

the council candidates



Felicia Lewis

Lewis concerned about downtown housing

Editor's Note: The following is the sixth in a series of interviews with candidates for the State College Municipal Council in the Nov. 3 election. Today's article will be the last because the seventh candidate, Republican Ralph Way, would not agree to be interviewed by The Daily Collegian.

By KAREN KONSKI
Daily Collegian Staff Writer
State College Municipal Council candidate Felicia Lewis said she would like to see some of the block grant funds from the Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area program be used for housing projects.

Lewis, a Democrat and incumbent, said she is concerned about the spread of deteriorating neighborhoods downtown.

According to guidelines for the block grant funds, Lewis said, the funds are supposed to be used to help low- to moderate-income people. She said the people living in deteriorating housing, including students, fall into this category and would be affected most by the project.

The council should also consider proposals made by the former code enforcement officer to have more stringent demands for those in the process of converting old homes into housing units, Lewis said.

The long-range impact on the community would be beneficial, she said.

However, Lewis said changing the zoning of downtown areas where conversion is taking place would not help the problem. If the zoning were changed to general commercial, the housing units could have a greater density.

"This would have a devastating effect on the community," Lewis said. "It would accelerate the deterioration."

In addition to block grant funds being used for housing, Lewis said she would like to see the funds used for one project that would have a particular meaning for the entire Centre Region and one that would have a particular meaning for the county.

She said block grants are designated to benefit the core area, so the emphasis will have to be on the municipality.

State College is eligible for the block grant funds since it was designated an SMSA because of its growth as recorded in the 1980 census.

Lewis also said she does not want to see the funds used for ongoing programs. She said the funds are not guaranteed after the next three years, so she does not want to see them used for anything that the municipality would have to end up paying for if the funds are discontinued.

She said she wants to see the same principle applied to revenue sharing funds; she does not want to see them used for ongoing programs either.

Lewis also said something will have to be done about the parking problem downtown; either a garage will have to be built on an existing lot or a deck will have to be constructed.

"We're moving in that direction," Lewis said. "It would be foolish and shortsighted not to consider it seriously."

She also said she thinks the council should seriously consider acquiring a lot to be used for temporary long-term parking, until the future expansion of downtown parking space is worked out.

The council is looking into buying a piece of property to be used as a surface parking lot by people who now rent spaces in the Pugh Street garage on a monthly basis. This would free the spaces in the Pugh Street

garage for people who do not need them on a long-term basis.

Because this is the first election after the Centre County Court of Common Pleas decision to register the Consumer Party as an official party in Centre County, Lewis said she does not think the Consumer Party will have much of an effect on the election.

"I'm pleased they won their court case," Lewis said. "I think they have something important to say to the community. But it's hard to have a whole lot of impact your first time around."

The Consumer Party was denied ballot status in February by the Centre County Commissioners. The party sued the commissioners for party status and won the decision in September.

Lewis also said the council should look at private buyers for the cab company at the end of the company's trial period, but if there are no buyers who are qualified, the council should vote to keep the company.

The municipality bought the Centre Cab Co. from private buyers in 1979 and turned its operation over to the Centre Area Transportation Authority, CATA later asked to be relieved of responsibility for the cabs. The council then voted to keep the cab company for a year on a trial basis with a review after six months.

"The important thing is the services should be provided," Lewis said. "If private owners can't provide the service, the local government has to step in."

"The service is important. It's vital to too many people (to be discontinued)." She also said the public is slowly becoming aware that the cabs are now providing 24-hour service and are being dispatched from the Trailways bus terminal. She said she does not think these services will have much of a financial impact on the cab company, but will improve the public's opinion of the system.

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Don Humphrey, a participant in Juvenile Court Day, takes the witness stand in a mock trial.

Public learns about juvenile court

By L.A. HILL
Daily Collegian Staff Writer

In a courtroom with about 100 observers, Juvenile Court Officer Jeanette Fairbanks recommended to Judge Charles C. Brown yesterday that 16-year-old Tim Smith be found delinquent and taken out of his parents' custody. Brown, however, denied the recommendation, and Smith is allowed to go home with his parents. A happy ending — it's a bogus trial because, among other reasons, 100 people watched the proceedings.

Juvenile Court hearings by law are closed to the public, but yesterday the Centre County Juvenile Court officers held an open mock juvenile trial in the Centre County Courthouse in Bellefonte as part of Juvenile Court Day.

Through this mock trial, more than 30 students invited from area schools were able to see, probably for the first time, what their peers and possibly they themselves may have to experience if they break the law.

"Juvenile delinquency is a concern for all of us," said Fairbanks. "The public has to be aware."

Likewise, Centre County Court of Com-

mon Pleas Judge Charles C. Brown said juvenile delinquency is not the problem of one group alone, but for everybody.

"The matter of juvenile delinquency, the solution to the problem of juvenile delinquency, the handling of the problem as it exists is not the job alone of the juvenile court, not a job alone of the police, the community agencies alone, of social services agencies alone... It's a combination of all that."

"There isn't a lot of attention paid to (the juvenile court) by the general public unless you're involved in it — and then the system is supposed to work very well," Brown said.

Fairbanks said that last year the Centre County Juvenile Court handled 139 juvenile cases. Of those, 75 to 80 percent of those minors involved were not found to be delinquent and have been handled with informal supervision.

These juveniles, she said, are not entered into "the books."

"When they turn 18, their folders are actually buried," she said.

The extent of the informal supervision involves such matters as obeying a curfew, maintaining attendance at schools

and just listening to parents.

