

Special Muster tribute

Next week Aggies from all over the world will be celebrating Aggie Muster, an event to honor all Aggies who have died the previous year. Despite the rampant use of traditions at A&M, here's one idea for revising the most honored of traditions — Muster — that should be taken seriously.

Professors at Texas A&M who die are not honored in any way for their time at this University. They are not recognized with Silver Taps ceremonies or at Muster, which have traditionally been reserved for students.

However, why not make Muster a chance to honor professors who've died after giving many years of service to this University and recognize their contribution at the Muster service on the main campus. The number of years as a professor could be debated, but say about 15 years teaching at A&M.

There would be few professors who could qualify for this type of recognition, so the time involved in adding this limited number to the ceremony would be minimal.

It could be a special tribute to a group who have given of themselves to make this University better.

— K.T.

Debating against what's his name

By ARNOLD SAWISLAK
United Press International

WASHINGTON — A study commissioned by the Twentieth Century Fund has recommended another round of televised debates for the 1980 presidential candidates.

Will it happen? It probably depends on whether the "What's his name?" rule of politics is in operation next year.

Simply stated, the rule says candidates should never help give opponents publicity. The rule was considered especially important when one candidate was well known and the other not.

The theory was that even an attack on an opponent could boomerang in the form of increased voter recognition for the opponent. "Call me anything you want to," says the politician in his critic. "Just be sure to spell my name right."

So established politicians, especially incumbent office holders, would go to extreme lengths to avoid even speaking their opponents' names.

The idea of appearing in public to debate an opponent was regarded as about as helpful to a campaign as a public flag-burning.

The Lincoln-Douglas debates of 1858 often are cited as the model for the presidential debates. Advocates of the "What's his name?" rule note that Sen. Stephen Douglas was the famous participant in those debates, but it was the relatively obscure Abraham Lincoln who ended up in the White House.

Mass communications, particularly television, has made it a lot easier for political unknowns to become known to the

electorate. Even so, some campaign managers still counsel against giving opponents free publicity and it was widely predicted after 1960 that John Kennedy would find reasons not to debate his 1964 opponent.

There were some efforts to set up debates in 1964, 1968 and 1972, but they bogged down in what appeared to be a morass of legal problems. More likely, at least in 1964 and 1972, was that Lyndon Johnson and Richard Nixon simply didn't want to give their opponents the national exposure of a debate setting.

Apart from all the legal hairsplitting, there always were loftier reasons given for an incumbent president to avoid debates.

One was that the chief executive would be put in an untenable position by having to discuss issues about which he possessed information that simply could not be disclosed, while his opponent could make all sorts of charges with a clear conscience.

Worse yet, there was the expressed concern that a president might get so caught up in the debate that he might let slip classified information.

In 1976, Gerald Ford, even though he was the incumbent president, agreed to debate Jimmy Carter. Ford did it because he had not been elected to the presidency and because he believed that with his experience in congressional give-and-take and his knowledge of government, he could blow Carter out of the water. Of course, that's not quite what happened, and Ford may even today be wishing he had found reasons to avoid debating "What's his name."

Giving bubbles bad name

By DICK WEST

WASHINGTON — To the extent that recent events at Three Mile Island can be said to have a positive side — millions of laymen now have a clearer picture of how nuclear power plants work.

Or don't work. Our week-long crash course in nuclear technology was enhanced by dozens of schematic drawings of the plant's innards — pipes running that way and this, little arrows pointing in sundry directions, captions everywhere.

The main thing we learned from the diagrams is that a reactor has a uranium core. When enough uranium is present to develop a chain reaction of fission, it is called a "critical mass."

If something untoward occurs, as at Three Mile Island, the "critical mass" changes into a "critical mess."

When that happens, the reactor starts blowing bubbles, much like the machine that provides the background for Lawrence Welk's "Champagne Music."

No state wants a bunch of radiated Lawrence Welkian bubbles floating around, especially a state that gave the world Fred Waring and the Pennsylvanians.

