

OPINION

THE DAILY
Collegian

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Letters should be about 200 words. Student letters should include class year, major and campus. Letters from alumni should include year of graduation. All writers should provide their address and phone number for verification. Letters should be signed by no more than two people. Members of organizations must include their titles if the topic they write about is connected with the aim of their groups. The Collegian reserves the right to edit letters. The Collegian cannot guarantee publication of all letters it receives. Letters chosen also run on The Daily Collegian Online and may be selected for publication in The Weekly Collegian. All letters become property of Collegian Inc.

Parking increase too dramatic

Penn State football fans are going to see a change in parking costs come this season, and it's probably more than they would like.

A recent decision to double the cost of stadium parking on game day is supposedly not a plan by the athletic department to gain additional revenue, though it is difficult to imagine a scenario in which the department does not profit. Regardless, it is not the athletic department that needs to be concerned.

While buying parking passes in advance may be a cheaper option, this sudden rise in daily parking, which is somehow supposed to help game day parking run more smoothly, hurts the wallets of fans. With same-day parking purchases for cars jumping to \$40, spectators

are now going to pay almost as much to see the Nittany Lions on the field for three hours as they are just to park their vehicle, if not more.

To place that in perspective, in order for someone without an advanced parking pass to simply park his or her car each game, the cost comes to \$280 for the entire season — and it's worse for RVs and buses. A season spent driving a RV will come to \$560, and \$840 for buses.

But this increase in cost is not just sudden but sharp as well. The price for parking doubled immediately. There was no slight change of 10 percent at first, and then a grow to 20 percent and so on — a doubling of cost makes it look like other options were not even entertained.

And though it may appear that there are other parking options available, such as the Eisenhower or HUB parking decks, the fact of the matter is that these garages are often filled to capacity come game day, as is downtown. This gives stadium parking a monopoly on day-of parking options, and such a steep rise in parking cost is exploitative of the situation.

Is there really no other way to make gameday parking more efficient? At what point does the efficiency-to-cost ratio become so great that football fans stop coming to games all together?

Rising ticket prices were already an issue on their own. Doubling parking costs is only adding fuel to the fire.



Twitter was made for Kanye West

By Aubrey Whelan

MORE than a year ago, back when I had a Blogspot account (so 2009), one of my first entries was an admittedly naive post about my recent discovery of a little website called Twitter.



MY OPINION

Specifically, I talked about how "really, really awesome journalists" (I cringe) were using it to break news and explore new reporting techniques. It showed "a remarkable willingness to adapt and innovate," I wrote. Twitter wasn't just a mass of voyeuristic losers sending 140-character updates into the ether; it also represented real hope for a new kind of journalism.

Ah, youth. Don't get me wrong, I still think the microblogging site is an incredibly valuable resource for getting a story out to the world as fast as possible, promoting stories once they're published and reaching out to millions of Justin Bieber fanatics. But let's face it, we might pretend it's a new way to connect with people and share ideas and create a cushy new world based on love and harmony and retweeting. But in the end, we're all voyeuristic losers desperate to notice and be noticed on Twitter.

Case in point: The current flap over Kanye West's Twitter

account, which he activated last week. Twitter was made for Kanye. The Twitverse bows before him — or at least his 345,530 followers do. The rapper and producer who built a career on being the most narcissistic jerk he could possibly be, given 140 characters to say whatever he wants, whenever he wants? It's too perfect.

Let's consider some of his tweets.

"I love me," on Saturday afternoon. (Duly noted.)

"I specifically ordered persian rugs with cherub imagery!!! What do I have to do to get a simple persian rug with cherub imagery uuuuugh," on Thursday. (We feel your pain, Kanye.)

"I think Twitter was designed specifically with me in mind just my humble opinion hahhha-haaahaaa humble hahahahha-haaahaaa," a few hours later.

See? This column is Kanye West approved.

Kanye's tweets are horrifying, banal, self-congratulatory and, at the end of the day, kind of refreshing in their casual narcissism. Were I a millionaire rap star, I, too, would probably be tweeting about eating cereal out of gold-encrusted goblets (1:06 a.m., Thursday) and complaining that my jet was too small (10:25 a.m., Wednesday). But instead I'm a slovenly undergraduate with an embarrassing addiction to "Buffy the Vampire Slayer" reruns, so I tweet about my messy room and Xander Harris. Such is life.

Like every good social networking site, Twitter began as

just another way for people to connect online. But like all good things in America, it's been taken over by spammers and get-rich-quick swindlers and teenage girls who tweet solely about prepubescent Canadian pop stars. And celebrities know that on Twitter, one slightly witty tweet from them is worth more than a million thoughtful updates from the New York Times.

