opinions

editorial opinion

Overregulation blues

The tone of this editorial will not exceed 55 decibels. We wouldn't want to violate State College's noise ordinance. But wait! What noise ordinance? What 55 decibels? IF WE GOT LOUD, WE'D BE ARRESTED FOR DISORDERLY CONDUCT. What's going on?

Seventeen months after this community was blanketed by a noise ordinance that limited parties to 55 decibels, only six noise citations have been issued. But it's still pretty loud out there: at least 90 percent of the 867 citations issued for disorderly conduct have been for noise violations, according to State College District Justice Clifford Yorks.

The noise ordinance, nine months in the making, met loud approval from non-student residents and equally loud opposition from fraternities and independent students. It made any amplified sound at any time a violation if a neighbor complained. It even made barking dogs illegal if a neighbor complained.

The State College Municipal Council hailed the ordinance as a panacea for an unavoidable problem in a college town. Council member R. Thomas Berner said it "will make everyone responsible for getting along with their neighbor."

Well, borough council, you passed the law. You spent the time passing it and you spent the money training officers to enforce it. At least you could enforce the law.

Not the law that is easiest to enforce, but the law that applies to the specific violation. Now why don't they enforce the noise ordinance instead of using the all-purpose disorderly conduct, which is much more subjective in its enforcement?

Police Chief Elwood Williams says "it's less of a hassle," because officers don't know how to use the noise-measuring equipment. And they don't have that much equipment, only two measuring devices.

So why did council agree to the ordinance if it's just a hassle?

Perhaps council members put on their regulator gas masks that make them go regulation slap-happy. Why not a noise ordinance when there's an open-container law, weed ordinance, cruising ordinance and an ordinance banning residents from parking their own cars in their own yards?

It is clear council and the police department have the obligation to enforce the noise ordinance as it is written. If they don't intend to use it, it should be repealed.

And the next time council plans to further regulate the life of this college town, it should remember the difference between loud but meaningless rhetoric and the "hassles" of everyday life.

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Students' letters should include semester standing, major and campus of the writer. Letters from alumni should include the major and year of graduation of the writer. All writers should provide their address and phone number for verification of the letter. Letters should be signed by no more than two people. Names may be withheld on request.

The Collegian reserves the right to edit letters for length and to reject letters if they are libelous or do not conform to standards of good taste. Because of the number of letters received, the Collegian cannot guarantee publication of all the letters it receives. Letters may also be selected for publication in The Weekly Collegian. All letters received become the property of Collegian Inc.

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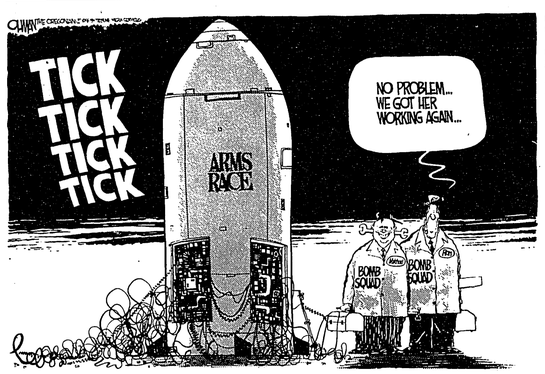
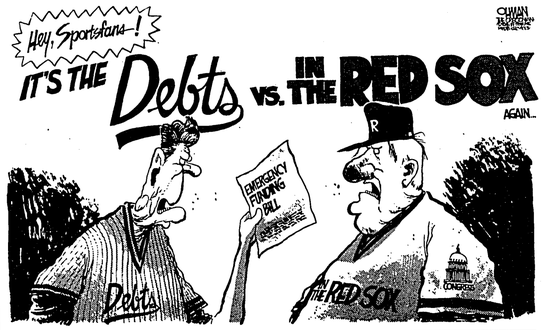
Mail other letters to: The Daily Collegian; 126 Carnegie Building; University Park, Pa. 16802.





reader opinion

Remembrance

Penn State and the Department of Electrical Engineering lost a great friend on Oct. 10 when Professor Clifford Holt died. Until a few weeks ago, he was teaching in the department without pay, as he has done for the 13 years since he retired. He did it because he loved to teach and he loved Penn State.

