



Drug-free school zone law  
could be repealed

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Test prep classes  
hardly raise scores

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Store lets parents connect  
while children play safely

Jean-Michel Cousteau on  
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Young biofuel scientists

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Penn State and  
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A tribute to art and  
one student's short life

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Opinions and columns: SC  
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November 2009

# Are women safe in Centre County?

What our system tells us about rape,  
sexual assault and domestic violence

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**Thoughtful. Fearless. Free.**

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November 2009

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# Thieves and cowards won't win here

from the desk of managing editor

**Suzan Erem**

Voices recently suffered a number of thefts and one rude phone call connected, we suspect, to another theft.

This summer our digital camera grew legs and walked off. It had been a gift from a former volunteer. Now we have no camera.

Last month, a newspaper rack was stolen from Chili's, right next to our office. We asked the managers, but they just said, "Things like that get stolen all the time..." and their voices trailed off.

A few days later the call came saying that papers were "flying" all over some laundromat. The caller was nasty. He left no name or address. By the time a volunteer checked it out, the papers were gone.

Finally, Voices volunteers worked a table at the Downtown Improvement District's Fall Chili Festival. We thought it would be a great place to get the paper to new people. Five volunteers sat for an hour each at our new eight-foot-long folding table. Our last volun-

teer took charge of returning everything to our office. She grabbed the chairs and some materials and walked them a block away herself. When she returned five minutes later, our table was gone. All she could find out was that "two college-age men" came by, removed the banner, folded the table and walked off with it.

How can two men walk off with a table that isn't theirs in broad daylight? What made other people think they were entitled to take our rack or throw out our papers?

District Attorney Michael Madeira says he has made Centre County safer. Well, downtown State College is safe for only one kind of resident—white, middleclass, able-bodied men who bleed blue and white. Women can't walk safely downtown at night. Black people have racist epithets tossed at them from cowards. Working people hardly feel welcomed at all with these high housing costs and students whooping it up on daddy's dime. And no one dare say a critical word about the almighty Penn State, or what happens? They are silenced. In our case, through theft.

But as long as you support what we're doing, we will fight the cowards and thieves.

Their hate comes from fear, the fear of ideas, of free thought, of anyone who demands more from our imperfect democracy. I believe they are a very small minority in Centre County.

I, for one, am not afraid. Why? Because of you.

Here's an example: I want to welcome our newest Board members and Advisory Council members (see lists left and above). Thanks for serving and we look forward to the great ideas everyone develops over the next year!

Readers, if you have upgraded your digital camera in the last few years, please consider donating your old one to Voices. We'll put it to great use showing off our great community and having the last word with thieves and cowards. Write to voices@voicesweb.org.

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