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Tobacco spitting and more! —page 8

Gary Newton of the Congregational Bible Church gets the \$1.00 prize for tipping us off to the back page story on rappelling.

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FIFTEEN CENTS

The kids:

"Police are hassling us"

The young people who are often seen standing along Market Street in Marietta's business district have been avoiding the area of Marco's Pizza restaurant lately: the residents of the area complained about the youths to the borough council at the last meeting. The 65 petitioners called them a "nuisance" and accused them of double parking, using drugs and alcohol publicly, using obscenity, and so on. The petitioners had singled out Marco's as the primary hangout, although other businesses' sidewalks also host idle young people on occasion.

How do the young people feel about the complaint?

"Marco's is the only place we have to go," said Jim Hess, one of a group

gathered near the laundromat one evening last week. "If they gave us a place to go, we'd go there," Jim went on. "But when you don't own a car... there's not much to do in Marietta."

The other youths, who ranged in age from early teens to early twenties, nodded in agreement as Jim answered the charges of littering and boisterousness.

"Sure, people get boisterous sometimes. That's only natural. As for littering, the trash can in front of Marco's is always full."

The double-parking complaint, he said, was based on people stopping their cars for a few seconds to see if anyone was in Marco's.

Who signed the petition? "Old people. The petition is aimed at the younger generation."

A woman, about 30 years old, walked past during the interview. She had to walk among the lounging kids to get past, as they were spread all over the sidewalk.

The police:

"We aren't hassling them; they're hassling the citizens"

Some of the kids who were found hanging out in Marietta's commercial district last week told the *Susquehanna Times* that the Marietta Police had been "harassing" them. We called Chief Millar for a comment. He said:

"We aren't harassing them; they're harassing the people of Marietta."

"We get calls from people, complaining about them. That's why we disperse them."

Marco's restaurant is not the problem, he said. The kids loiter all over the business district.

"When they gather in a group, pedestrians have trouble getting through. We can't allow them to block a public passageway."

"Not only do they obstruct the sidewalks, they also obstruct the roadway, by just sitting in the middle of the street in their cars."

The charge that the police had arrested them for loitering, and imposed \$51 fines, is false, says chief Millar—there is no such crime as loitering.

"We arrested some of them, all right," he told us. "For trespassing. They had been warned, at least a week in advance, by both police and the owner of the property."

(The kids had been sitting on a stoop, which is private property.)

Millar said that the

Although they were not crowding her, and paid no attention to her passage, she hesitated as she came near the group; her steps quickened as she walked through. She glanced at a longhaired, bare-chested young man's tattoo with distaste. The kids scared her.

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Birchland Avenue's water problems

Just how bad is the flooding situation on Birchland Avenue in Mount Joy? To find out, a *Susquehanna Times* reporter toured the street right after last Sunday's rain.

The street itself was a mess, with big brown puddles at the feet of some driveways, but there was no apparent backyard flooding.

"You should have been

here two weeks ago," said Oliver Mateer, who was trying to sweep mud off his driveway with a broom. He showed us a photograph (reproduced below) which he had taken after the heavy rains of August 11. The photo shows a sheet of chocolate-colored water blanketing the backyard of Mr. Mateer's neighbor, Jeff Brown.

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Marietta survey results released

The Marietta survey of public opinion has been released by Borough planner Paul Sontag.

While only 28% of the 1808 questionnaires mailed last February were filled out and returned, the survey is still a valuable tool for government planning: those who returned them are the likely to be the same people who are concerned about their borough. In any case, more people filled out the questionnaire than voted in the last election, so council need have no qualms about acting on the survey results.

The survey tabulation (copies are available at the borough office) shows the following:

BUSINESS

The survey shows that Mariettians like their local stores and businesses, but don't like the downtown shopping area. 59% said the stores were "neat and attractive" (25% said they weren't), and the only area of wide complaint was lack of variety: clothing, shoe, and drug stores are needed, the people said.

The shopping area was called unpleasant by 52.9% of the respondents, who cited loitering as the main reason for their dissatisfaction. Littering, lack of variety, lack of competition, and insufficient parking space followed on the list, each one being listed by about 10% of the people.

A whopping 75% of the people favored the establishment of more stores in Marietta. Only 13.3% didn't want new business.

