



OF COURSE I BROUGHT THEM WITH ME—HOW DO YOU THINK I GOT IN HERE?

## Editorial Back Jack Move the track

The Battalion was assured on Dec. 4 that the university and the three local governments (Bryan, College Station and Brazos County) would ask for a feasibility study on relocating the railroad tracks west of campus.

Monday night, College Station Councilman Don Dale fudged on his promise to raise the question at the CS Council meeting.

He said he was waiting for a reply to a report which College Station prepared for the governor's office. The city report said, "The existing railroad bisects the community and is a serious physical barrier to other transportation modes. Financial help must be forthcoming for the solution of the railroad problem."

We suspect Dale didn't do his homework. The governor's office can't help pay for the relocation until a feasibility study is completed. Glen Cook, executive director for the Brazos Valley Development Council, said the BVDC would do the study upon request from the university, Bryan, College Station and Brazos County.

Four letters asking for a feasibility study — it seems like a simple start toward solving a complex problem. An entire agricultural campus will be built across Wellborn Road along with a coliseum and intramural complex and parking. These additions will cause quite a bit of traffic between the existing campus and the other side of the tracks. If that track stays where it is, Cowtown College will have trains rumbling and whistling through campus. The Northgate wall may be an inconvenience, but it doesn't block roads and it is harmless. Besides, it would be nice to watch movies at the outdoor Grove Theater without trains passing on the other side of Wellborn Road.

Four letters — that's all we wanted a month ago. That's all we were promised.

President Jack K. Williams told the B-CS Chamber of Commerce this summer that he would like to see the track moved. We support Dr. Williams on this issue and we urge citizens of College Station (which includes 16,000 off-campus students, like it or not) to contact the following people and ask them to do something now.

O. M. Holt, mayor of College Station, City Hall, 846-8868.

Julius A. Skrivanek, mayor of Bryan, City Hall, 823-0071.

William R. Vance, county judge, County Courthouse, 822-7373.

## The Battalion

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### LETTERS POLICY

Letters to the editor should not exceed 300 words and are subject to being cut to that length or less if longer. The editorial staff reserves the right to edit such letters and does not guarantee to publish any letter. Each letter must be signed, show the address of the writer and list a telephone number for verification.

Address correspondence to Listen Up, *The Battalion*, Room 217, Services Building, College Station, Texas 77843.

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D.S. Breakdown!

# Fee hike raises questions

By BILL SHEEN

Either the recent rise in the Building Use Fee is the biggest rip-off since they started charging for school, or it is the most valuable addition to Texas A&M since the football team. Your view likely depends on whether you're paying it or administering it.

The rise of \$4 in the BUF will pay for the \$25 million bond sold last fall by the university. Counting the principle and the interest to be paid, it will cost the university \$65 million over the next thirty years. Now the question arises, does a 200 per cent rise in the BUF necessarily reflect poor planning as most students seem to think? Was the bond necessary to finance proposed new buildings? Is there something (such as certain aspects of the MSC or the wall) which might have been done away with to reduce the size of the bond necessary for improvements? Was there sufficient warning to the student body that their BUF would triple so that they might make plans (Heaven for-

bid) to attend a less expensive university?

Here is what I have been able to find out. In order to create better repayment rates the bond was sold to competitive bidders who submitted sealed bids. So the bond probably couldn't have been gotten much cheaper. (The law requires that this system be followed anyway.) But were there inappropriate spendings by the university? Most students point to the interior of the MSC and the wall and say yes. Why? Well, \$3.3 million is being spent on the interior of the MSC, \$27 million on the total project, and \$300,000 is going to Mr. William Pahlmann who is decorating the place.

The point that many make is that we're paying Mr. Pahlmann \$300,000 to make us look like a bunch of extravagant hicks. Now, I doubt if many students would argue that the MSC should not have been built altogether, but serious argument can be made that it could easily have been built more efficiently. In the final analysis, it comes down to the fact that most people don't seem to believe that they got their money's worth. The same goes for the wall. Elimination of the wall would have been easy. The aesthetic loss to the campus would have been minimal. And we would have

been \$485,000 to the good.

But why even belabor the point? Well, money saved on the MSC and the wall could easily have been spent on the three new needed buildings which the bond finances. (The Soil and Crop Science and Entomology Building will cost \$9 million to \$10 million, the Animal Science and Food Science Center \$10 million to \$11 million, and \$5 million of the \$7.5 million addition to the Architecture Building will come from the bond).