That's why Kanye's Twitter is a stroke of genius. He doesn't talk about how grateful he is for his insanely luxurious life. He doesn't thank his super-special fans. He doesn't promote charities or retweet news stories about anything other than himself, but he knows that we'll all follow his every word anyway.

It's time we stopped pretending.

Twitter isn't really about breaking news or making valuable virtual connections — it's about inside jokes and self-promotion and celebrity gossip. And Twitter's most valuable commodity is a glimpse into how the other half lives. Kanye's Twitter account is the best example I've seen of that yet.

So move over, Ashton Kutcher. Watch out, Britney Spears. I'm really happy for you, and I'mma let you keep tweeting, but Kanye West's Twitter account is the best Twitter account of all time. OF ALL TIME!

(Couldn't resist.)

Aubrey Whelan is a senior majoring in journalism and French and is the Collegian's Monday columnist. Her e-mail address is ajw5139@psu.edu.

Healthy food options in halls a step in the right direction

After reading the July 29 article, "Halls to serve healthier food," I am pleased to hear that Pollock Halls has added healthy options to its menu. I remember eating in Pollock halls during my freshman year and struggling to choose from the different foods offered there. Many freshmen live in Pollock Halls and have their first Penn State dining hall experience there. But while some students have no problem selecting from fried foods galore and slop, many health-conscious students enjoy the opportunity to eat nutritiously.

Throughout college, it is often hard to eat healthy because of time, money and availability; adding healthy options to Pollock Dining Commons will help greatly with two of those factors. Though the meal plan is not inexpensive, the majority of full-time students on campus choose this option because of a lack of other on-campus eateries.

Perhaps with the implementation of healthy options in Pollock Dining Commons, more freshmen from East Halls will be encouraged to eat healthier and make the short walk to Pollock considering it is closer than the previous healthy option of Simmons Dining Hall.

Either way, it is refreshing to hear that students who choose to dine on campus will have a choice to eat healthy come this fall semester.

Mark Weaver
senior-biology

Wanted: Web Intern

The Collegian is seeking a web intern for the fall semester to join its award-winning web team. This position offers a merit-based \$1,000 scholarship per semester.

We are diving into several new web initiatives this fall including a brand new website, and are looking for applicants with a working knowledge of HTML, CSS and proficiency in at least one of the following: Javascript, Flash, PHP, Perl, ASPnet, or C#. We are also looking into mobile applications, as well, so a knowledge of or interest in learning about mobile development is encouraged but not required.

You will be working with the Web Editor, who also has a knowledge of these technologies. This position requires a flexible but steady time commitment. Your responsibilities will vary based on your skills, but could include designing pages and/or interactive pieces for our site, writing scripts to parse and reformat old stories or communicate with public APIs (Twitter, Tumblr, etc), or designing back-end management systems, among other things.

To apply, send a resume and cover letter to Editor in Chief Elizabeth Murphy at editorinchief@psu.collegian.com.

blog lines

FOOTBLOG

Bowman signs with 49ers

Time wasn't on his side, but former Penn State linebacker Navorro Bowman was still able to join his San Francisco teammates for their first training camp session.

With little time to spare, Bowman agreed to a four-year contract with the 49ers, who selected him 91st overall in the 2010 NFL Draft. Financial terms of Bowman's contract are not available.

Though Bowman skipped his final collegiate season and fell on some draft boards because of previous off-the-field issues, his entrance to camp marks the beginning of his professional journey.

With all four of San Francisco's starting linebackers returning in 2010 plus Hall of Fame linebacker Mike Singletary as head coach, Bowman will need to use this camp as an opportunity to learn as much as he can about the 3-4 defense.

With veteran linebackers Patrick Willis and Takeo Spikes on the roster, Bowman should have every opportunity to continue learning and easing into the defense. ...

Audrey Snyder
Football reporter

Odrick, Dolphins reach deal

On training camp eve what more could the Miami Dolphins ask for?

With the opening of camp less than 24 hours away, the Dolphins were able to get a contract worked out with first-round pick Jared Odrick.

It's reported that Odrick's five-year contract includes \$7.1 million guaranteed and could max out at \$13 million. The signing also makes the former Penn State defensive tackle just the fourth first rounder to be under contract.

The timing of Odrick's signing is also important because he'll be able to report to training camp on time, where he will most likely take snaps with the first team.

Dolphins veteran defensive end Phillip Merling, a second-round pick in the 2008 draft, went down with a season-ending injury last month. Merling's loss along the defensive line should allow Odrick the opportunity to crack the starting lineup. ...

Audrey Snyder
Football reporter

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