

Public Safety or public nuisance?

By Sam Jenkins
STAFF WRITER

It's Sunday and you're hung over. You'd like to sit around and make fun of your roommate all day, but you have to pick up Grandma for her doctor's appointment. Again. So you stumble out of Bryan, hawk some nasty loogies, and go out to fire up the Plymouth — only you can't find it anywhere. Better call Gammy, because Public Safety has stolen your car. Your day is going to suck.

Last school year alone, 3,843 parking tickets were written, generating \$65,648 for the school. That's a lot of dough.

"What if you saw a Public Safety officer driving a golf cart with like, dope-ass rims and a really nice stereo," pondered junior Hannah Thresher, "You'd know it was a good year for parking tickets." Real mature, Hannah.

One student who fails to find any humor in this sad state of affairs is junior Henry Wells, a victim of over-zealous Public Safety.

It started with \$100 tickets for "parking an unregistered vehicle."

"I had my car registered and everything, but the stupid sticker kept falling off my window," Wells said. Thinking the school would drop the fines after he set them straight, he didn't worry about the first few tickets.

By the ninth ticket, Public Safety put a boot on his car to force him to pay \$900.

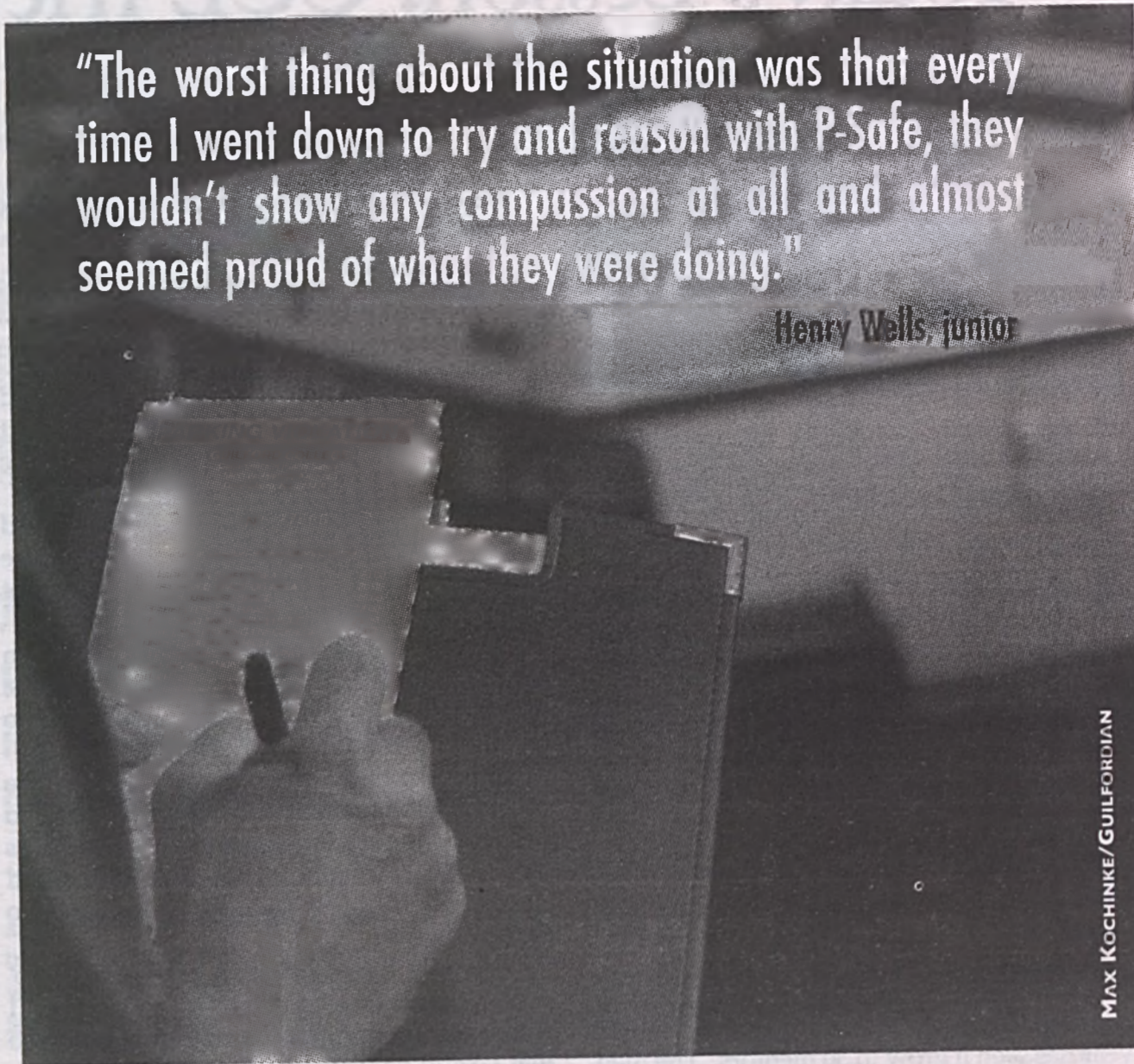
"I told this Public Safety lady my story and she laughed at me," Wells said.

Public Safety didn't seem to care that Wells didn't have the money for his bogus tickets, and they had his car hauled off campus to a caged-lot. The bill was given to Wells.

