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EDITORIAL Wrong turn

Bus changes need rethinking

Students trying to ride on-campus shuttle buses this semester have found one inefficient system of routes exchanged for another.

Instead of waiting a long time for buses to pick them up, students are stranded on buses which slowly, belatedly make their stops.

Bus Operations compounded these problems by not publicizing the new routes, which were established July 6. The new system is the first major alteration of shuttle bus operations in several semesters, and many students at the bus stops on the first day of fall classes found themselves completely uninformed of the changes.

The current routes were developed from research conducted by Bus Operations, which included student surveys and traffic measurements. Feedback from those surveys indicated that students would rather ride longer on the buses than wait at the stops.

In an attempt to meet these demands, the new routes have increased the number of buses on each route. All the buses now run in one direction — clockwise — in order to reduce

traffic congestion.

However, riders waiting for the shuttle buses complain of buses reaching the stops too full to take on more passengers. Other students arrive at their destinations after spending up to 45 minutes on the bus.

These obstacles can make the struggle to get to class or work on time impossible. Although most of these incidents occur in early mornings, around lunch, and late afternoons, the new routes should have focused on remedying the situation during these peak times.

Interestingly, at one point Bus Operations designated a committee of drivers to devise a plan to improve upon the previously existing routes. Bus Operations then rejected the committee's plan and ignored its input, despite the logic that the drivers would be the most qualified experts on needed changes.

The new shuttle bus routes obviously fail to meet the need for a more efficient service. Shuttle bus service will remain unsatisfactory as long as the needs of students are ignored.

Confessions of a cholesterol junkie Converting to vegetarianism best done in small bites



JOHN SCROGGS
Columnist

Promises, promises... The most difficult ones to keep are the ones you make to yourself. I have once again proven this little truth.

It all began a year ago as I was having my blood drawn for some insurance health tests. Several minutes after having my blood sucked from my veins into a tiny tube, I noticed that the red stuff started to settle, and a white, milky fluid floated on top. Being the curious person that I am, I asked the lab tech what exactly was happening to my blood.

He casually explained to me that what I was watching was my cholesterol and fatty fluids separate from the whole blood. He reassured me that it wasn't terribly uncommon, although he had never seen the white stuff so thick and opaque.

He asked me what I had eaten lately. I replied that it was just the usual stuff. For breakfast I had a ham sandwich, and for lunch I had just eaten a chicken fried steak with a side of pork rinds.

He simply said, "Oh..." as if waiting for a signal to begin C.P.R.

Well, I took a semester of health in high school and was able to put two and two together.

I got four. Four chambers of my heart struggling to pump enough blood to my

brain but not succeeding because of the chunks of cow, pig and grease blocking the way. I then realized something needed to be done, so I headed to McDonald's to try and figure out a plan.

By the end of August, I had resolved to become a vegetarian. To save myself from an imminent and horrible blood-clotting death, I would give up my life-long love affair with greasy, well-done steaks. I also found out that vegetarianism is much cheaper than the unhealthy — but quite filling — life of meat-eating. You can buy enough pasta to fill a bathtub with the money it takes to buy a nice T-bone.

My vegetarian friends tried to convince me that my plan was also the most moral decision to make. I heard horror stories of how cows, pigs, chickens and the occasional calf were put through ghastly, inhumane conditions just so I could have a nice cozy cheeseburger. I was so disturbed that I almost went to a vegetarian priest to confess my meat-eating sins.

I knew it wouldn't be easy to convert to a no-meat diet, but I had a plan. I felt the best way to accomplish my goal would be to have a trial period of a month.

September was set aside as my "Vegetarian Month." I knew that in one month I would be able to wean myself off of all the tasty things in life — no problem.

The next step was to talk my boyfriend into joining me in this venture. Misery loves company. After a few minutes of begging and hours of stubbornness, he agreed, and we both waited patiently for September to come.

Then, on our second day of vegetarianism, I lost my sweetie to some leftovers. He was

hungry and said the chicken fingers were calling to him. Some support system, eh?

Well, I decided not to let this influence my quest for health and cow liberation. I re-avowed my original promise to last the entire month of September as a vegetarian.

Then, after a week of fried-chicken dreams, I decided to review and rewrite my original promise. The new compromise was that I would not eat meat during the week, but on the weekends I could have a little chicken, turkey or fish.

