

Borough approves holiday parking

By Paul Osolnick
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

The State College Borough Council approved continuing the "Holiday Courtesy Parking Program" that provides better holiday parking conditions in downtown State College.

The policy allows for free parking at times and helps shoppers avoid tickets caused by parking meters running out of time.

Downtown State College Improvement District (DSCID) Director Jody Alessandrine said the program provides free parking at any municipal location from 5 p.m. to 10 p.m.

on Monday through Friday.

Free parking remains for any parking garage in the borough from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. on Saturday, too.

All parking — including municipal meters on streets and lots and parking garages — is free on Sunday, Alessandrine said.

Alessandrine said the policy also helps people who park at expired meters during the holiday season.

If someone is parked at an expired meter, the meter maid will not give the person a ticket, but instead will place a quarter in the meter for the first three offenses and place a card on the

windshield thanking the person for shopping in the downtown district, Alessandrine said.

In previous years, the program would avoid giving drivers tickets all together for expired meters, Alessandrine said, but there were some people who would simply never put money in the meters — realizing that no ticket would be given.

"The purpose is not to reward the people who take advantage of the program," Alessandrine said.

While the policy has been in place for several years, Borough Manager Tom Fountaine said the council made a few changes to the policy for the 2010 holiday season.

Fountaine said the program is usually in effect from Black Friday — the traditionally busy shopping day after Thanksgiving — until New Years Day. But this year, the policy will go into effect on Nov. 29, the Monday after Thanksgiving, he said.

Fountaine said the change in dates is due to the fact that the final Penn State home game against Michigan State is the Saturday after Thanksgiving and the borough does not want to lose the potential revenue from parking they would typically receive on a game day.

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A couple walks at the Arboretum.

Plants battle heat

OPP protects Arboretum

By Micah Wintner
FOR THE COLLEGIAN

The recent heat wave and the effects of a dry summer have had the Office of Physical Plant monitoring the plants at the Arboretum daily.

OPP spokesman Paul Ruskin said workers are prepared to battle dry summers at the Arboretum — which opened last year — because they have installed special Rain Bird irrigation systems.

Ruskin said this underground irrigation system is able to provide water for the thirsty plants in key sections of the Arboretum.

Treegator bags are also used to combat the dry summer, Ruskin said. These are special bags filled with water and tiny holes attached to newly planted trees. Water percolates out of these tiny holes to help water them.

"Landscapers monitor the situation daily," Ruskin said.

Ruskin said these problems, like anything else, have been consuming operating budgets. These funds come from private donations as well as fees for weddings and other receptions people hold in the Arboretum, he said, adding that the facility has suffered very little from problems like vandalism and litter.

Despite its close proximity to busy Park Avenue, the Arboretum remains a quiet labyrinth of sidewalks that run through neatly trimmed fields of grass and colorful patches of flowers.

One of these sidewalks leads to the Margery Enes Smith Soaring Waters, the same fountain visible from the corner of Park Avenue and Bigler Road.

Ruskin said the Arboretum tries to be as energy efficient as possible — the Margery Enes Smith Soaring Waters fountain uses recycled water and the fountain's lights shut off at 11 p.m.

"This is one of the biggest things to happen during the 36 years I've been here," said Kim Steiner, professor of forest biology.

Steiner was appointed the Arboretum's director in 1999, but it was not until last year that the gardens were opened to the public.

Ruskin also said a lot of excitement has generated over the project as a whole.

What is constructed so far of the Arboretum has been labeled phase one — the first of many, Steiner said. The different committees in charge of its construction have ambitions for the Arboretum that will span several more decades, he added.

"The community is thrilled with the way the Arboretum has turned out," Ruskin said.

"It is currently used as a classroom, living laboratory, gathering place and place for meditation."

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CHILLING OUT



M. Antonio Silas/Collegian

Two children from the Child Development and Family Council of State College enjoy some Creamery ice cream on a hot day.

State Theatre to show free kids movies

By Mike Hricik
FOR THE COLLEGIAN

The State Theatre's "Read It, Watch It" series entertains generations of filmgoers every week with family films in cooperation with the Schlow Centre Region Library's summer reading program.

