

# Fair Play for Students with Apartments Indeterminant

By BARB SEARS

A number of local apartment owners and managers have formed the Apartment Association for Bryan - College Station landlords. This association has a major purpose of lobbying for legislation favorable to landlords, and its goals include the establishment of a local office to be staffed by a secretary and possibly a lawyer.

A recent organizational meeting was attended by managers and owners of about 25 local apartments, as well as officials from the Texas Apartment Association (TAA). Confirmation of the B-CS Chapter by the state board will occur Nov. 28.

Ronny Fenger, an officer in the TAA, was at the meeting to review landlord-tenant legislation which came up during the last session of the legislature. The state association was concerned with bills affecting insurance, zoning, tenants' rights, deposits and environmental planning and activity lobbied on these issues.

Fenger explained that the TAA supported the new tenant-landlord and deposit laws which they saw as preferable to some even stronger tenant protection bills with which they were "threatened" by consumer advocates. The TAA pushed for the Landlord's Lien Bill which gives landlords the right to seize certain items owned by the tenant if he fails to pay his rent. The law that was passed is relatively watered down (from the landlords' point of view) because it protects

the tenant's clothing, tools, books, most furniture, food, medicine, kitchen utensils, one automobile and one truck and certain other essentials of life.

The TAA worked against a bill which would require remodeling and maintenance companies to post a \$20,000 bond as a guarantee on their work. This bill would have had the effect of eliminating small businessmen from contracting for such work. The apartment owners group also worked against a bill which would have required that 10 per cent of all apartment property be dedicated to scenic beautification.

As would be expected, the association also lobbied against the corporate profits tax, and against a bill which would have placed the responsibility for any latent apartment defects on the original builder of the apartment. In short, the TAA is concerned with legislation that affects pocketbooks, so the higher ideals of ecology, progressive taxation, and good construction of buildings may have been sacrificed.

However, every interest group, including students, works for items of self-interest which may benefit only that particular group, so the TAA should not be faulted for lobbying to protect its own interests. It is just unfortunate that those interests may be contrary to those of the community.

Exception should be taken to one remark made at the meeting. It was inferred that because this area has about 15,000 people living in apartments, the owners should

thus have a great deal of political clout in dealing with legislators. I would think that the opposite conclusion should actually be true. One would expect the tenants, i.e., voters to play the influential role.

Two projects of the TAA are to publish a 55-page listing of apartment laws and to establish a local Resident Relations Committee. This committee would be composed of managers, owners, associates and would hold hearings on tenants' apartment complaints.

As a tenant, I would certainly be hesi-

tant to take any of my gripes to such a landlord-oriented board, but the TAA people offered assurances of fairplay. They cited one such board which has about a 50-50 record of rulings for tenant versus landlord.

The TAA claims that it wants the good landlords as members, and the bad ones disassociated from it. The apartment owners present at the organizational meeting were both hospitable and interested in the student Fair Housing Commission and extended their invitation to future meetings as well as of-

fered their assistance with complaints. A great deal of interest was expressed in the Student Government - published Apartment Guide which contains a critical evaluation of the local apartments based on surveys taken at pre-registration. A final judgment on the TAA must be postponed until it begins operations. The cordiality expressed to visitors by FHC members was impressive, but there is no doubt that the foremost goal of the group is protection of landlords' interest.

## Listen Up—

# Kerosene for Bonfire Ignition Valuable

Editor:

As long term students of TAMU, we have watched the annual unfolding of "the bonfire debate." This year, a new factor, "the energy crisis", has added new fuel to the environmentalist position.

The fuel in question is the hundreds of gallons of kerosene traditionally used to ignite the Aggie Spirit. Despite their Commander in Chief's order to conserve all fuel, Aggies led by the Corps of Cadets, are presently engaged in the orderly stacking of a colossal amount of cord-wood, used to absorb the kerosene. Recent news articles have noted the local scarcity of kerosene for home heating, increasing the usefulness and value of the cord-wood. Presumably the trees have been cut, but the kerosene can be saved. Let's find another way.

Randy Williams '73  
Eugene E. Wisakowski '73  
Lynn Culey '75

The kerosene used is contaminated and unsuitable for normal use—Ed.

★ ★ ★

Editor:

Our congratulations to the students, faculty and administration of TAMU. I was privileged to

attend a conference on campus the first part of last week and then returned Saturday with my family for the SMU game.

We were all favorably impressed with your campus — the friendliness and neatness, the spirit, the tradition — it brought a lump to my throat and thrill to my spirit.

The ten years we've been in Texas we've had a warm spot for the Aggies, but our visit to your campus capped-the-stack. You've got a great team, a top-notch Corps, a marvelous band and a fine student body. Keep up the good work.

A. A. Rambiker  
Point Comfort

★ ★ ★

Editor:

Please convey my appreciation to all of Aggieland. The attention shown to me, the oldest living Aggie, has been overwhelming. The score today (Saturday) is a perfect climax to a wonderful 100th birthday.

John Bain Honaker '95  
Farmersville

★ ★ ★

Editor:

On Nov. 1, Dr. Syler gave "correct definitions" of the terms "Aggie" and "tradition." His def-

initions were philosophical and only included Cadets. Perhaps these ideas may better suffice.

An Aggie is a student at TAMU. He or she may be a member of any race, nation or creed. Hopefully, an Aggie is a good statesman, a refined person, a clear thinker, and someone who, instead of telling a man to "go to hell, if need be", would rather sit down with that man and exchange ideas. Unfortunately, this type of man and woman also takes a back seat in controversies such as the MSC grass and hat problems, and the headline-makers are unthinking big-mouths who don't think before they throw some verbal abuse at the offender of some abstract tradition.

