

Slouch

By Jim Earle



"Falconry does have its inconveniences."

July: A crazy month in D.C.

by Ira R. Allen  
United Press International

WASHINGTON — The political "silly season," a phrase coined by some pundit long ago to describe candidates' publicity gimmicks, is generally thought to start a few weeks before the first primary and to continue through election day every two years.

But close observers of headline patterns know that the "silly season" is not some vague metaphor — it arrives on schedule once a year and lasts precisely 31 days.

It is July — a month so hot and humid in Washington that statues sweat and lethargic pigeons slide right off.

No sooner do the lightning bugs and mosquitoes rise up from the capital's primordial swamp than lawmakers and top government policymakers flee to Delaware beaches or California mountain-tops.

The top investigative reporters loll on Martha's Vineyard, and the regular order of official business stops. It's too early for politicians to be campaigning; the voters don't start paying attention until Labor Day, if at all.

In July, there's no such thing as a slow news day. It's a slow news month.

That is why for the past six years without fail, relatively minor events or revelations become full-blown scandals, dominating the headlines until Congress or

the president does something truly controversial.

So every renet July has seen the Washington media, usually consisting of those reporters who have to work when everyone else is on vacation, embarked on a feeding frenzy nipping for the latest juicy tidbit.

This July, for example, the only story in town — breaking as soon as Congress left on a two-week vacation — is the allegations that lawmakers engaged in homosexual acts with pages and may have used, bought or sold cocaine.

While potentially more substantial than other scandals, there has yet to be any solid evidence of widespread vice on Capitol Hill, and a growing suspicion that whatever is proved will implicate only a few members.

In 1981, the July scandal was the firing of CIA covert operations chief Max Hugel for his past deeds in an alleged stock swindle, and calls for the firing of CIA Director William Casey, whose failed to fully disclose his huge financial holdings.

It was also in July 1981 that an international scandal flared when President Reagan slept through the shooting down of two Libyan jets.

In 1980, President Carter's perennially embarrassing brother, Billy, was required to register as a foreign agent and to testify before a Senate committee about alleged influence peddling in Libya,

where Julys are no more pleasant than they are in Washington.

In 1979, President Carter hinted at a crisis by retreating in the mountains to Camp David and then promoting the existence of a "national malaise" will do that to you.

Carter, it might be added, revealed the August doldrums as well when he revealed that he had been attacked by a bunny on a Georgia pond.

In 1978, it was Carter's drug problem that was the headline. Dr. Peter Bourne, who scandalized the line writers by having written a prescription for an aide and then having to resign.

And July 1977 marked the beginning of the fall of Carter's budget advisers — "I'm proud of you" Lance.

Obviously, there are many minor scandals that occupy idle time — witness the Libyan hit squad in December and the recent investigation of President Reagan's new dry look.

And there is plenty of legitimate news being made — in other months.

So it gives one pause, in the month for pausing, to wonder what happened to July. Perhaps its great events — the birth of Julius and the American and French revolutions, the Battle of Gettysburg and the landing, which occurred the same day, Ted Kennedy's fateful encounter with a bridge railing on Chappaquiddick — used up long ago.

Geography problem for State Department

by Art Buchwald

Why do American secretaries of state have so much trouble with the White House? It's nothing more than a question of geography. In the good old days the State Department was located in the Executive Office Building, which is right next to the White House and considered part of it now. All the secretary would have to do is cross an alley and walk into the Oval Office.

But then someone in the White House, years ago, got a brainstorm. If they could move the secretary of state down to a swamp called Foggy Bottom, he'd think twice about bugging the President over some silly matter concerning foreign affairs.

The White House used the excuse that it needed the Executive Office Building to house its own staff. To add insult to injury, they built a new State Department that was the ugliest piece of architecture in Washington. But it served its purpose because it kept the secretary of state from easy accessibility to the boss.

Although State is only about 15 blocks away from the White House, the secretary might as well be stationed in Paraguay.

This is what happens to all secretaries of state since they moved out of the EOB: The President sees his White House staff every day.

"Top of the morning to you, sir," they say to him.

Now it goes without saying that a person who says "Top of the morning" to the President every day is going to have more input than a Cabinet officer who has to taxi over to the White House twice a week.

No President spends all his time just signing bills, and making speeches at prayer breakfasts. Who does he chew the fat with? His White House staff, of course. He isn't going to call up the secretary of state and say: "Hey, come over and have a beer."

Even if he wanted to, the White House staff members, jealous of their turf, are

not going to let an outsider like a secretary of state become part of the inner circle.

Not only is the secretary kept away from the President for bull sessions, but the staff goes to great lengths to see that he doesn't get to see the President too often when it involves affairs of state.

The first rule is that a secretary of state must always call the President before he comes over.

The conversation could go like this:

"This is the secretary of state. I have to see the President of the United States."

"I'm sorry, sir. The President is in an important meeting with Charlton Heston. Can anybody else help you?"

"No, I have to talk to the President about China."

"Haven't you already talked to him about China?"

"I have to talk to him again."

"He has a terribly busy schedule. We could fit you in a week from next Thursday for 10 minutes."

"It's urgent."

"We can't move it up any sooner. But if we have a cancellation we'll call you back."