"I felt like my car was being held for ransom," said Wells. "The worst thing about the

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Wells eventually worked out a community restitution program, but only after weeks of pleading and reasoning. He was given 120 hours of work.

I, too, have suffered abuse from Public Safety's parking enforcement.

I drive an old car, a 1971 Plymouth Satellite

(bada--, I know). It's my prized possession, my baby, the only thing I own that I really care about and love. I have put so much work into that car, not only the work I had to do to buy it, but also on its engine and what not.

Last year I got a little bored during the fall and decided to freshen up my old engine.

It was a bigger job than I had expected, and took several weeks of labor in the cold parking lot. But everyday I was out there

working away. One day I went out to work on it and it wasn't there. I freaked out. I found out that Public Safety had taken it.

I wasn't making a mess. I had paid for a parking spot. But they just assumed it was "abandoned," something it will never be as long as I am alive.

When I got the car back, all my greasy tools and parts (that I had tastefully placed underneath my car) were thrown in the back seat. An air conditioning compressor was wedged behind the driver's seat making a giant hole in the fabric.

"According to the parking regulations vehicles cannot be abandoned on campus," said Director of Public Safety Ron Stowe after I asked why my car was towed. "For issues of safety and appearance, we don't want to create an environment with abandoned vehicles lying around."

In other words, when prospective students and their rich parents are touring Guilford, we don't want the school to look like a bunch of poor, greasy kids are running around in broken down Mopars, much less actually working on them.

Stowe and his cronies take this parking ticket game pretty seriously.

When asked if he ever feels as though the parking enforcement policies at Guilford are a little harsh, Stowe replied with one word, "No."

What "Public Safety" needs to consider is what type of school Guilford is, what it is supposed to stand for and the principles on which it is founded upon: friendship, compassion, all that Quaker stuff — not making money at the cost of the community.

But until that happens, try putting an old parking ticket underneath your wipers every time you park. That way, the Maroon Marauders will think another officer has already given you a ticket, and will roll on by in one of their pimped-out golf carts.

Lightning Bolt, an all-natural alternative for all-nighters

By Tim Cox
STAFF WRITER

All-nighters: staying up all night, getting little or no sleep in order to finish a paper or project. We all do it (at least that's what I tell myself so I feel better).

It's not always easy, though. Fatigue overtakes the best of us, even this early in the semester. Once you've spent three hours staring at the one paragraph you've written on that computer screen, it can be hard to find the will and energy to keep going.

It's a slippery slope. A lot of students, feeling that they can't do it alone, turn to coffee. From there, it's not far to energy drinks or even pills.

"It's not a big deal, I just need a little extra energy," a student might say. Probably to themselves, since they're sleep-deprived and hopped on caffeine.

There have been concerns raised about the health effects of energy drinks. Do Guilford students really want to be putting all those chemicals in their bodies?

There is an alternative to the chemical-laden Amp; to Redbull; to Rock Star. And what's most amazing? It has an even more awesome name: Steven Seagal's Lightning Bolt.

It is "A natural energy drink packed with vitamins and exotic botanicals," as Steven Seagal's disembodied head tells us from the front of the can.

Yes, that's Steven Seagal, Aikido master and star of such action films as "Above the Law," "Hard to Kill," and "On Deadly Ground" (known for its environmental message and groin-centered violence). No, I'm not making this up; he has his own brand of energy drink.

This is no ordinary energy drink. According to the can, "This long lasting energy elixir is made with ingredients from all over the globe." That's right, Steven Seagal hand-picked the ingredients for the "herbal tonic blend" during his many travels.

Aside from being the first energy drink to be 100% all-natural juice, its claim to fame is a unique ingredient, Tibetan goji berries.

"There's no such thing as goji berries," said Assistant Professor of Religious Studies and intrepid world-traveler Eric Mortensen.

Well, I guess we'll never know what Tibetan goji berries are, but that's not important. What is important are the two questions to ask regarding any energy drink. Does it work, and does it taste

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good?

Well, according to www.lightningdrink.com, the beverage's official Web site, Seagal's invention "holds untold natural power." So, that answers the first question.

An all natural herbal blend sweetened with evaporated cane juice crystals has to taste good, right?

"It tastes like really flat, old root beer. But like, with some kind of magic in there. It's really scary, I want more," said Mortensen. "It's carbonated! That's horrible! Why would they do that?"

So, we'll say the jury's still out on the taste. But just as the "Chi" symbol on the front of the can promises, Lightning Bolt "provides you with the TRUE ENERGY you need."

"I'm feeling particularly awake now. I think I'm feeling power coursing through my veins," Mortensen said while staring

at his hands.

So is Lightning Bolt the all-natural alternative we've been waiting for?

"Any student who takes this to stay up late is a fool I say, a fool," said Mortensen. "That's nuts. It's wiser to snort Pixy Stix than to drink this."

I asked him if the exotic botanicals worried him. "No, it just tastes awful! Plus you could end up with untold powers."

Even the bargain price of one dollar wasn't enough to convince him.

"Clearly the great weight of evaluation of this drink rests on whether or not it would be wiser to snort a dollar's worth of Pixy Stix. And I think it would be," he said.

If you want to try Lightning Bolt for yourself, you will probably have to head to Wal-Mart (which I don't endorse in any way; please, don't hurt me). Look for Steven Seagal's face. You can't miss it.