States needs to do something about the oil prices? Well gee, we know he's vice president and all, but since when did a vice president have power in the affairs of the United States? That is just too much of a coincidence for Gore to bring this issue up and actually watch his idea being carried out a week thereafter. Seems to me that Gore might have needed a small boost in the polls.

Every week, two editors from the staff will debate a topic that is hot. Students, faculty and staff are encouraged to email suggestions for the hot topic. Send ideas to behrcoll2@aol.com

Three million barrels of oil might sound like a lot, but it really is just a drop in the bucket. The effect of that oil being removed from our nation's reserves is negligible, so it is doubtful that any consumer has even said, "these gas prices are a little bit crazy, but like cheaper fuel, I've learned to complain." Even if it is only a drop for a month or so, we can all save that money for Christmas. The oil that was taken out of the reserves is for emergency use only.

Well the United States has more oil than it needs to feed the country. We have oil in the Midwest, Texas, and Alaska that is not yet mined out. There are bans from pumping oil in certain spots throughout the U.S. Unless than one hundred years at the current rate of consumption, the Middle East will be out of oil. One day who will be the only country in the world that has large deposits of oil? You guessed it - the United States of America. We rule.

By the time the world starts to run out of oil, the United States will begin to turn on those pumps on Alaska and Texas. Then we will have several years of oil supply to find alternate forms of energy. Hopefully something a little more efficient. So why does it really matter if some politicians want to see this release of oil to gain favor in the polls?

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Issues with parking

Dear Editor,

I am writing in response to the recent article entitled *Any Empty Spots? Parking Problems Being Addressed?* from the September 22 edition of the Beacon. The article was very well written, but a few parts that fire me up are those dealing with the interview with Mr. Donahue, manager of Police and Safety at Penn State Erie, The Behrend College. Just to clear things up right away, there is NOT a personal attack on Mr. Donahue, but simply an omniscient student's point of view.

As a student, coordinator, I, as well as hundreds of other students, have been dealing with on-campus parking problems since my freshman year. I can't say though that each year seems worse than the previous one as enrollment at Behrend grows.

Mr. Donahue was correct when he said, "anyone who says we don't have adequate parking on campus is confusing 'adequate' with 'convenient,' and it's not the same thing." When I think about where our options to park are as commuters, I remember not too long ago the Jordan Road Lot. Granted, some students with classes in the Academic Building park here, but what about the engineering students who have nearly all of their classes on the West End of campus and are sometimes forced to park here and walk 15-20 minutes to class? It should be their choice when they see their venture over to the West End to look for that lucky spot. Many times they will find it as students trickle out to their cars after meeting a professor or leave class for the day.

It was also mentioned in the article that once the ARC opens to students, commuters may be directed to park there, and residents may park in the Jordan Road Lot. If I'm not mistaken, isn't the ARC going to be just as far and inconvenient? If I had a class there or an athletic practice, I could justify parking there; otherwise, I find it to be far out of the way.

Some solutions were included in the article, and several colleges successfully enforce a few of the ideas. I believe that it would be a viable option to deny resident parking to first-year students. This would make more spots available to older residents in the upper lots. Some colleges don't even allow first-year students to commute. Instead, they must live on campus, thus freeing up more spots for the older students who do commute. I understand however, that the responsibility of solving this problem does not lie only in the hands of the administration. Students must be also, by car-pooling with roommates or with friends who live along their route to school. But I know personally that many students already do these things.

It's the point now that some of our tuition dollars have to go towards building that dreamy parking ramp, instead of vanishing into the mysterious black hole that tuition seems to disappear into every fall. I'm sure many students would like to see their hard-earned tuition money being put to use here at Penn State Erie and not in some other place and also that they would directly benefit from it. Since I started college, I have worked two jobs each school year and summer to pay for my education. I am not working 40 hours a week and carrying a full load of classes to NOT have convenient parking. While I understand that these problems cannot be solved overnight, there are steps that can be taken to ensure that this situation will not worsen.

Tracy Jones, COMMU_05

Simmer down now, take a chill pill or shut up

Disclaimer:

The following article does not intend to offend any people based on race, sexual preference, height, weight, body odor, color of eyes, hair color, athlete's foot or lack thereof. The following people, groups of people, things, and fictional characters are in no way, shape or form intended to be defamed: Muzak lovers, shriners, mimes, mime groupies, people who thought Milli Vanilli were musical geniuses, Phil Collins fans, professional wrestlers, Trekkies, Civil War re-enactors, zoo animals, people whose names begin with the letter "Q," crack addicts, people who dress up for the Rocky Horror Picture Show, Drew Carey, Jerry Seinfeld, Andrew "Dice" Clay, mullet sporting individuals, people who still wear acid washed jeans and B.U.M. equipment shirts, the dead, the undead, zombies, mutants, ghosts, imaginary friends, lawyers, farm animals, air hockey tables, cheap beer aficionados, goats, crappy boy bands (not that there is such a thing as a GOOD boy band), people who think professional wrestling is real, people who like professional wrestling, members of the mafia, drug addicts, drug dealers, born again Christians, cult members, atheists, internet porn addicts, Yanni, cock rock bands, the letter "H," chicken quesadillas, Ronald McDonald, Hamburgler, the actors who comprised the "A-team," swiss cheese, The George Foreman low-fat grill, compulsive liars,



Untitled 21
Ben Kundman
editorial columnist

sufferers of Catholic guilt syndrome, my strength of materials book, car bombs, the

N.R.A., the D.E.A., DMX, N.W.A., tech support workers, telemarketers, tickle me Elmo, Pokemon characters, Beanie Babies collectors, Witches, Warlocks, Dragons, people who play "Magic," Marlon Brando, pizza delivery boys, hobos, "No Skateboarding" signs, the person who decided riding a skateboard at 9:30 at night on campus was "disorderly conduct" (\$125), sobriety checkpoints, bartenders who cut you off, our "open" container law ("that's not open!" "Technically, no, but you're getting fined anyways"), Republicans, Democrats, Libertarians, The Green Party, the vast non-voting majority on campus, people with big teeth, and Martha Stewart.

I may have gotten a little carried away on the disclaimer. The point of this article was to point out that being politically correct is getting a little ridiculous. I am sure that I offended 98% of the campus with my disclaimer, knowing how big Phil Collins is here. I don't believe that people should have to constantly worry whether what they say,

do, write, breathe, or think about is "ok." I think racism, sexism, and discrimination against people based on sexual preference is complete bull. Yet, I don't think people should be preached to because they said something off-color. There is a difference between calling someone a demeaning name and telling an off-color joke (within reason). Unfortunately, the "within reason" aspect is impossible to define. Offensive to some is hilarious to others. I just think people need to look at context more than what is said.

With another 92 words left in this column, and nothing more to say about the topic of this article, I would like to address a letter printed in the Beacon three weeks ago. The letter, titled "Quit talking in codes Beacon," talked about what a talented and creative group of writers we are here at the Beacon. Actually, the letter said the editorial columns are "poorly thought out and poorly written right-wing garbage." I will be the first to admit, I suck at writing. I'm an engineer, silly! I can barely read, let alone write a column that clearly conveys a message. The important thing about having an editorial column is providing a voice for students. If you're sick of hearing "right wing garbage," then send a sample editorial into the Beacon and get on the staff in the spring.

Kundman's column appears every three weeks.