

Students stalled

by Doug Derkatch

By now you've probably heard many stories of harried drivers trying to park at the U of A. If you're not a permit holder this can be a very frustrating experience. Many believe the problem lies in the rules and regulations laid down by that great bureaucracy known as Parking Services.

According to Kevin Campbell, Administrative Assistant for U of A Parking Services, parking revenues were around \$2.5 million last year. Many students are complaining about the price increases this year, especially the hike to a \$6.00 daily maximum in the Education carpark. There are reports of closing off visitor parking lots that are supposedly full when they're really half empty. If you get a ticket and don't pay it, the university holds your marks until you do pay it.

"They're going to keep pushing their weight around and getting away with it as long as nobody questions their authority," said Peter Gilchrist, a day-leader at U of A Student Legal Services.

"This issue of withholding marks for non-payment of fines is questionable," said Gilchrist, "and the only way to determine its validity is to challenge it." He added that the courts have been reluctant to interfere with the policies of Canadian universities, until very recently.

University of Calgary student Rob Sigurdson did challenge the U of C's parking regulations in court, and, as a result, the university has approved a new set of regulations

that makes life a lot easier for students there.

Kevin Campbell says he's not aware of anyone challenging the U of A's regulations and maintains that there are general misconceptions about his departments' legislation.

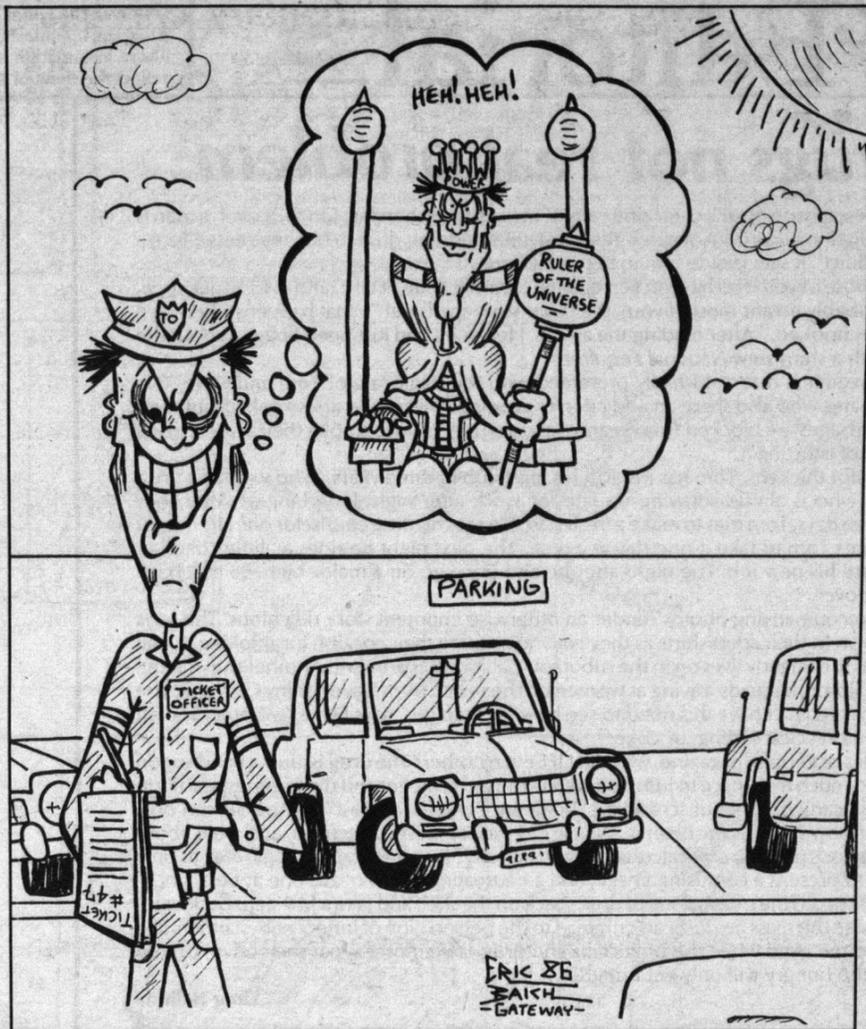
"With regards to price increases, the people are not aware of what we have to pay for," he said. "The main expenditure goes to debt retirement from previous years."