The resulting saving to the student can only be based on value judgments. But some money could have been saved. I asked several top administrators in business affairs where the university could save money. They said no money is being wasted at Texas A&M. But then their lack of vision may be one reason why we are saddled with an unwanted \$4 rise in the Building Use Fee.

Another important point involved in this whole controversy invol-

ves the matter of warning. This was first reported in the *Battalion* just before the Thanksgiving days. The decision was made September. Why the delay?

Each meeting of the Board of Directors sends out a summary of important decisions and decisions. The September summary apparently failed to report the pending issue. The Battalion staff pined upon the news, checked out, and reported it, pointing out that had the Board of Directors a little harder they could have sent the news out three months earlier.

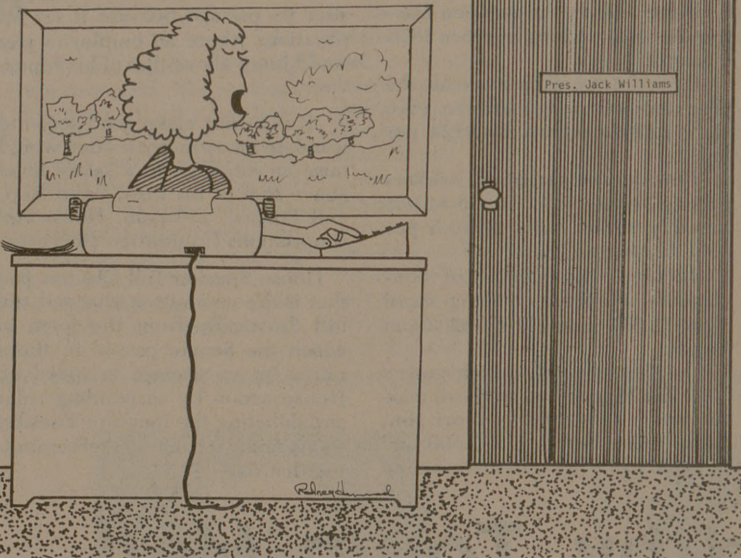
So, it seems that the Board of Directors does make mistakes. I think it is important that someone keep an eye on them. A very good administrator who resides on the second floor of the Administration Building told me it wasn't a business what the Board did here to get an education. Well I'm getting one. Meanwhile I intend to keep an eye on the Board of Directors.



## Listen Up

# White elephants . . . they're taking over

Coasters and Co. By Rodney Hammack



"President Williams? I have a long distance call from a Mr. Irwin Allen of Disaster Flicks, Inc. in Hollywood. He wishes to speak to you about filming his next epic on campus . . ."

Editor:

To better express the theme of the new MSC furnishings, these benches should be upholstered in white elephant hide (Just joking, Mr. Pahlmann. Please don't). Many think the MSC is not the only example of such a trend in expenditures.

The students are now feeling the burden of such spending, but where are the benefits? A&M has offered to Texas the highest quality of education at the lowest student cost, one of the finest educational offers in the world. Why do we now deviate from such an ideal?

All policies and projects must be more carefully examined for their true value to students, the University and the people of Texas. Let's not buy any more white elephants.

James Gill

Dear Editor:

As we enter the new term at a time when we traditionally vow not

to repeat old mistakes, there is something which I would like to see leave behind for good. That is the practice, engaged in by some, of attempting to counter an adversarial argument by referring him to the topological properties of Rindler.

Never has a practice done to the University more disservice. A person who thinks that the purpose of Route 6 is to provide an exit route for anyone who might disagree with him has no understanding of the source of the strength of a great University — the people whom it comprises.

Each person at this University has brought here, via Route 6, his own experiences and his own store of knowledge. To minimize date him into leaving again is to deny to the rest of us the privilege of benefiting from what he might have had to say.

Johnnie B. Linnell

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PEANUTS

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SIR, YOUR FRONT DOOR WAS WIDE OPEN SO I WALKED IN... I ALSO THINK THAT ALL YOUR FURNITURE IS GONE...

I GUESS I WAS LUCKY THAT YOUR NEW WATCHDOG DIDN'T BITE ME, HUH?

IF I EVER GET OFF THIS WATERBED, I'M GONNA BITE THE WATCHDOG! I FEEL SICK!

SIR, I THINK SOME BURGLARS HAVE STOLEN ALL YOUR FURNITURE...

I KNOW THEY HAVE, MARCIE! HELP ME GET OFF THIS WATERBED!!!

STOP BOUNCING, SIR! I CAN'T HELP YOU!!

AH! LAND AT LAST!

STOP CALLING ME "SIR"!