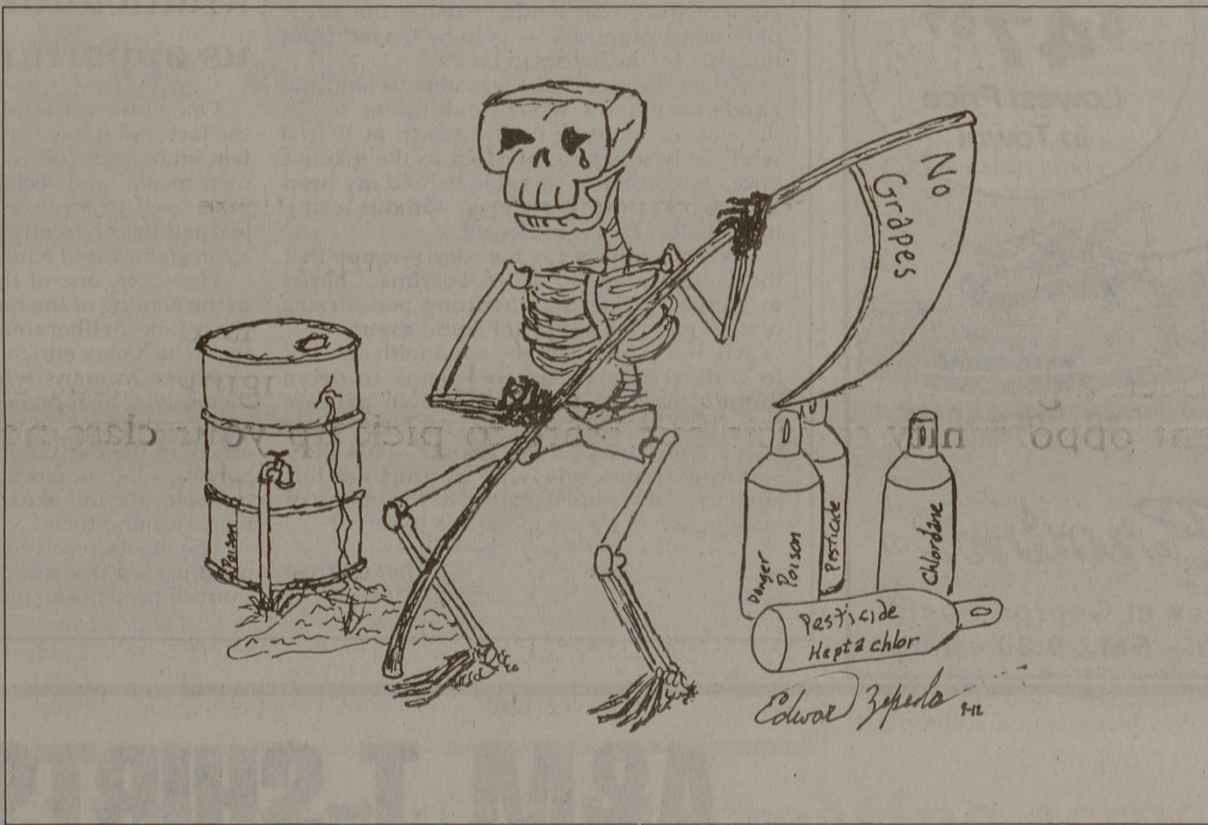
Yet another unforeseen problem presented itself. In one week of vegetarianism, I had lost three pounds. Now, I was officially a 98-pound weakling — my neighbor's cat was the first to kick sand in my face.

Other problems in my quest to become a vegetarian included the lack of places in the Bryan/College Station area which offer tasty, reasonably priced veggie meals; my own lack of veggie recipes; and the incredible desire to eat one of my mom's home-cooked meals.

All these factors led to my final relapse into the meat-eating world. I celebrated my re-immersion by ordering a Whopper with double meat and cheese and a side order of guilt.

I have not given up my quest for a meat-free life, but I have decided to wait until I can ensure that I have enough veggie recipes to last me and know at least four restaurants in which I can feel safe. I'm also looking into a campus support group for vegetarians.

John Scroggs is a senior English and philosophy major



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Go back to the bulletin board to regain students' attention

Last Thursday night at a meeting of the Institute of Industrial Engineers, someone announced that some faculty members in the engineering department are working to change the way they teach.



MELISSA MEGLIOLA
Columnist

They are now working at a new model for the ideal classroom. The elementary school. As an industrial engineering student, I would like to offer some input into what may be the most important research conducted at Texas A&M.

First of all, resurrect the bulletin board. In elementary school I always new what reason we were in. Ghosts and pumpkins meant October, Indians and pilgrims meant November, and April and May were noted by a sequence of rain and flowers. My teachers would buy different

colors of butcher paper, trace, cut and laminate a new and vibrant scene every month. Not only did the bulletin board brighten the room and give me a direction to gaze, but it also hung as a symbol of how much my teacher cared. Think about how much harder it would be to ream a professor at the end of the semester if you knew he or she spent hours with construction paper trying to improve the aesthetic value of your classroom.

Next, call on students by name. I remember almost jumping out of my seat during the formative years in order to be recognized for my brilliance. Now, I am neither expected nor willing to participate in class. A&M could give each of us a nameplate when we register for classes in the spring. We could be required to set it on the front of our desks during all lectures and lab.

I'm sure this would increase participation. At least I would have read Newsweek less during physics if my name had been written across my desk.

Teachers also need to put some competition back into the classroom. I am not advocating anything like true bell curves

— these always kill me. And we have too much competition for grades as it is. Teachers should motivate their students through the traditional fear of looking like an idiot.