For the third consecutive summer, films old and new are shown every Wednesday at the State Theatre, 130 W. College Ave., free of charge with the help of local sponsors, starting with the 2006 animated comedy "Over the Hedge."

Food bank food donations are collected weekly, State Theatre marketing director Kristy Cyone said.

Cyone said the atmosphere on summer afternoons thus far has yielded animated reactions from children.

"They absolutely love it. We have someone that does an announcement before every show. It never fails," Cyone said. "As soon as you ask them if they're ready for the film, the reaction is absolutely wild."

The Schlow Library supervises



Courtesy of dan-dare.org

State Theatre, 130 W. College Ave., will show "Over the Hedge" this week.

about 1,800 children in grades 1-12 in its summer reading program. Children who attend showings have benefited, head of children's services Anita Ditz said.

"The kids enjoy seeing movies of books they've read and that was the intent the first year they started," Ditz said.

Now, films are chosen thematically because of difficulty in find-

ing children's books with film adaptations, Cyone said.

But that hasn't prevented diverse crowds of people from coming to see the films.

"The demographic is pretty much everyone. Grandparents bring the kids. Professors from campus come," Cyone said.

"There are school field trips, day-care trips and trips for the dis-

abled. The movies have been enjoyed from a few different [groups of] people we weren't expecting."

The State Theatre has shown a commitment to local charities with "Read It, Watch It".

A selected charity's representatives are invited to the every showing to explain their organization's work, Cyone said. Today's featured charity is Hope for Kids, a nonprofit specialized foster care organization in State College. Hope for Kids public relations officer Rebecca Corum-Weaver said forging community relationships with charities is essential.

"We're thrilled to be partnered with the State Theatre. We're all very happy to collaborate with the business community," Corum-Weaver said.

If you go

What: "Read It, Watch It"
When: Every Wednesday through Aug. 11 at noon
Where: State Theatre
Details: Free admission

Alumni groups expand networks to undergraduate students

By Megan Rogers
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

The largest dues-paying alumni association in the world is getting a little bit bigger.

Five alumni interest groups (AIGs) within the Penn State Alumni Association were formed this year: two chapters of the African American Alumni Organization AIG, the Essence of Joy Alumni Singers AIG, the Columbia (S.C.) chapter and the Northeast Maryland chapter. The LGBT+ AIG was also reconstituted.

And about two times a week, the Alumni Association is approached by individuals who have ideas for

new interest groups, said Kevin Barron, director of volunteer services for the Alumni Association.

If the interest for a new group is there, the Alumni Association encourages its growth. Barron said, though he said it is often hard to find a population for some niches.

Currently, there are about 35 AIGs within the Penn State Alumni Association and about 270 groups connected to the association, said Kate DeLano, the associate director of strategic communications for the Alumni Association.

AIGs connect alumni who have either a common interest through college activities — such as a club

— or a common interest as current alumni — like location or business.

The LGBT+ AIG was reorganized after it went "dormant" from lack of volunteer leadership — but not lack of interest — in the early 2000s, DeLano said.

Depending on the type, AIGs can be more focused on networking events or forging ongoing connections with current undergraduates and the university.

To become chartered under the alumni association, AIGs must meet some milestones like forming a volunteer board, and holding regular meetings, Barron said.

University Park Undergraduate

Association President Christian Ragland said he first became involved with the Alumni Association last year, and when he was elected the first black president of UPUA, many members of the African American Alumni Interest Groups reached out to him.

Ragland (senior-political science) has met with the chairperson of the African American Alumni reunion and pledged his support to get as many black undergraduates involved with their local chapter of the Alumni Association.

"It's another way we can leave our mark on the university as graduates of Penn State," he said.

Both undergraduates and alumni are looking forward to building relationships.

Dawna Jones, chapter president of the recently formed Pittsburgh chapter of the African American Organization AIG said the group was formed to connect with current undergraduate students.

"We started the program because we thought it would be a great way to connect with current students at Penn State to make sure they have support and that they have a network to rally around them," Jones, Class of 2005, said.

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