By doing so, he enabled young professors to have a lighter teaching load so they could get their careers established.

He served as an inspiration to professors who met his students rejoicing in the memory of his compassion, dedication and sense of humor.

He will long be remembered by his students, his friends and through the scholarship fund that has been established in his name.

John S. Nisbet
professor of electrical engineering

Nearsighted

The only thing all parties agree upon in reviewing the recent Iceland "mini-summit" is that advancements were made and that they broke down over the Strategic Defense Initiative. Consider these facts:

- SDI research has been going on for at least 20 years; Reagan didn't even learn of it until 1983.
- If a defense which is not cheaper than the counter measures against it, the defense is not feasible.

The Soviets already possess technology to alter their present nuclear missiles (by shortening the boost phase or having them rotate during the boost phase) which would effectively nullify the best of our present high-tech space goodies.

They may also launch dozens of small space mines in a single rocket payload and maneuver them into position near SDI devices. These mines could be exploded at will from the ground in time of war.

- Reagan totes SDI as a non-nuclear progarm, yet the most potent and promising weapon in the SDI arsenal is the x-ray laser, a weapon powered by a hydrogen bomb.
- The Soviets have been researching similiar weapons for years. So what do they gain in confining SDI testing to the lab? As long as the United States doesn't test these weapons in space, the Soviets are relieved of the rather expensive burden of financing similar tests.

Besides, no one particularly likes the thought of dozens of satellites, some with nuclear bombs at their core, floating about space in their development phase. There is also the fear that space weapons escalation would result.

This is not saying SDI is hopeless. The vision of a space-based, non-nuclear "peace shield" implemented and maintained by the world's major powers to ensure against third-party attack as well as arms escalation, is achievable as well as admirable.

It's likely to become feasible someday, but for Reagan to hinge U.S.-Soviet arms reductions talks on the in-space testing of a system that cannot possibly be effective in the next 20 years is irresponsible and nearsighted.

Preying on the misinformation of the citizens of this nation to gain support for what is at best a vain political issue is unjust. Doing so at the expense of promising arms reductions proposals is inexcusable.

Todd G. Fitch
junior-information systems

Liability?

My sister-in-law's mother's brother's aunt's pet dog's former owner's third niece's step cousin's under-21-year-old daughter came to visit me when I was a freshman living in (OH MY GOD!) M-e-K-e-a-n Hall. That was a couple years ago.

Two months ago, her mother died from acute emphysema (she smoked four packs of cigarettes a day for 35 years). It's easy to figure out the circumstances which led to her death, however. It all goes back to the time her daughter visited me at Penn State one day long ago.

Some of our activities included drinking some beer in my room and a site-seeing excursion in her car (the same car her mother was to die in, years later, while having a severe emphysema attack on the way to the hospital) of the several fraternity houses around campus.

Drinking some beer while under age is against the law, if caught, but you know, *no way in the world* could her parents *ever* be held responsible, much less accountable, for the actions of their own under age child. Nope. The blame has to fall somewhere else.

That's why the rest of her family has, in vain, been trying to win their lawsuits against the company that manufactured the aluminum from which the beer can she drank out of that night was made, the construction company (since they were the one's who built McKean Hall in the first place) and, of course, the car manufacturer for building the very same car which was used for the site-seeing tour. I mean, they had to start somewhere, right?

Well, to wrap all this up, to this very day I make sure I never involve myself in the deadly combination of drinking beer out of aluminum cans in McKean Hall and taking site-seeing tours of fraternities in one of that company's cars. I think one can understand why.

Michael Rybacki
junior-fuel science

What do you think?