It therefore becomes important to learn what caused the Three Mile Island bubble

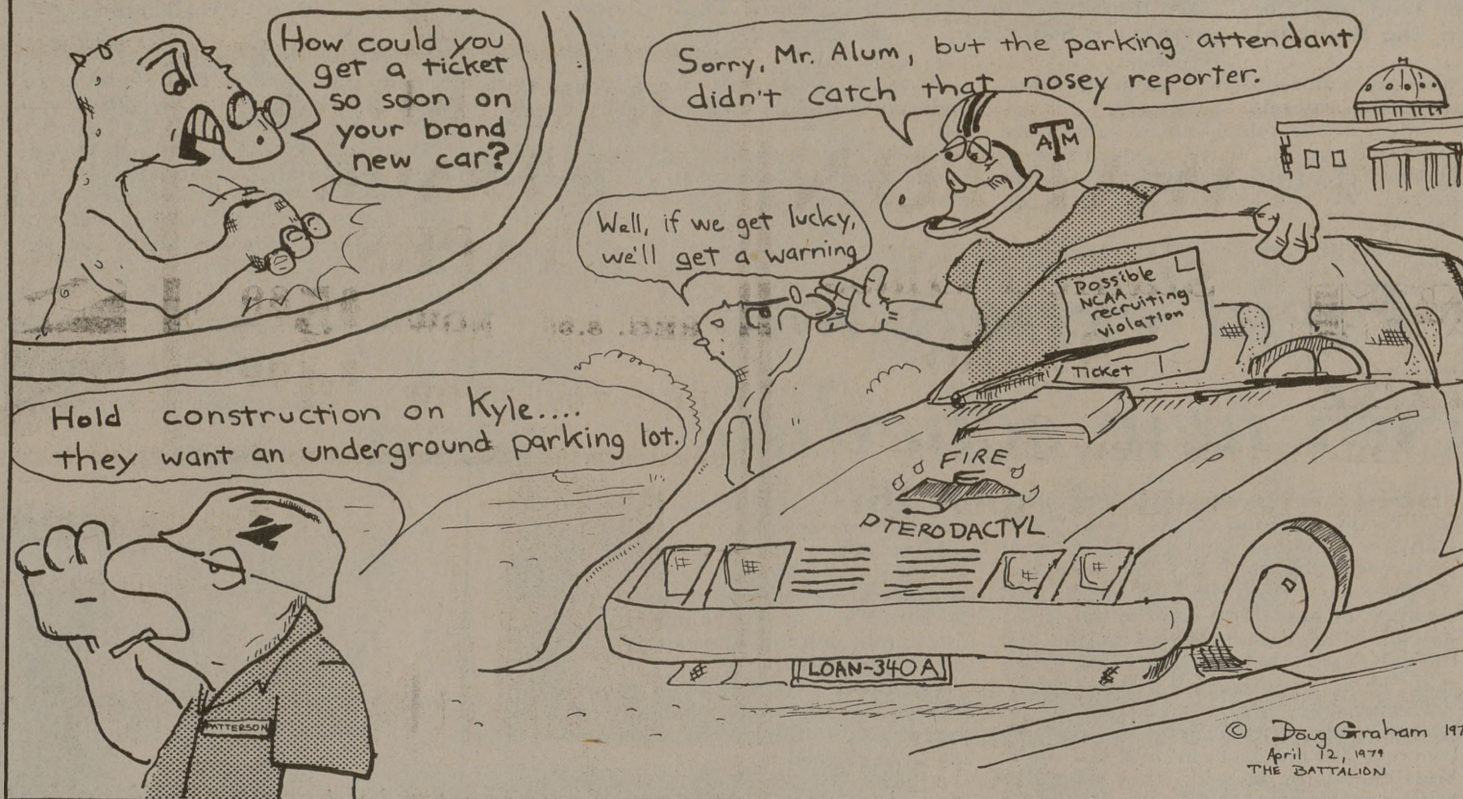
ing bubble baths. Attendance has dropped 50 percent at night clubs that feature bubble dancers. It's terrible. Virtually every phase of the bubble business has been hurt.

But he expressed confidence that congressional hearings will demonstrate that bubble power is here to stay.

"By harnessing the energy of bursting bubbles we could go a long way toward solving our fuel problems," he said.

"If a nuclear reactor can produce bubbles, there's no reason Lawrence Welk's bubble-maker couldn't generate electricity."

Thotz



By Doug Graham

Humor

and to find ways of preventing others from forming.

Toward that end, so many congressional committees are investigating nuclear power safety that a shortage of expert witnesses has developed. The waiting list, I understand, is such that one subcommittee is switching to an investigation of the bubble industry.

"Up to now, bubble production is this country has enjoyed a commendable safety record," an industry spokesman told me.

"Lawrence Welk's bubble machine has performed countless times without getting out of control, even when the band is playing polkas.

"The only accidents have been caused by bubble gum erupting prematurely and spreading over the nostrils of the chewers, thus impeding their breathing.

