

THE BEHREND BEACON

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Crackdown on Copies Mini-THON helps in a big way

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The Penn State Erie Police are cracking down on the amount of photocopied parking permits. Campus officials say that some have tried to beat the system by photocopying real parking permits and hanging them on their rear view mirror trying to pass them off as real parking permits.

With thousands of cars parked on campus every day, it is almost impossible to check all the parking permits, but fraudulent permits are easily seen. "If you've looked at thousands of [parking permits], thousands of real ones, then you see the one that isn't quite right, you have to look at it," says Penn State Erie chief of police Jim Amman. "They do it obviously to save money; Rules and Regulations says it's a \$20 fine for a fraudulent permit."

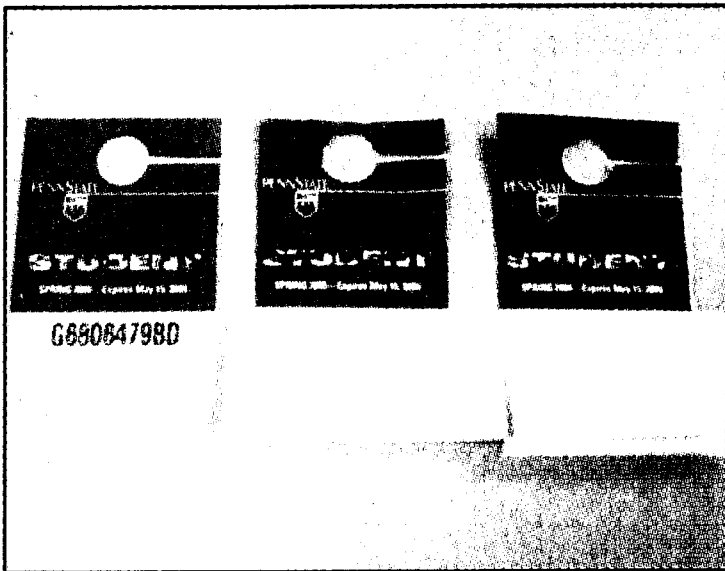
The seemingly small fine doesn't stop there. For not having a parking permit, a student can receive a \$50 fine on top of the \$20. Then the offender is cited for theft of service, and will have to appear in district justice court. After that the offender may face fines up to \$400 and with the court costs could pay up to \$500. Offenders are then referred to student affairs, who do whatever they feel is reasonable. "If you are trying to save a couple of bucks, you are running a risk" says Amman.

However, it's not just about the photocopied permits; police are disturbed by the amount of tickets written. Last year, the total number of parking tickets written was 3,484. This year beginning from Aug. 31 2005 to 2006 the amount of tickets written so far is has been 426. A parking pass is the only way to avoid getting a ticket. A semester parking pass for a full time commuter student is \$130 whereas a semester parking pass for a residential student is \$135. Also, a part time student pays \$65 for a semester parking pass.

However, if you purchase a fall and spring pass, rather than separately, you receive \$30 off the total price. Tickets range from \$7 to \$50 depending on the offense. Chris Szustak, a freshman, as well as a commuter here at Behrend was angry to find a ticket on his Chrysler Concorde. "It was ludicrous because it was the second day of classes." Szustak had parked in the student parking section without a permit and had received a \$50 ticket for the offense. "I was so upset because I am college student and can't afford to pay that much."

After nine tickets are written for the same vehicle, the car is then suspended and must be kept off campus for a week. If the same car receives any more tickets after this, each offense will have the car suspended for another week. Even if you are a resident, you must remove your car from the campus. Amann says, "A lot of the tickets are the same people over and over again."

With the ticket price ranging from \$7 to \$50 Amann says, "We have people that have racked up hundreds of dollars in parking fines. That's a lot of tickets." All money for parking fines goes toward the maintenance of existent parking lots and the construction of new lots. The rules for visitor parking are simple. After you receive a free parking pass from the Erie Hall police and safety services, you may park in the visitors parking lot of the Reed Union Building or you can park in the Erie Lot. Visitors cannot park in residential lots except on weekends after 5 p.m. on Fridays, and must have their cars removed by 3 p.m. on Sundays. For further information on parking rules and regulations, Behrend's police and safety website is at: <http://pennstate-behrend.psu.edu/student/police/index.htm>.



Jeremy Korwek / THE BEHREND BEACON

Although outwardly similar, counterfeit permits are easily identified.

By **Johnny Evans**
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Students here at Penn State Erie are putting in their own efforts this upcoming weekend in the mission to conquer childhood cancer. The first Annual Mini-THON is being held this weekend at Erie Hall beginning at 7 p.m. Through the Mini-THON and several donations, a goal of \$10,000 is hoped to be reached by Feb. 17 (the start of THON at University Park). All money raised for the event is being donated to the THON organization in an effort to fight pediatric cancer.

The Mini-THON will last 24 hours, beginning at 7 p.m. Friday, and ending at 7 p.m. Saturday. During the 24 hours, the participating dancers will not be able to sit or sleep. Currently, there are 15-20 people signed up to participate in the 24 hour dance; however people can join at any time, or just simply show up. Ben Raymond and the rest of the LEB (Lion Entertainment Board) have arranged for "Son of Glam" to perform starting at 10 p.m. Friday night. Son of Glam is a more "successful band" that has been here in the past. "If enough people come to support them and Mini-THON, it should definitely give the dancers enough energy to last the full 24 hours," Raymond stated.

