

Mother Nature takes toll on parking lot

The Cathedral Prep parking lot may seem like an ordinary slab of pavement placed on the corner of West 11th and Chestnut Street, but it is so much more than that. This parking lot has been home to Rambler folklore since the time of its existence. Epic tailgates, the annual cigar celebration following the senior banquet, last day of school festivities, and many other events with own their own place in Cathedral Prep history have taken place in the parking lot. Its legacy seems to precede us, but we need to do our part to retain its existence.

The Erie weather has played its role in the partial destruction of our parking lot. Years of snow, ice, sleet, hail, rain, and every other form of weathering has taken it well past its former glory. Numerous cracks, dips, and potholes create a minefield for parking. "It's tough swinging into the parking lot," said senior Max Bloomstine. "I have to be careful when trying to find a spot." Not only has Mother Nature played its role, but the student body and outside forces have littered the parking lot with debris.

"I've seen cans, broken headlights, wrappers, and even a broken shovel there," recalls senior Calvin Behm. Not only does this diminish the overall presentation of the property, but it creates a safety hazard for drivers and pedestrians alike.

This year's nation leading snowfall totals have also caused even more havoc. The large amount of snow accumulation in Downtown Erie has created problems for most private, and state run snow clearing businesses. With no place to put the snow, many have resorted to only selected clearing, which is very evident in the Prep parking lot.

“It’s hard parking here; it really is,” said junior Nathan Lutz. “People park wherever they can, and it blocks so many people out.”

This has been the an ongoing issue, as covered parking lines and inexperienced drivers lead to cluster parking, leaving many to guess whether one location is better than another. The main entrance to the Prep parking lot located on Chestnut Street has also caused major issues. Larger piles of snow have promoted multiple cars to be stuck in its grasp. Prep junior Skyler Neely and Prep senior Joe Mischler were both pushed from the snow’s grasp during this time, jamming many drivers coming in and out of the back entrances.

The parking lot’s location, which resides a good walk from Cathedral Prep, brings its normal gripes from the teenagers roaming Cathedral Prep’s halls, but it also brings new challenges. While many students have learned to live with the annual commute to 9th and Mrytle, at least once or twice a year, Prep students are alerted of theft in or around the student parking lot. No one knows this better than current Prep senior Ian Steff. During his junior year, his car was robbed of change and other various items when his windshield was smashed during a robbery. “It’s frustrating having to deal with the whole situation, but the lack of security still concerns me.”

Students are reminded to leave valuables out of site and to lock their cars each day. As the Prep parking lot will see many more years to come, as different members of the Prep community continue to park on 11th and Chestnut, the lore of this place will continue to grow. So for now, we remind you to lock up your valuables, and to use caution and proper driver’s edict in the parking lot of champions.