

Loitering ordinance deemed a success

By JASON FAGONE
Collegian Staff Writer

The recently passed loitering ordinance is making a difference in town, police and business owners said.

"The officers have already seen a substantial difference in the places we were having problems," State College Police Chief Tom King said. "Many teenagers have been complying with the ordinance, which indicates some respect on their part."

Despite opposition from young people and members of the community, the State College Borough Council passed the ordinance on July 7. It prohibits individuals from obstructing access to area businesses, and is punishable by a \$100 to \$600 fine.

Now, two weeks after the ordinance was written into law, less young people are loitering in Calder Way, King said. Also, when officers respond to complaints, the loiterers get moving right away, he said.

"We haven't had to confront anybody about it," said Chris Deiter, an employee at Campus Casino, 320 E. College Ave. "They're all terrified of the ordinance."

The State College Police Department has issued ten warnings to loiterers this month, King said. Citations will not be issued until August, giving offenders a chance to become more aware of the new rules, he said.

King explained the procedure officers must follow when responding to a loitering complaint. If a business has posted a "No Loitering" sign, then officers can issue a citation immediately, he said. If the person in question is a repeat offender, then there is a greater possibility the individual will get a citation, King said.

If there is no sign posted, a property owner can ask loiterers to leave, and if they do not, police can respond with a warning or citation, King said.

Basically, "The officer has discretion between issuing a warning and issuing a citation," he said. "In many cases there will be warnings, but not all."

Police have only made two loitering-related visits to Campus Casino this month, Deiter said. Usually Campus Casino calls police eight or 10 times per month with loitering complaints, he said.

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— Tom King

State College police chief

"There's been a remarkable drop," Deiter said. "Hopefully, if it keeps working like this, nothing else will be required."

Before the ordinance was passed, 30 or 50 kids would hang out behind the arcade on weekends, he said. Now that number has dropped to one or two, Deiter said.

"They've just found different spots, I think," he said.

One of those spots is the parking lot adjacent to College Pizza, 128 Locust Lane, Deiter said.

"They usually come in and get pizza," said employee Missy Pici (senior-psychology). "We don't mind because it gives us business."

The loiterers do not cause any problems, but if they did, employee Joshua Dorsey said he would be prepared.

"If anyone started acting up, they'd get kicked out immediately," Dorsey said. "They'd get a pizza paddle up their butt."

Employees at Beekman's Bagel Deli, 310 E. College Ave., agreed that the ordinance has been effective in curbing loitering.

"It seems like it's gone down," said employee Lisa Tirimacco (junior-hotel and restaurant management).

Alex Hintz (senior-environmental resource management) said the ordinance empowers businesses.

"I haven't kicked anybody off our front porch for a while," he said. "You know you have the power to go out on the front stoop and tell them to leave."

Not everyone is sure the ordinance is working. Ken Kubala, manager of City Lights Records, 316 E. College Ave., said it is too early to speculate on the ordinance's effectiveness.

"It seems like there's been less hanging out in front," Kubala said. "But since the (31st Annual Central Pennsylvania Festival of the Arts), the whole town seems pretty dead."



