

Gas Prices and Student Travel

Contributed by Kate Schlenkert
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The impending doom that rising gas prices seems to be placing on travel is annoying, obnoxious, and downright ridiculous in the eyes of most. As many students discovered, travel plans over Spring Break almost depended solely on how far they could afford to drive, taking into account the drive back to campus from their destination. Other students had no choice but to drive home, some as far as 10 hours away from campus. How much did students spend on gas?

Bryan Moran, a junior in the Criminal Justice department, observed, "Gas Prices were cheaper here than out west. I spent \$75 to get from campus to my house in Bloomfield, but out in San Diego it was about \$3.50 a gallon. Prices on gas near the airport were as high as \$3.70!"

Some students were lucky to live about 3 hours away in Marquette, MI. On average, students that live in Marquette reported only needing a quarter to a half a tank of gas and spent anywhere from \$25 to \$50. Were they the sole "lucky ones"? Maybe, maybe not, because they also reported that gas prices rose about .20 cents halfway through break.

Stephanie VanRyn, a freshman majoring in nursing, wishes she were lucky enough to have only needed to spend \$50 total on gas! "It was about \$40 for me to get to Grand Rapids, one way. It definitely reduced the amount of stuff I could do and who I could visit, because I didn't have enough gas to waste."

In short, out of 50 students surveyed, 100% of them wished gas was more affordable, 100% of them said they would go more places, or go further, if gas was more affordable, and about 85% of them said that they wished their vehicle got more miles to the gallon.

Will gas prices ever be affordable? Seeing as how some reports claim gas will be over \$4.00 by this time next year, probably not. So look into getting a more cost effective vehicle (one with more miles to the gallon and/or 2 wheel drive), and carpool with friends!