Webster defines tradition as "an inherited pattern of thought or action" and TAMU really exhibits this. The problem is that good Ags seem to accept traditions like babies had to accept genes: they accept both the good and the bad. (Recall Josten Ma's letter and the replies he got? It concerned the quote "I don't care what the peace queers think, I just want to kill some chinks." Dr. Syler, is this one of the "principles that build greatness?") We should instead

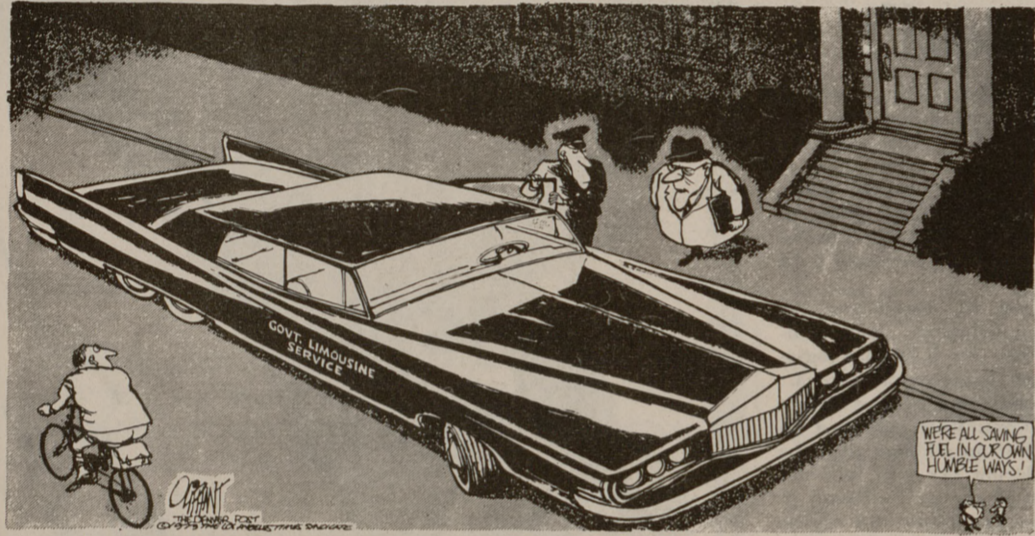
select the poor and unreasonable traditions and trash-can them. For example, people don't expect hat and grass policies like the MSC's. After all, the men die for our freedom, so why restrict it with little rules? The dead don't know if the grass is walking on or hats are worn. We have such policies to make us look "respectable", so why have them at all?

Traditions should 1) be voluntary, and 2) not interfere with people's rights. Think about it.  
Richard Mueller '77

★ ★ ★

Editor:

Mr. Syler gave a very descriptive view of what an Aggie is and I particularly agree with him that an Aggie is a superior being of man, or person as the case may be. I'm afraid that Mr. Syler generalizes too much when he said challenge non-regs to become Aggie enough to honor traditions. There are plenty of non-regs who are Aggie enough to honor traditions honor traditions I just wish there were more that would. I would like to see people here thinking more of each other as Ags and not just non-regs or c.l.s.  
Jeff Christensen '78



'EXECUTIVE OFFICE BUILDING, JAMES . . . AND KEEP IT UNDER FIFTY!'

## Batt Commentary

# Spanning the Gaps

We've been harping for two years on the problem of bad communication gaps that frequently unveil themselves here and those problems are really beginning to hurt now.

Take for example, the case of the two police officers mentioned in the lead story of today's Battalion, "Jersey Intersections Raise Problems." These two men could be in for the legal fight of their lives if the persons involved in the Nov. 1, Jersey at Bizzell Streets accident pursue the matter. And all because much of this University tries to operate as if military secrecy were being practiced.

Dr. Jack Williams wished for someone to direct traffic there and through the inability of his subordinates to communicate, has placed the reputation and possible financial status of two month-old University Police officers in double jeopardy. Double jeopardy because of the victims they may have to answer to and the "big brother" administration that might have to decide what to do with two broke policemen.

The cause of the communication gap is two-fold, both on the part of Williams, who should have made swifter changes in the administration when he took over his post, and the people beneath him, for waiting for Williams to come to them with all the answers. We are all to blame.

Another potential disaster was in the announcement of the probable change in scheduling approval of the University operating budget in April instead of July. While the reasons behind the change are for the most part sound, we don't know why the information on the proposal shouldn't be announced, at least for the sake of giving department heads, deans, vice presidents and student leaders time to prepare for the change.

Instead, students, for example are told they are being given an extra month to work on Services Fee allocations. In reality, students worked for three months on the project last year and will be here on campus only two months to work on allocations this year. This excludes the length of time it will take student leaders to hassle over the amount awarded the Athletic Department. Last year, the administration had modified the Senate's proposal by over \$40,000 in the favor of the AD, but changed it back after student leaders "accidentally" found out about it.

Communications around the vice president for student services office has improved tremendously lately since Dr. John Koldus took over the post in August, with students getting results for most of their efforts—more than before. Unfortunately, it hasn't rubbed off to other areas of the University yet.

It's been evident, too, from many of the letters received at The Battalion that Student Government and the administration aren't doing much for attracting and solving all the problems in their areas.

It is the leaders of these two groups that must start cooperating faster to keep up with a University predicted to have 21,000 enrolled in it next year and who knows how many the year after.

# The Battalion

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