After the White House aide hangs up he turns to another White House aide and says, "Can you imagine the gall of the man? He thinks he can just call up, and see the President on 48 hours' notice. What kind of administration does he think we're running?"

"They're all alike," the other aide says.

"They believe just because we let them sit in on Cabinet meetings, they can have access to the President any time they want to. If there is one thing I hate, it's a pushy secretary of state."

And that's how it's been ever since the State Department moved to Foggy Bottom. And thus it will always be until the secretary of state gets an office back at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, so he can see the President every day and say as the lowliest White House staffer does now: "Top of the morning to you, sir."



The Average takes over life

Editor:

Seeking to protect our campus from the pervasive and omnipresent maladies that permeate our present day society, I have appointed myself (surreptitiously, of course) TAMU's epidemiologist. As such, I have to be privy to and wary of the ominous rumblings that threaten the mental and emotional integrity of our student body.

It is therefore my duty to report an insidious disease that has gripped our campus by its jugular vein and endangered our very survival. Incantations, supplications and entreaties have failed to dent its impermeable armor. Its voracious appetite knows no boundaries, as it seeks adherents at any hour of the day or night. Many people are only dimly aware of its deleterious side effects, as it strikes all sizes and ages indiscriminately. The guise under which it seeks anonymity, however, has made itself known to me and even at the risk of my life, I will reveal its nom de guerre — The Average.

This hideous term has affected (and continues to affect) every sphere of our lives. For instance: class grades are stated in terms of the average; course grades are meted out according to the normal (the euphemistic term for average) distribution curve; students, on the average, should finish college in four years; one ought to toss aside his/her altruistic aims and ideologies in quest of the pragmatic dollar; and the granddaddy of all the prevarications associated with the term "the average": one must fall in love to the tune of Henry Mancini's platitudinous songs accompanied by the dithyrambs of Lothario, all of course before the senescent age of 30.

The malicious side effects of this term

usually leaves its victims writhing in physical and psychological pain aided and abetted by guilt, censure and an implacable superego, its power and control is imperceptibly burgeoning, with no foreseeable end in sight. We can, however, stop "the averages" flow to the sea if we keep in mind (and practice) the following tenets:

- 1) Define the word average as the "amalgamation of individualities." Note, I said individualities, not exceptionalities.
- 2) Just like one has a biological circadian rhythm, I propose that one also has a mental, emotional, social and intellectual circadian rhythm, different from and unique to every person constituting the human race. Listen to yours and respect its dictates rather than pillorying it to societal norms.
- 3) Differentiate between the average's insatiable quest for rote knowledge without comprehension; glibness and deftness over comprehensiveness and insight; and logic purging intuitiveness. Go

with your intuition; seek knowledge the exhilarating flush that results in discovery unbeknownst to you and only. Become a belletrist rather than a pedantic.

4) Let your heart back into your visions, as its altruisms flow with the your soul, making you unlike any individual in the world. Heed its intimations and accept its soothing balms.

Now I realize the resiliency and ability with which the average will maintain and/or increase its beach into your life. I only ask that you be real you come forth instead of substituting your finely honed, idiosyncratic some idolatrous worship of the approved and dictated average. Honesty and placidness will be your companions and quite frankly, could ask for better guardian angels.

the small society

by Brickm



The Battalion

USPS 045 360

Member of Texas Press Association Southwest Journalism Conference

Editor ..... Diana Sultenfuss  
City Editor ..... Bernie Fette  
Sports Editor ..... Frank L. Christlieb  
News Editors  
Tracey Buchanan, Daniel Puckett  
Diane Yount  
Staff Writers ..... Cyndy Davis, Susan Dittman,  
Terry Duran, Colette Hutchings,  
Hope E. Paasch, Joe Tindel Jr.,  
Rebeca Zimmermann  
Copy Editors ..... Gary Barker, Carol Templin  
Cartoonist ..... Scott McCullar  
Photographers ..... David Fisher, Peter Rocha,  
John Ryan,

The Battalion is published three times a week — Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday — during Texas A&M's summer semesters, except for holiday and examination periods, when it is published only on Wednesdays. Mail subscriptions are \$16.75 per semester, \$33.25 per school year and \$35 per full year. Advertising rates furnished on request.

Our address: The Battalion, 216 Reed McDonald Building, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX 77843.

Letters Policy

Letters to the Editor should not exceed 300 words in length, and are subject to being cut if they are longer. The editorial staff reserves the right to edit letters for style and length, but will make every effort to maintain the author's intent. Each letter must also be signed, show the address and phone number of the writer.

Columns and guest editorials are also welcome, and are not subject to the same length constraints as letters. Address all inquiries and correspondence to: Editor, The Battalion, 216 Reed McDonald, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX 77843, or phone (713) 845-2611.

Editorial Policy

The Battalion is a non-profit, self-supporting newspaper operated as a community service to Texas A&M University and Bryan-College Station. Opinions expressed in The Battalion are those of the editor or the author, and do not necessarily represent the opinions of Texas A&M University administrators or faculty members, or of the Board of Regents.

The Battalion also serves as a laboratory newspaper for students in reporting, editing and photography classes within the Department of Communications. Questions or comments concerning any editorial matter should be directed to the editor.

United Press International is entitled exclusively to the use for reproduction of all news dispatches credited to it. Rights of reproduction of all other matter herein reserved.

Second class postage paid at College Station, TX 77843.