The Daily Collegian welcomes letters from students, faculty, staff and area residents concerning issues and topics of interest to the *Collegian's* readership. With the semester at the half-way point, many important issues confront the University. The *Collegian* wants to know what you think about:

- State College Municipal Borough's noise ordinance. After 17 months, only six citations have been issued under the ordinance. Do you think a special ordinance is needed to reduce noise in the State College area? Or do you think this ordinance is just another case of overregulation?
- Political candidates who use mudslinging to gain the advantage over their opponent. Granted, mudslinging has been around nearly as long as there have been politicians. What do you think about these politicians who overlook issues and concentrate on slighting their opponent?

Authors must present letters to the editor (no more than 1½ pages, double-spaced) or forums (up to three typed pages, double-spaced) to the *Collegian* in 126 Carnegie Building during office hours, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Students' letters should include the semester and major of each writer. Letters from alumni should include the author's major and year of graduation.

All writers should provide their address, phone number and social security number for verification of the letter. Letters should be signed by no more than two people.

The opinion editors reserves the right to edit letters for length and to reject letters if they are libelous or do not conform to standards of good taste.

Participation:

Look beyond obvious forms of protests while searching for solutions to the world's problems

Is there no end to the atrocities that this University will sponsor? Not content with the South African dealings, there is yet another area in which the University has dealings with a situation of dubious ethical clarity.

It is a little known fact that Penn State has numerous holdings in a small area in Antarctica. Isolation in a forgotten corner of the world has enabled this company to avoid public scrutiny and ultimate exposure of what it really is: a sordid little operation headed by a greedy, fat old man who blatantly exploits his workers and mistreats animals. Penn State must cease funding of this atrocity.

This miserable old codger, growing literally by the day as a result of your tuition, employs hundreds of laborers for nothing more than food and lodging. Beyond this abomination, he refuses to employ nothing but extremely short fat white men whom he degradingly refers to as *elves*. You should feel real guilty about this.

These serfs labor throughout the year on useless trinkets while their master reaps

the ultimate benefits of fame and overall adulation by working merely one day a year and eating stale cookies the other 364.

He refuses these poor workers unemployment benefits, health insurance and it is rumored that a worker who misplaces so little as a tinkertoy becomes polar bear bait.

If you are not ready to take your own life because of your pounding guilt over this, you have all the conscience of a garish lawn ornament.

This man is a Stalinistic-type communist who has never been seen garbed in anything but the color red. Well, gosh darned it, he makes me see red as well.

University support of Santa Claus must be stamped out. It must be gutted, shouted down, blown up and sent on a long hike without the proper footware.

I, as the moralistic voice of universal integrity, announce the presence of a group called: *Students Against the Parasitic Santa*, or SAPS. We have already had hundreds of rallys at Old Main.

Unfortunately, only me and about 20 people with very strange haircuts showed up, so I felt ridiculous and instead went downtown and played video games where I got to shoot at large, unfeeling aliens.

I summoned up the courage to stay at the the next one I attended. We chanted dumb slogans and tried to pretend no one was really staring at us. *The Russian Bear has four paws that's four more votes for Santa Claus! Dr. Jordan, listen to us, while we act like children and fuss and cuss!*

We all felt quite sheepish when we found out that Jordan was out playing golf with Gerald Ford and did not hear our wailing and grinding of teeth.

Nevertheless, it did have quite the impact. Really, it's true.

I tried to find other ways to help the elves. I discovered they often suffered from chapped lips because of their diet which consisted mainly of broken candy canes. So I pursuaded my fraternity to have a slam-a-thon with a sorority to *lick chapped lips*.

It was a success. We raised much money. Members repeatedly bashed themselves over the head with large, thick clubs with larger donations for more powerful and lengthy self-bludgeoning. The group with the largest number of comatose members at the end won the Marquis de Sade "Pain is not So Bad" award as well as free trauma care at Center Community Hospital.

Unfortunately, after expending all this effort on each of these endeavors I felt quite empty. I had attempted to give my boring, collegiate life meaning by attaching myself to causes rather than just going out and meeting girls instead.