"To date, however, there have been no fatalities.

"Nevertheless, the Three Mile Island incident has created an anti-bubble backlash. All that publicity about the reactor bubble has made the public mistrustful of bubbles in general.

"Thousands of women have stopped tak-

Letters to the Editor

Test grading laziness inexcusable

Editor:

How would you feel if the last three tests you took had not been graded and returned? Perhaps not too badly if these were mere weekly quizzes.

How would you feel if these were major tests taken Feb. 27, March 22, April 5 and account for 40 percent of your final grade?

It seems to me that at a quality institute of higher learning only quality professors should be employed. Well, it seems that even Texas A&M's employment office workers take coffee breaks. How else could a "teacher" who is responsible for such inexcusable actions have slipped through the screening process?

How can a "teacher" sleep nights knowing that he has failed in his responsibility and duty to keep his students informed about where they stand in their course work? How can a "teacher" leave on a week-long trip to Hawaii leaving major duties such as these unperformed? How can a "teacher" expect anything but apathy from students when he himself is apathetic?

The purpose of this letter is not to salvage this course this semester. It is too late for that. I feel confident, however, that this "teacher" takes time to read the paper and hopefully I will trigger some stifled trace of humanity that will instigate a change in future semesters.

—Bill Hicks, '80

Round the reviewer

Editor:

Once again, the obvious lack of reading comprehension skills and/or unadulterated ignorance of these people who seem to persist in commenting on behalf of Victor Sylvia in regard to Duke Watson's past letter has left me totally bewildered.

Let me update the situation for you fortunate few who were not subjected to the punishment of reading these "letters." Mr. Watson wrote in suggesting that Mr.

Sylvia pay more attention to reviewing the actual album content of a given album, the new UFO album in this case, rather than attacking the music based on his impression of the band members, without even listening to the whole record!

Mr. Clossman, obviously with the wrong impression of Mr. Watson's letter, wrote in that Mr. Sylvia wrote a "great" review, even though he admitted Mr. Sylvia hadn't listened to the whole record.

Come now, Mr. Clossman. Mr. Clossman did, however, (bless his little soul) listen to the album and verified Mr. Sylvia's "knowledgeable" critique of the album. Who cares? The point is not how good or bad UFO can perform on record, but how bad Mr. Sylvia "objectively" reviews albums.

I thought Mr. Chasen's ensuing letter to this effect had finally cleared things up once and for all, but to my astonishment, I read yet another letter in Tuesday's Batt by a Mr. Mike Wardlow. Mr. Wardlow called Mr. Watson's letter "biased" and felt it was his right to pass judgement on Mr. Watson to the effect that Mr. Watson should resent Mr. Sylvia's name-calling attack on the UFO band as a personal attack on his own character solely because he listens to their music.

Really! When will you people finally realize that Mr. Watson had no intention of defending UFO, but rather of questioning Mr. Sylvia's "intelligent and humorous" (as Mr. Wardlow puts it) method of review. Any other attack on Mr. Watson's letter could, in my opinion, come only from (as Mr. Sylvia "intelligently and humorously" coined) quasi-humanoid characters and "slugs."

I would also like to take this opportunity to compliment Mr. Steve Lee's excellent review of the Shake Russell Band, who performed in the Basement Coffeehouse April 7-8.

Although not an album review, it has all the ingredients of what it takes to make a good review. If you have not read it yet,

Mr. Sylvia, I suggest you do — you might learn something.

—Rusty Conley, '79

Where's priority?

Editor:

When the school administration can declare a Friday holiday for the Texas-A&M football game, but not for Good Friday, something is wrong. I think with all of us.

—Joseph P. Newton, '81

Underground talent

Editor:

The Basement Committee should be applauded for bringing such fine talent as the Shake Russell Band to A&M this past weekend. Shake and company put on an excellent show, easily the best concert on campus this year.

My question is: Why can't Town Hall bring talented groups to A&M like the Basement does? The reasons can't be money, because A&M students proved they were willing to pay \$8 to see Boston. Of course, Town Hall does not have very good facilities (G. Rollie) to offer, but then again neither does the Basement.

But Town Hall has exclusive rights to use Rudder Theatre and Auditorium. It is too bad the Basement Committee cannot use Rudder Theatre because of this idiotic rule. Groups like Shake Russell and St. Elmo's Fire could easily fill the Theatre, as evidenced by the many people who could not get tickets to those concerts. Of course, Town Hall would not consider booking acts as talented as Shake Russell. Instead, they feed us England Dan etc.