The juveniles who are found delinquent may be sent to a detention center, but only for a limited amount of time — no longer than 30 days, Fairbanks said.

Juvenile Court Officer Tom Lee said that although placing a juvenile in detention may "wake the kid up," detention placement is really treating the symptom but not administering a cure.

After a period in a detention center, the juvenile is brought back to the court for "disposition," Fairbanks said.

At that point, he or she may be sent back to the detention center, placed in a foster home or another program, such as the Youth Forest Camp in Huntingdon, or placed under parents' custody.

Fairbanks said that if a juvenile is taken out of his parents' custody the court usually sends him to a program or center in or close to Centre County.

Centre County has five foster homes and a reciprocal placement agreement with neighboring Mifflin County.

However, Fairbanks said, in some instances it is better to remove the juvenile from the immediate area.

Anti-handgun coalition calls for awareness

The epidemic of handgun-related violence in the United States has prompted a national anti-handgun group to call for a renewed awareness of the problem. The Coalition to Ban Handguns has designated the week of Oct. 25-31 as National End Handgun Violence Week.

Recent cover stories by both Time and Newsweek reported the magnitude of violent crime in the United States with the following statistics:

- Someone is murdered with a gun in this country every 43 minutes — a total of about 23,000 persons a year.
- Americans purchase handguns at a rate of one every 12 seconds — a total of 2 million sold every year.
- There are an estimated 55 million handguns in the United States today — one for every four people.

• More than 50 percent of gun victims are shot as a result of an argument or an accident.

University students who were asked about the problem of handgun violence had differing opinions, but most agreed that a new form of control is needed.

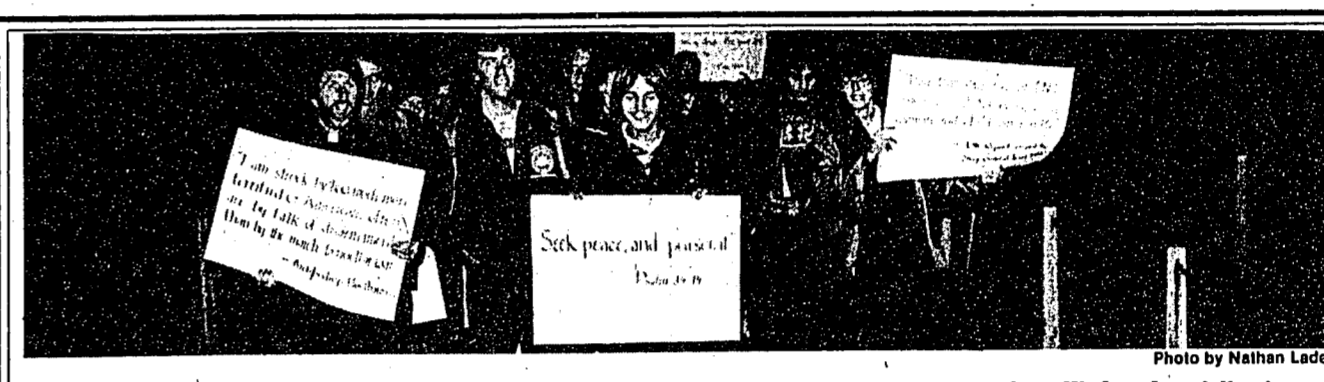
Todd Cleff (1st-science) said that designating one week out of the year to think about handgun violence isn't going to solve the problem.

"We only think about it for a week or two — like when the pope or the president is shot — and then we forget all about it."

Carl Roeder (8th-journalism) said gun laws are too loose and vary from state to state.

Other students said they were also in favor of registration, but said they would not support a total ban on handguns.

—by Tony Phyllitis



In conjunction with Peace Education Day, area residents hold a candlelight peace march on Wednesday, following a vigil in Eisenhower Chapel.

Groups hold peace march

More than 40 people formed a candlelight peace march Wednesday night that wove its way around campus, drawing many curious stares — but even more enthusiastic followers.

"We're marching as a consciousness-raising to the realities of our world and the direction in which it's moving," said Don Ealy, head of the committee for the Peace Day.

"This is especially for young people, since it's the older ones who have made a mess of things."

The march, which followed a vigil in

Commission presents improvement awards

Five Regional Consciousness Awards were presented by the Centre Regional Planning Commission yesterday to those in the region who, in the committee's judgment, have contributed to the "betterment of the community" through careful planning and maintenance.

"The rationale behind the award is to recognize anything, be it an activity or an improvement, which just increases the beauty of an area," said Bob Nuss, group chairman. "It's an aesthetic appreciation award."

This year's winners are:

- The Friends Meeting House of State College, 611 Prospect Ave., because the new structure blends well with its surroundings.
- The James Smith family for maintaining the Smith Memorial Planting, corner of Garner Street and Easterly Parkway.
- Elby's management for restoring an old schoolhouse on the Elby's property, South Atherton Street at Branch Road.
- Nuss said although "it would have been just as easy to run a bulldozer" over the schoolhouse, built in the 1800s, Elby's chose to keep the building for its historical value.
- The Harris Township Board of Supervisors Building, Boalsburg, for "retaining the old" by incorporating an old blacksmith's shop into part of its building and for keeping "in tune" with the other structures in Boalsburg.
- Willis C. Bryant, Patton Township, for restoration of his residence which dates from the 1700s.
- Nuss said the group keeps a list of potential winners throughout the year.

—by L.A. Hill

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