I didn't solve my problems or anyone elses by throwing group tantrums on Old Main Lawn. Rather, we sounded like a bunch of infants with diaper rash.

Maybe instead of storming around screaming or bashing myself over the head like an idiot to raise money, I could have instead helped some very real people who were around me and could be helped much more than someone a continent away.

In my community there are the elderly, the orphaned, the sick and the handicapped. They just didn't seem as exciting as a lot of other people who appeared on the evening news every night. But I could make a difference with them.

There is nothing wrong with peaceful protest or charitable events. They certainly do a lot to advance their causes. But the only way to make a difference in something is to actively participate, not merely talk a lot or raise money once a year. Participation is the only solution to any problem.

Brian Schafer is a senior majoring in health planning administration and a columnist for The Daily Collegian. His column appears every other Wednesday.

Frats join forces to combat crime

By VICTORIA PETTIES
Collegian Staff Writer

University fraternity members and pledges will patrol the streets of State College every weekend as part of the first-ever nationwide fraternity crime watch.

Eric Graves, Interfraternity Council community relations chairman, said that last weekend 72 fraternity members patrolled a 16-block area from 10 p.m. Friday to 2 a.m. Saturday. The patrol area stretches from Hetzel Street to South Allen Street and from East Beaver Avenue to East Hamilton Avenue.

Fraternity Crime Watch, sponsored by IFC, orginated as a program to deter weekend acts of vandalism and disorderly conduct in neighborhoods with a large number of fraternities, Graves said.

"Vandalism and disorderly acts are not serious problems in the fraternity community, but it is enough of a problem for IFC to address," Graves said.

IFC's community relations board originated the program last spring "but the program did not get off the ground until this semester," Graves said.

"Participation in the program is overwhelming," Graves added. "Thirty-six of the 52 fraternities have signed up to participate in the crime watch."

The participating fraternities will take turns patrolling four areas for an hour each starting at 10 p.m. on Fridays.

IFC President Pat Conway said the Crime Watch program started on Homecoming weekend because of the high number of people visiting State College throughout the weekend.

"Our houses have been victimized enough," Conway said. "Most of the crimes at the fraternities occur Friday and Saturday night after a party when everyone is sleeping."

David Caster, police community relations and crime prevention specialist, said the State College Bureau of Police Services advised Crime Watch fraternity members to act "only as the eyes and ears of the State College police."

> 'The Crime Watch is effective in terms of deterring (crimes) more than anything else.'
>
> — Brian Cousins

Caster said fraternity members are advised to call the police immediately if they observe any crimes.

State College police received about six calls, mostly concerning disorderly conduct, from Crime Watch fraternity members last weekend, Caster said.

During football weekends, the increase in people visiting the fraternities has helped to cause an increased number of disorderly conducts and acts of vandalism, he said.

Four members of Theta Delta Chi fraternity, 305 E. Prospect Ave., said they patrolled the two square block area from East Fairmount Avenue to East Hamilton Avenue.

Brian Cousins, member of Theta Delta Chi, said he and four other fraternity members reported no crimes Saturday night.

"The Crime Watch is effective in terms of deterring (crimes) more than anything else," Cousins said. "If people know that the fraternity will be watching the house, it is more likely that they will not cause any problems."

Cousins said his fraternity has not had a major problem with vandalism this year but that several cars in the parking lot have been damaged.

Kevin Noble, a member of Kappa Delta Rho fraternity, 420 E. Prospect Ave., said the Crime Watch is leaving the "State College police free to do other more important things."

Conway said the Crime Watch is the "progressive step for fraternities that are taking on their own responsibility in watching our homes and our neighbors."

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Thanks, ΑΟΠ
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Letters to the Editor

TONIGHT ON C-SPAN

Penn State launches series on Cable TV and the Public Interest by joining forces with National Museum of Cable Television and Cable Television Pioneers.

Date: October 22
Time: 7:00 p.m.
Topic: First amendment issues

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