

Gripe service opens

The Battalion has established an office to field complaints and questions from its readers.

Any problems requiring the attention of the editors can be phoned in to the staff's ombudsman, Assistant Editor Roxie Hearn, at the Student Publication's office, 845-2611.

Office hours are from 6 to 11 p.m. Monday through Thursday nights.

For written complaints, write Ombudsman, Texas A&M Battalion, 216 Reed McDonald, College Station, Texas, 77843.

Fur sales still boom

CHICAGO — Sales of mink, sable and other furs, traditionally marks of wealth, are booming despite the recession, say a pelt dealer, a leading furrier and the customers. "If you got it, you flaunt it," one woman explained as she attended Irwin R. Ware's showing of designers' furs valued at more than \$1 million.

"The recession has not touched us at all," said Ware, who operates the Bonwit Teller Fur Salon. "In fact, I've been in this business 40 years and the past two years have been our best."

Furs with price tags of \$30,000 were modeled at the show, which attracted 1,500 potential customers Monday.

Furs in the show included green mink tennis sweaters, seal jackets "to wear to the grocery store" and a collection of Bicentennial furs dyed red, white and blue.

"I think if a woman really wants a fur, she can figure out how to afford one," said Linda Lind, who attended the showing.

Gerald Newman, a corporate lawyer, said, "The economy's great. If it weren't, I wouldn't be here to buy a fur for my wife."

And Bernie Siegel, who owns a printing business, noted, "People in the upper income bracket are spending as much as ever. And one of the things they buy is furs."

Jeffrey Garber, a dealer in pelts as well as the finished goods, said the price of longhaired fur pelts has doubled and, in some cases tripled, in the last three or four years.

"Lynx coats are almost at the point of pricing themselves out of the market," he said. "A lynx coat selling for \$1,500 three or four years ago is now \$3,500 to \$4,000."

Short-hair furs, such as mink, have gone up only slightly, however, and most of the increase has been in assembling the coats, Garber said. A full mink coat going for \$2,500 to \$4,000 now would have been only a couple hundred dollars cheaper a few years ago, he said.

Aggiemoons



—Brad Foster

Newsmen watchful

Information law revised

AUSTIN — Texas newsmen, and all others interested in public access to public records, will be watching closely the next few months as federal authorities draw up new security regulations on criminal information records.

Some say the federal regulations will have no effect on the Texas

Open Records Act. Others predict they may supercede the state law guaranteeing public access to governmental records.

Also very much in the picture is a pending decision by the Houston Civil Appeals Court concerning city police records.

"What effect the federal regulations have will depend to a great extent on what the Houston court says our Open Records Act means,"

said Bill Reid, an assistant Texas attorney general.

Last May, the Federal Law Enforcement Assistance Administration LEAA issued new security regulations, under the federal Omnibus Crime Control Act, for criminal records which the LEAA said would "afford greater protection of the privacy of private individuals who may be included in the records of the FBI, criminal justice agencies funded directly or indirectly through the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, and interstate, state or local criminal justice agencies exchanging records with the FBI or these federally funded agencies."

Whatley said the state's version of the regulations will be submitted to Washington by Dec. 15.

The final version of the regulations will not be effective until December 1977, Willis Whatley, general counsel of the Governor's Criminal Justice Division said.

"I don't think the Texas Open Records Act will be involved," he said. "These regulations are not to prohibit any authorized person from getting the information... It would prevent such people as employment agencies from getting criminal histories."

However, Bill Roberts, Tarrant County director of information systems, says he got a different idea after attending a workshop in Dallas held by LEAA personnel.

Roberts said the LEAA personnel said the new rules will supercede any state laws such as the Texas Open Records Act. "I was appalled... The new standard is stricter

and requires not only a specific request from the press, but limits the information given to confirming or denying specific information in the inquiry.

Roberts said in Tarrant County's case this would mean purging the county's computer system of criminal justice files, purchasing another computer to handle those operations and organizing new computer department under the control of the district attorney, sheriff or some other law enforcement agency.

Whatley said Texas' proposal to carry out the new regulations will not be submitted until after LEAA has completed holding five orientation meetings across the nation to get local comment.

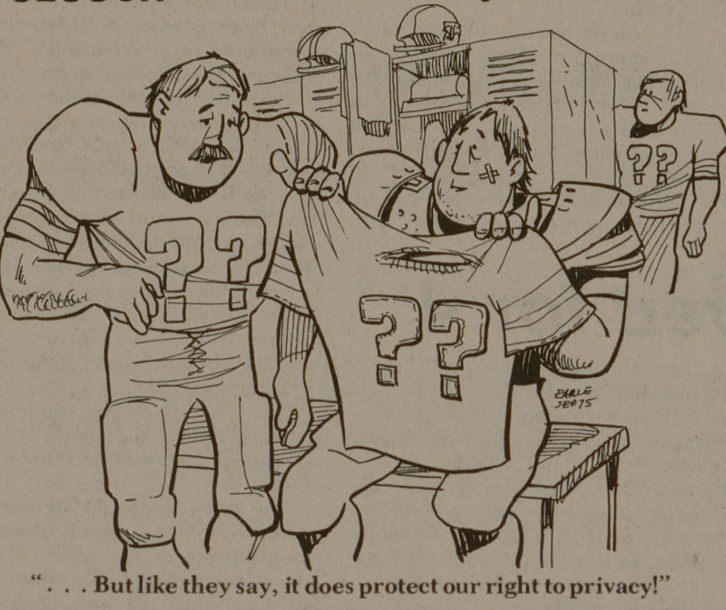
"They suggested we wait until we see what everybody thinks about the plan before we write ours," he said.

Whatley said the proposed federal rules do not apply to any criminal history information contained in announcements about fugitives or wanted persons, about original records such as police blotters, court records or judicial records, published court opinion, or records of traffic offenses.

"Nothing in these regulations prevents a criminal justice agency from disclosing to the public factual information concerning the status of an investigation, the apprehension, arrest, release or prosecution of an individual, the adjudication of charges, or the correctional status of an individual, which is reasonably contemporaneous with the event to which the information relates."

SLOUCH

By JIM EARLE



PEANUTS



The Battalion

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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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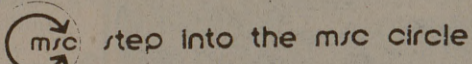
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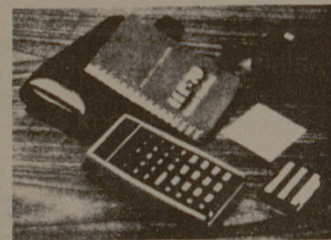
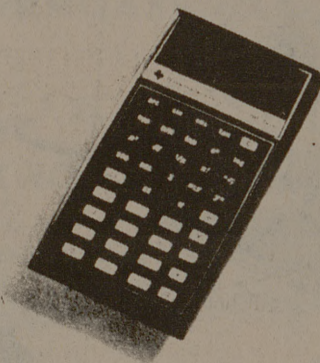
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