In third grade, Mrs. Methenitis, my favorite teacher of all time, painted clouds all over our classroom walls. When we began to take our multiplication tests, all

Why is it that I have trouble remembering in what century the Civil War divided our country yet I can still recite the lyrics to that annoying song by Vanilla Ice?

of her students were given a hot air balloon — cutout, colored and laminated — that would move from cloud to cloud as we passed each timed test. I was not about to be stuck on the "dumb clouds," I informed my mother as I made her time me multiplying eights over and over at the kitchen table.

Another great thing about grade school was recess — I loved four square. While neither a vast supply of big red balls nor a massive jungle gym will most likely be budgeted into the Capital Campaign, five-minute breaks should be incorporated into all Tuesday-Thursday classes. An hour and 15 minutes simply exceeds my attention span.

A few of my professors have already started this. The break really helps to keep us alert — at least those of us who tend to fall asleep in class have reason to wake up. My only suggestion for improvement would be to pass out popsicles at this time. It is impossible to be in a bad mood after eating a popsicle. Plus, the cold sort of freezes you awake.

Since popsicles may not be feasible, learning tools should be incorporated into every single lecture to make them more interesting. Why is it that I have trouble remembering in what century the Civil War divided our country yet I can still recite the lyrics to that annoying song by Vanilla Ice? Stop. Collaborate and listen...

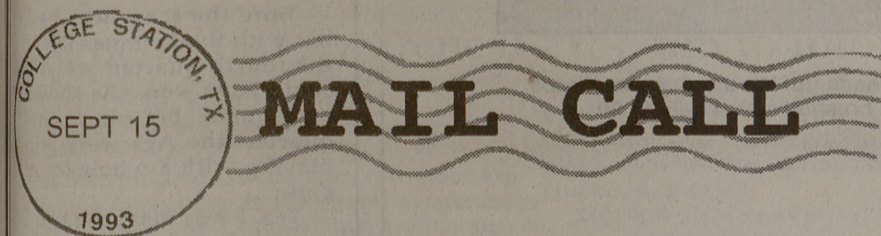
I learned, and still remember, the preposition song from seventh grade. How about a thermodynamics rap? Play-

ing some memory game game when I was 11, I learned the quadratic equation so well that I have never needed to program it into my HP. And for anyone who thinks technical subjects can't be adapted into fun mediums, I suggest you rent "Donald Duck in Mathemagic Land."

As college students, some of us may look like adults — I, personally, still get handed the kiddie menu by mistake and am actually laughed at when I present my totally legal I.D. A select few may dress like adults. At times, some of us may even sound like adults. But the facade can only last so long because we are, in fact, not adults.

A list of our favorite television shows proves that we share the attention span of the average seven-year-old. We like to nap and site "Jurassic Park" as our favorite literary piece. We prefer to be entertained rather than to learn. We don't want to be given a lot of credit for our brilliance or maturity. As students, we simply want to enjoy being in the classroom.

Melissa Megliola is a senior industrial engineering major



MAIL CALL

T-shirts: first Quayle, now Clinton's turn

This letter is in response to Anand Patel's letter "Shirts show lack of respect for President" in the Sept. 10 issue of The Battalion. Anand, where were you when Dan Quayle was being hung out to dry?

Were you laughing at the jokes about his intellect and the mistakes he made, or were you taking a moral stand on how no one should cast stones at him? I must have missed that Mail Call if you did.

Welcome to the world of politics. If you're in the political arena and national spot light, and then just happen to say something as idiotic as "I didn't inhale!"

when asked if you had ever smoked marijuana, you'd open yourself up to criticism and ridicule. It's politics and as unfair as it might seem "mud slinging" is a reality.

In 1828, Andrew Jackson's opponents accused him of being a son of a slave. His mother was called a whore and his wife was called a polygamist. That didn't soil "Old Hickory." He got the majority of votes in that election.

Clinton may not have received a majority, but he received the presidency. Anand, if you support him, go right ahead. But let Republicans or conservatives or whoever wants to wear anti-Clinton shirts have their fun. You'll get yours in 1996.

Robert Lagoudis
Class of '93

Conservatives lose right to free speech

I am completely fed up with all the criticism that organizations such as the Young Conservatives of Texas and College Republicans have been receiving in the last week. What's ironic though, is that most people don't mind the trend at all. Free speech, right?

But what if I told you that I think the Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual organization should be dispelled because "queers have no right being Aggies"? Or better yet, that the Atheist/Agnostic group should be heckled because they don't believe in God. Here at Aggiefield you believe in God, period. No, let's go a bit further. If you don't swear allegiance to

the ideas of democracy, then hit the road.

Now the idea of free speech has been thrown out the door because the rules of "political correctness" come to play. It's not appropriate to judge those who choose an "alternate lifestyle." Not all people embrace the idea of a "supreme being." The Constitution allows people to express their own ideas of how government should operate. Yet "political correctness" allows us to completely lambaste those of conservative ideology and regard the right-wing as "crazies."

The point is, the next time you give the conservative thinkers (which happen to make up the majority) of this school a hard time, be prepared to catch a little heat yourself. Free speech, right?

Joseph A. Bell
Class of '97