AP Photo

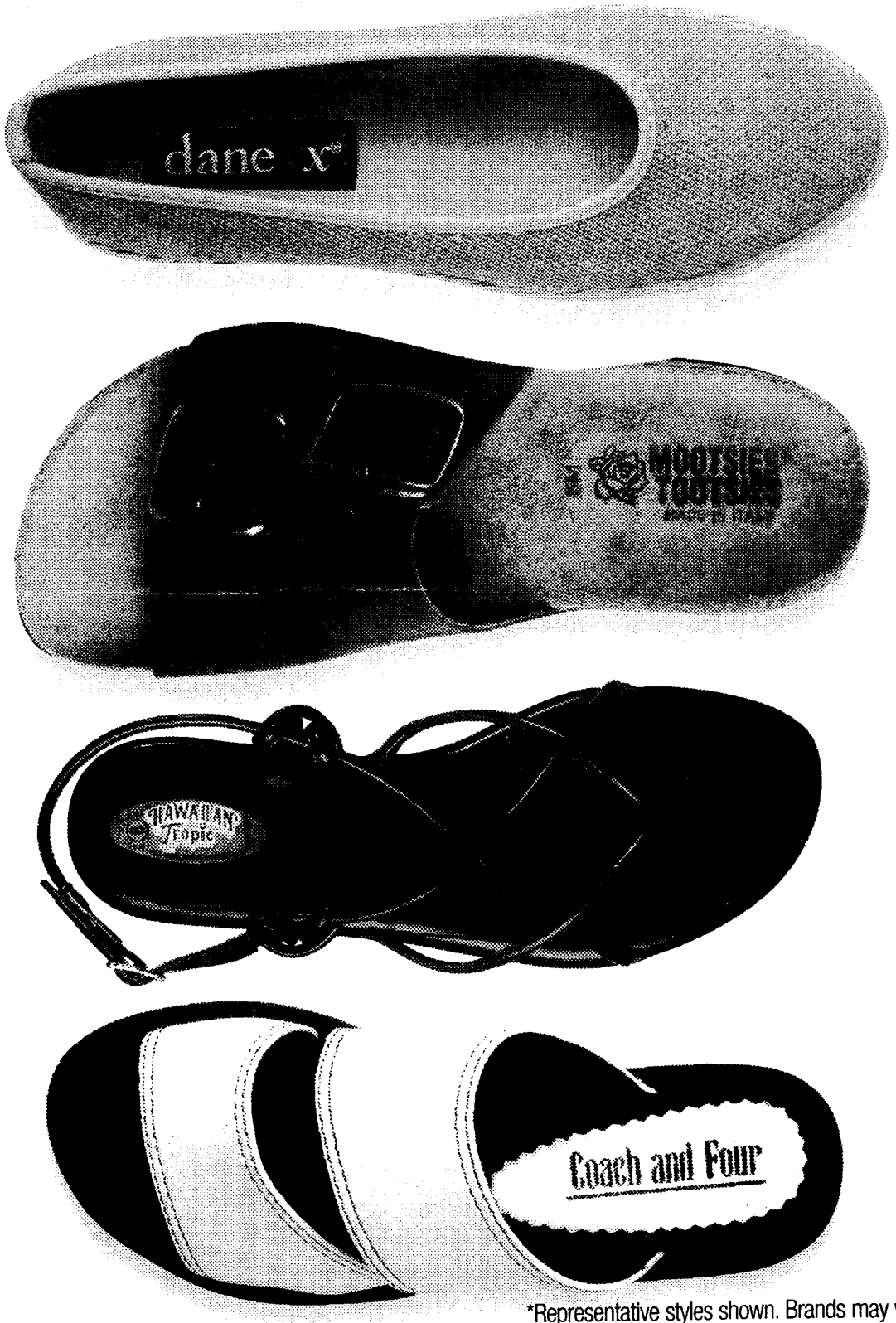
Rainy day nuns

Sister Elaine of All Saints, left, and Sister Catherine Grace make morning shower. Cooler weather and rain relieved the Philadelphia their way across a wet Philadelphia street yesterday during a area of oppressive summer heat.

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AP Photo

Step right up!

People line up on Steel Pier in Atlantic City, N.J. to try to win stuffed toys yesterday. City officials are meeting to decide whether to allow gambling on the city's piers.

Cunanan

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graveyard caretaker William Reese.

The FBI continues to receive tips on Cunanan's whereabouts nationwide. This week, sightings of Cunanan have been reported in New Hampshire, North Carolina and North Dakota. None have been verified.

"Unfortunately, many of those calls are the proverbial Elvis sightings," Chambliss said.

A tipster told police yesterday that he thought he saw Cunanan board a Continental flight from Newark to Houston.

Police in Houston let passengers

leave the plane and confronted the man, determining he was not Cunanan.

Also yesterday, the FBI in Los Angeles released a letter from a woman who claims that Cunanan is the godfather of her children.

"The Andrew Cunanan I know is not a violent person," wrote Elizabeth Cote, whom the FBI said was a close friend of Cunanan.

"Andrew, wherever you are, please stop what you are doing. . . You still have a chance to show the entire world the side of you that I and your godchildren know," Cote wrote. "The time has come for this to end peacefully."

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