

Spare Change: The Ins and Outs of UPEI Parking

By Matt Campbell
Contributor

Parking has gone a long way since 1995 when paid parking on campus had just begun. It was \$53 for a parking spot and no increases were implemented until now. This year we're seeing a 50% increase in rates which totals to \$80, leaving some students wondering why the price has risen while at the same time tuition has gone up by 5.8% from last year.

Sources from the Student Union explained that tuition hikes and the increased cost of

parking permits are due to funding cuts by the Binns government. UPEI was promised one million dollars in funding but had only received \$750,000, leaving students to foot the bill. That, and increasing operating costs are putting both students and staff in difficult positions when finding the cash to pay for a place to park.

Al Veale of Security and Parking also explains that it's fairly expensive keeping the lots maintained. The infra-

structure of parking lots is something we may not take into account when purchasing passes but the contents may be surprising. It consists of: resurfacing the lots, new lots, improving the pavement, ensuring proper lighting in parking lots, snow removal, signage. With all that combined, "Each new individual parking space works out to be about \$1500," explained Veale.

However, students and staff have a choice before purchasing passes. There are two different parking permits available. The university is selling general parking passes at \$80 per student and \$122 per faculty member. The alternative would be to purchase a Capital Area Recreation Inc. parking permit (which only allow you to park in CARI lots) for the same price. This is an advantageous option because spots in the CARI lots are virtually guaranteed due to the fact that no more than 300 passes will be sold for the 300 spots, while UPEI is selling unlimited passes for 1048 spots.

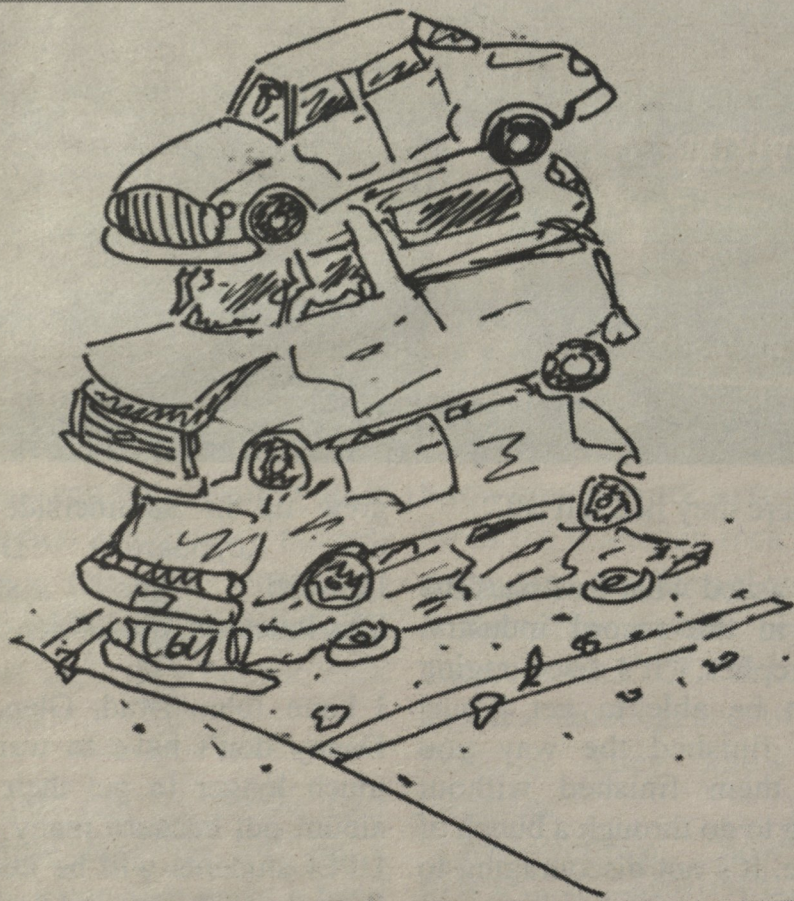
Selling unlimited passes does have its benefits, as students who are only on campus for a few hours a day leave most of the day open for others to park. It also keeps the rates

from skyrocketing and gives students a chance to get to class early and park legally rather than be denied passes and be forced to park kilometres away.

In an interview with Al Veale, he explained that with the relining of the parking lots there is more capacity for parking and the usage of the lots has become more efficient. Though construction is occupying several spots, the relining has balanced the equation, thus making it possible for more spots.

Another important change to note is the visitor spots. New this year, any student or staff member may park in a visitor spot but must follow the usual regulations for that area. Visitor spots run at \$1.00/hr with a max. of \$5.00 per day. There are currently 56 visitor parking spaces on campus. Also note this year they've introduced parking metres. Charlottetown went from metres to kiosks while UPEI went from kiosks to metres. Veale admitted that kiosks were a great idea, but didn't prove to work out well at UPEI. Ticket stubs were blowing out windows, and it was really an inconvenience for people having to walk back to their car. This way, with parking spread out across

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Sharing the \$80 parking pass.