Further information about the band can be reached at the bands website at www.sonofglam.com. Other entertainment will be going on during that time. Saturday morning, the Men's and Women's Lacrosse teams will be

participating in a basketball game. At 2 p.m. a game show will take place titled "Who Knows You Better," and an Improv show is also scheduled to take place.

Director Meredith Straub stated, "We are asking for each dancer to raise \$50 for the organization, but anybody is welcome to come and participate regardless." Bleachers will also be set up for anybody who just wants to come check out the event. All money for funding the event is raised or donated.

TOPS Friendly Markets and the Penn State Alumni Association have given substantial donations for the event, and the goal is to reach \$10,000 by Feb. 17.

According to the THON website, THON is the largest student run philanthropy in the world. It is a year-round fundraising event benefiting The Four Diamonds Fund, committed to conquering childhood cancer, at the Penn State Children's Hospital in Hershey, PA.

Through the efforts over 10,000 Penn State students and an endless list of sponsors, THON is able to donate a gift to the Four Diamonds Fund to help achieve their mission of conquering childhood cancer through "superior care, comprehensive support, and innovative research."

THON is supported by all Penn State campuses. Every February, a 48-hour no-sitting, no-sleeping dance marathon is held at the University Park campus. This year the event is scheduled to be held Feb. 17-19.

Over the fun-filled weekend, hundreds of supporters come together in hopes of one day finding a cure for pediatric cancer. Over the past 30 years, THON has raised over \$30 million and has helped many children and families fight childhood cancer.

Penn State Erie Mini-THON
Schedule of Events in Erie Hall
Friday, February 3:
10 p.m.: **Son of Glam** (sponsored by Lion Entertainment Board and Student Activity Fund)
Saturday, February 4:
12:30 a.m.: **Matchbox Player's Improv**
11 a.m.: **Student basketball game**
11:30 a.m.: **Half-time challenge with the Behrend lacrosse team**
2 p.m.: **"Who Knows You Better?" game show**
5 p.m.: **Cheerleader performance**
6 p.m.: **Closing ceremony**

Inside



Human/animal hybrid sees own shadow, Page 6

Warm weather leads to wasted winter

By **Nicholas Underhill**
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The fluctuating winter weather in the Erie region is creating a changeable climate of opinion among residents. While some people are enjoying the warmer than normal temperatures, others are lamenting the lack of snow.

Students and staff alike have been enjoying the warmer climate. The Food and Housing crew has been enjoying an easier winter with the omission of keeping the sidewalks off their list of chores this month. "It's been great, I've only had to shovel snow once," exclaims Bill Underhill. Many students are taking advantage of the increase in temperatures at the local basketball courts or in front of their dorms throwing around a football. Others are just thankful for the simpler things the warmer temperatures have brought, and Julius Aldanna is among them, "I'm just happy because I don't freeze and get my feet wet going to my classes!"

On the other hand, the warm weather has had an adverse effect on skiers and snowboarders. Mark Allison, a Behrend student and avid snowboarder, is among those disappointed with the weather. "I feel like my whole winter has been wasted. I was looking forward to getting out there and I've only been able to a few times." Allison claims that all of the local spots are shut down for now. "If you want to ride where there are rails, you have to drive to Peek n' Peek which is thirty minutes away, or Holiday Valley which is 90 minutes away. I don't have time to do that between classes and homework." The winter has also been very difficult on those who are just learning how to ski and snowboard in classes, which is the case with Rohan Ramanna, who says that the weather has been very discouraging. "Lately it has just been sheets of ice and its very slippery, it just makes it way too hard. It's definitely hindering my learning process."

Although the skiers have been expressing that the weather has been undesirable, it has not kept them away from Peek n' Peak. Michelle Weilaehner says that business has been good this month, "We haven't gotten as much snow as normal, but the weekends are still very busy." Weilaehner goes on to express sympathy for her customers having to endure undesirable elements, "When it rains it gets slippery and just puts a damper on things for the skiers."



Jerry Pohl / THE BEHREND BEACON

Penn State Erie student John Diurba enjoys the unseasonably warm weather by practicing his mountainboarding.

Winter sports enthusiasts need not fear because the winter weather is right around the corner. Erie Meteorologist Tom Atkins of WJET television attributes the recent weather to a Pacific Jet Stream flow that was moving from west to east, but he says that this is soon to end. "A polar Jet Stream flow will return next week and February temperatures will plunge below normal levels again, similar to the first three weeks in December. With Lake Erie unusually unfrozen, it will give us the potential for more lake effect snows." He goes on to state, "Of course lake effect snow is not the only way we get snow, so as long as the temperatures stay cold, we can tap snow from traditional low pressure and fronts, often called

"synoptic snow." Brain Neudorff, also a meteorologist with WJET, adds, "Lake effect (snow) is not done by any means; combine that with cold temperatures and an above normal lake (temperature), and that could equal out for the skiers stuck in this snow drought getting something after all."

So far, the city has only tallied 53 inches of snow this season, the fourth lowest total in its history, in contrast to 123 just last winter. In January of 2005, 38 inches of snow were accumulated, 28 more than it has in 2006. The average temperature of 37 degrees also placed on the record charts, at third; the normal average is 26 degrees.

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