"People have to understand that there is no space specifically reserved for visitor parking," he said, and added that he doesn't see any future projects to alleviate the problem.

One of the rules under the new legislation at the U of C allows recipients of parking tickets to appear before a committee to argue their case. The university has also stopped towing or impounding vehicles in order to collect on unpaid parking tickets.

This type of legislation could be implemented at the U of A if the system were to be challenged.

"Anytime you want to appeal the validity of legislation or wish to implement amendments to the legislation, you must first seek all avenues of appeal within the university's system," said Legal Services' Gilchrist. He added that an effective approach would be to voice your concerns toward your Students' Union representatives. If enough people lobby the SU, maybe the issue will gain momentum and change will certainly follow.

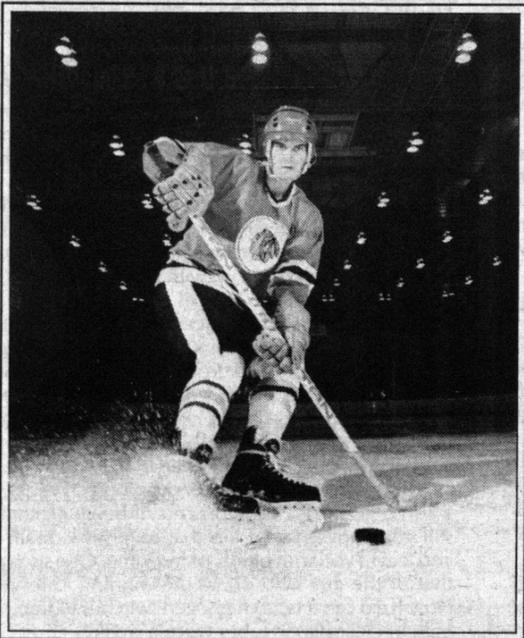


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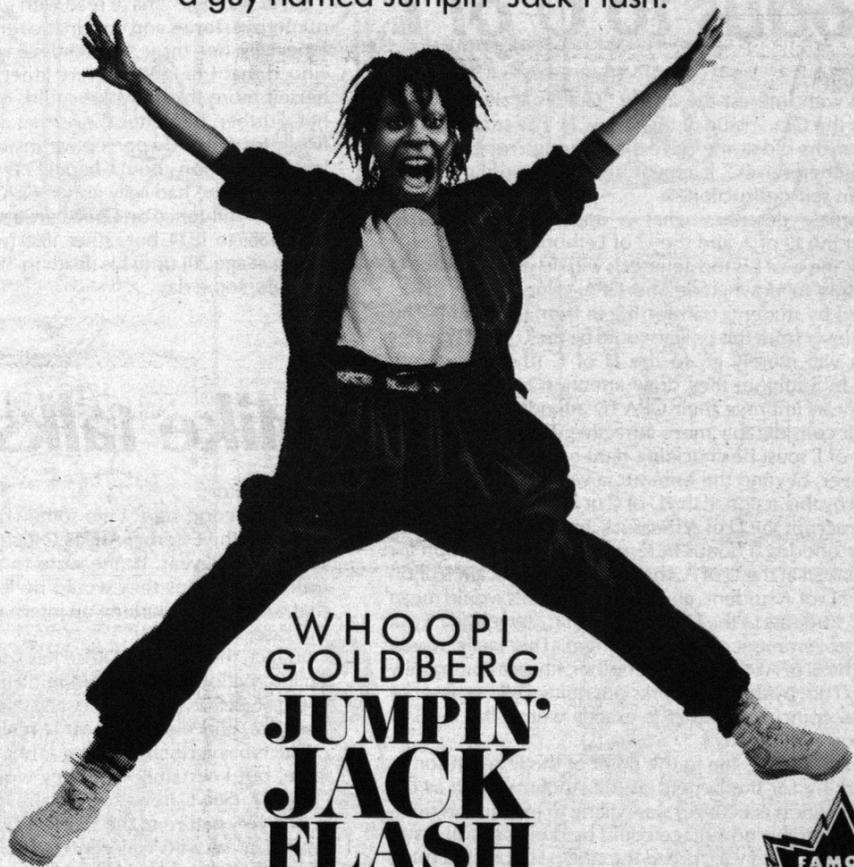
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