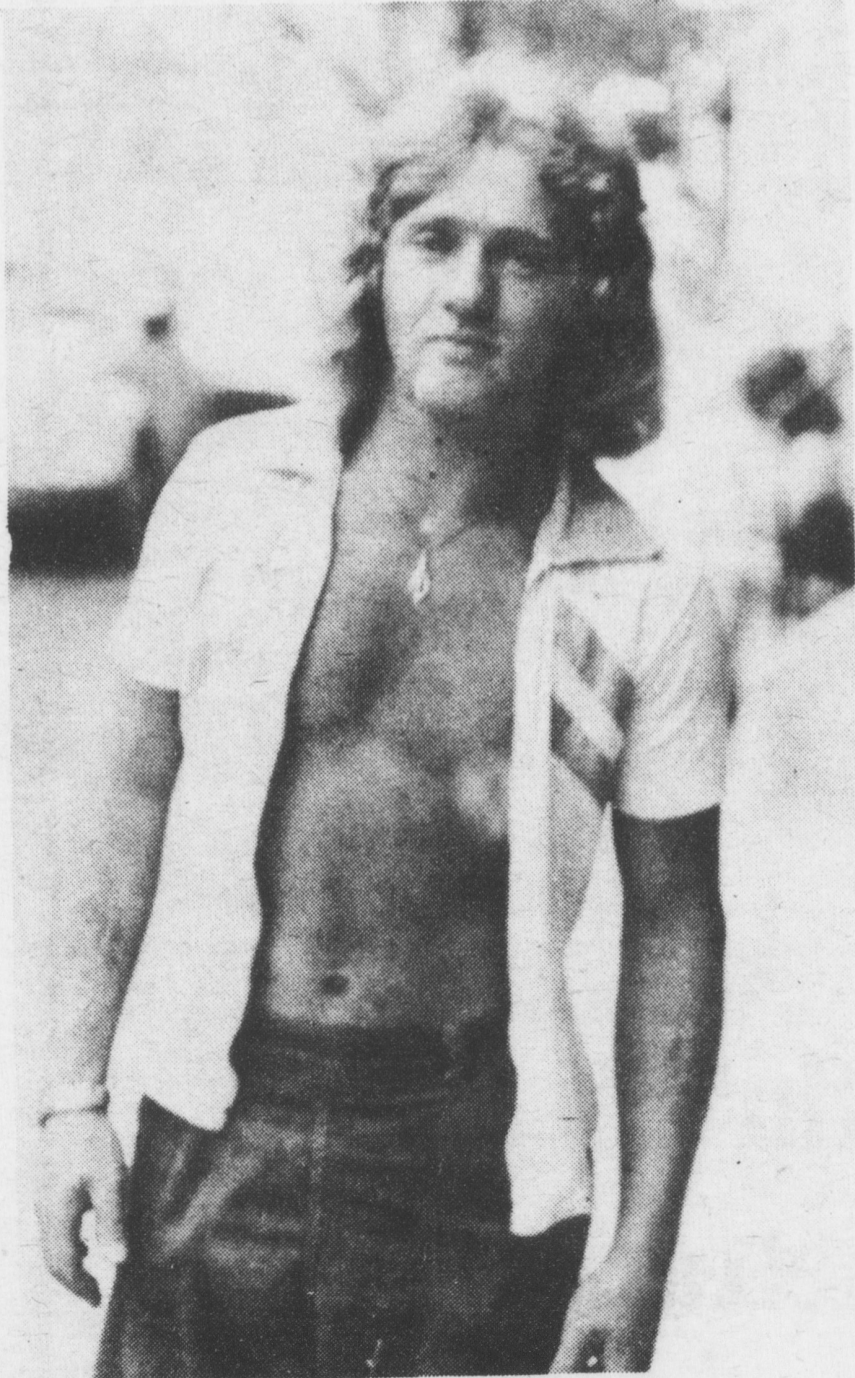
About half favored the centralized shopping area over a less centralized business district.

ENVIRONMENT

Most people seemed to feel that more recreational facilities should be provided in Marietta. The question was divided into three parts: east, central, and west Marietta. The respondents felt a stronger need for recreation in the west of Marietta. 62% favored more facilities here, and only 21% were opposed. (The split was 50-50 at the east end of town.)

72% said the high school should be made more available to adults for recreational use. 56.7% favor an outdoor public swimming pool (32.6% opposed).

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