

Opinion

Parking problems abound on campus; clarification offered

Dear editor,

There has been much talk, occasional explicative, and even some screaming when it comes to discussing the parking woes at Behrend.

As the Vice-President of Student Government, I have been given the dubious honor of overseeing the much "bombarded" Traffic Appeals Board. Believe me, I am as tired as any of you are when it comes to the lack of parking here I have tried to do the what I can to help out drivers and the other poor souls on the Appeals Board, that have to sit through "umpteen" appeals that come before us each week.

If your ticket falls into violation of one of the categories that I am going to cover below, do both of us a favor and don't appeal it; there is a good chance it probably will not receive much consideration if you do.

I spoke with Police and Safety Manager Randy Hoffman and tried to clear the air as to where a driver can and can not park their car. I will describe five of the areas I receive the most appeals on, and if I have, in my infinite dullness, neglected to address any question on the "screwy" parking situation that we have, please stop by the SGA office in the Reed, and ask me. I'll try to answer your questions, and if I can't I'll ask someone that can.

1. Parking behind Perry has changed as fast as politics in Eastern Europe over the last few weeks. There are now approximately 24 more LEGAL spaces available. There will be no parking on the grass or next to the building, since the area has been blocked off. Although signs aren't up yet, traffic will eventually be one way down the Perry turnaround and up the road; I think its name is Aquarius Dr.

2. As far as commuter parking up in the resident lot on weekends, there is going to be an informal non-ticketing policy in effect between the hours of 5 pm Fridays and 6 pm Sundays. Since this policy is still informal, it can be removed at a later date if it doesn't work. On the other hand, it possibly could become a formal practice if all goes well.

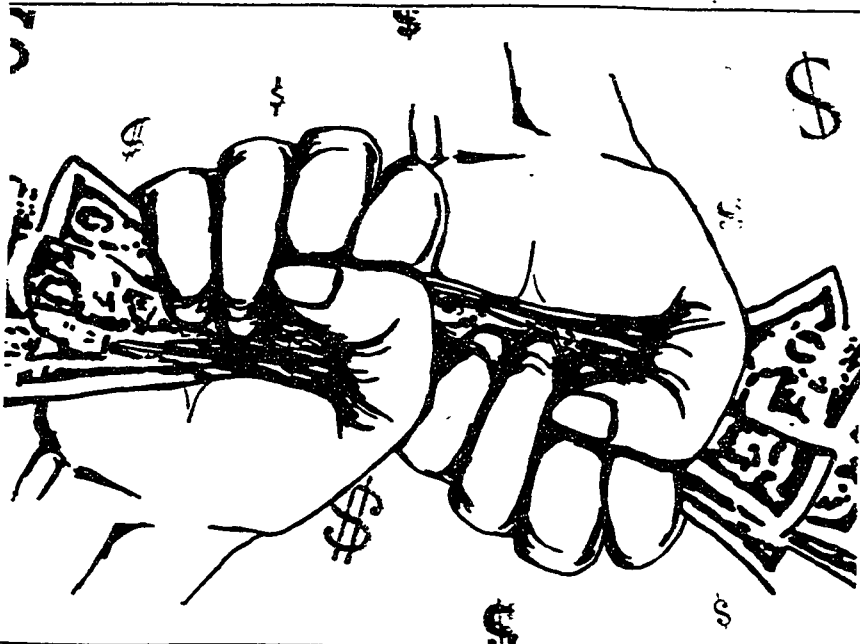
3. The third area deals with the people who park on the side of the road down at the lower commuter lots. This is a sensitive area and I didn't receive a very clear answer on it. In the end, the officers on duty are left to their own discretion as to when they are going to ticket these cars. I tried to clarify this a little. From what I could gather, there are two factors officers take into account. One is the lots are not usually full on Tuesdays and Thursdays, which means the officers will probably will ticket. The other is on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays after 11 am the lots are quite packed, meaning the officers will probably will let cars go. Don't forget that this is not carved in stone, but more of a gamble than anything else. You have to decide if you want to take the chance.

4. Parking in the Reed has received additional changes. The upper Reed lot is still off limits during the week. This means no parking between 6 am and 8 pm. The lower Reed lot, however, will be open for an additional two hours on weekdays. It will be closed between 8 am and 8 pm.

5. There is no parking at the studio theater! If you are unloading something, make sure turn your flashers on.

I hope this helps to keep those tickets off your windshields.

Marty Cunningham
Vice-President SGA



LOVE ROB

Garbage on the shore

by Rob Prindle

"Yeah, I've heard all this shit before. I still don't buy it, Rob."

What is it you are rambling about now, Butch?

"Oh, all this BS about access to Erie's bayfront. No way in hell. Just look what happened to that gorgeous patch of beach that use to be the Peninsula Inn right next to the entrance to Presque Isle. That place was really sweet. A bar right there on the beach. Doesn't that sound fine? Now that was public access. Do you know what's on that sweet beachfront property now, Rob? I'll tell you what's there: Condos. Ugly condos. I mean really ugly, make-me-sick condos, all fenced in. That's right, so much for public access. The dink of an owner sold out to condo builders who had no taste. Damn wimp."

There were real reasons why the owner of the property sold, though, Butch. You have to realize that he just couldn't afford the property taxes anymore. And he realized that the lakefront taxes were just going to get worse.

"That's what I'm talking about, Bobby. Aren't you listening to me? There is no more public access to water. I don't know exactly what it is that makes junior executives flock to water-side housing like they do. Perhaps urban professional types are more closely related to reptiles than the rest of us. Whadda' you think?"

I think that you are in a lot of trouble with the business majors here on campus, that's what I think.

"Yeah, yeah, I care. Anyway, what I'm saying is that if you look at any lake around, even the scummy ones like Canadota, and you will see a bunch of upper-income scumwads floating around the edges. If you know what I mean."

It just makes sense, though. Surely you understand how it happens.

"Yeah, I understand. This rich couple goes driving by a great-looking lake, like maybe Chautauqua, and they like it. Boom, the guy driving pulls a U-turn with his BMW and heads straight for the first lakeside house sporting a For Sale sign. The guy buys the property and either builds a \$300,000 house or finds a bunch of buddies and builds condos. Then the tax base shoots right up through the roof and the poor guy who lives next door with his 2 kids, his dog, his wife and his 8-foot fishing boat all of a sudden has to pay four or five times more tax per year than he actually paid to buy the house 20 years ago. So the guy has to sell his house to another rich water seeker and the whole process feeds on itself."

"The tax base goes up and pretty soon the local government realizes that if they sell all the public access land like the parks and the boat launches then they will make even more tax



Rob Prindle

money. So what is the country left with? One more private lake. That bites."

Sad but true, Butch. Sad, but true. And now Erie is trying to interest investors in building on the downtown bayfront. They keep promising public access, but I sure wouldn't count on that.

"Public access? Do you know what they mean by public access? They mean that if a person can afford to stay at the luxury hotel, or eat at the expensive restaurant, they can have all the freaking access they want."

Isn't that a rather cynical attitude? You have exaggerated the situation a bit, haven't you?

I mean, at least we live in a city where you can still sit on a beach at the Peninsula and see one of the most beautiful sunsets in the world. You can still rent a pretty decent lakeshore cottage and you can still find a waterfront park or two around.

"Yeah, but isn't it kind of funny that just as the rest of the world gets so much better, just as the Soviet Union eases its grip and the Berlin Wall is being demolished, just as walls are being torn down other places, more and more are going up in this country?"

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