Well, congratulations Basement Committee, and I'll be there in May when you bring Shake back for an encore.

—Frank Bruce, '79

TOP OF THE NEWS CAMPUS

Dr. Miller's mother dies

President Jarvis E. Miller's mother, Mrs. Ethel DuBose Miller, died Wednesday at her home in Orange Grove. Mrs. Miller, 78, had been in ill health. Funeral services will be conducted at 11 a.m. Friday at the First Methodist Church of Mathis. In lieu of flowers, the family has requested that donations be made to the Texas A&M Wesley Foundation of the Methodist Church or to the Friends of the Texas A&M University Library.

Women leaders' workshop set

A workshop for women student leaders is scheduled for Friday morning and next Wednesday afternoon. The program Friday begins at 8:30 and includes a panel discussion with current and former women leaders at Texas A&M University. Students may still register for the sessions with the director of student activities in Room 221 of the Memorial Student Center.

STATE

Legislator says trains a must

A Texas legislator presented congressmen copies of a resolution Wednesday in Washington urging Congress to reject recommendations to cut Texas passenger train service down to one train a day. The Department of Transportation has recommended eliminating two of the three daily Amtrak passenger trains serving Texas. Rep. Al Edwards, D-Houston, said trains are the most comfortable way to travel, serve many who are afraid to fly, can be competitive in price with other forms, and support many jobs in Texas. "The South and West are not interested in a rail system which only serves the Northeast," Edwards said. He held a news conference on the U.S. House steps Wednesday to dramatize his effort.

Nuclear plant may not get license

A meeting to consider licensing construction of Allens Creek nuclear power plant has been postponed indefinitely because of a Nuclear Regulatory Commission procedural error, a spokesman said Wednesday. The pre-hearing conference scheduled for next Wednesday was delayed because of questions about an NRC licensing board's exclusion of five petitioners from previous proceedings. Houston Lighting & Power Co. spokesman Jim Parsons decried the delay. Allens Creek, planned 45 miles west of Houston near Wallis, had completed much of the licensing process when in 1975 HLP shelved the project temporarily.

NATION

Blank tape may explain near-crash

Federal officials investigating the near-crash of a Boeing 727 jet that took a more than five-mile supersonic nose dive now have a second mystery — the erasure of a cockpit tape recording that might have helped explain what happened. Trans World Airlines said Tuesday it was not clear whether the 30-minute recording was erased by accident or on purpose. "I'm acknowledging the tape is blank," said TWA spokesman David Venz in New York. "How and why it's blank don't know. I think it's part of the investigation." The New York-to-Minneapolis flight, with 86 people aboard, suddenly yawed to the right while flying over Flint, Mich., rolled completely over twice and plunged toward the ground at a speed of 525 mph from an altitude of 39,000 feet. Pilot Harvey "Hoot" Gibson of Las Vegas, Nev., brought the craft under control and made an emergency landing at Detroit Metropolitan Airport in what Federal Aviation Administration called a "miracle." Three passengers suffered minor injuries.

Steel workers suspend strike

An 11-week-old strike against the Newport News Shipbuilding Co. will be suspended, a United Steel Workers official said Wednesday. Union Local 8888 organizer Jack Howar said the members will be asked to return to work Monday, pending a decision by the National Labor Relations Board on the shipyard's challenge of last year's union representation election won by the union. But there was no word on whether another USW local would end its long strike against the company. Union Local 8417, which represents several hundred designers, did not indicate whether it would end or suspend its 2-year-old strike against Virginia's largest private employer. Howar said Local 8888, which represents 15,500 blue collar workers, "is not ending the strike; we're just suspending it until the (NLRB) administrative law judge makes a decision on the chain-voting issue."

Tentative truckers pact praised

The Carter administration Wednesday praised a tentative contract settlement between 300,000 striking Teamsters union drivers and the trucking industry. It was reached late Tuesday night. The three-year contract — which ends a 10-day walkout and lockout by the industry — does not violate President Carter's voluntary 7 percent annual wage increase guidelines, an administration spokesman said. Rank-and-file drivers are expected to approve the proposal. Sources said it sets hourly wage hikes of 80 cents and 35 cents over the next three years. Drivers currently average \$9.45 to \$9.60 per hour. The agreement also provides additional health and pension benefits for the drivers who prepared to return to work in many areas Wednesday. The strike was especially hard on the auto industry, causing thousands of layoffs. The tentative agreement is subject to ratification by the union.

WEATHER

Sunny and warm with a high of 70 and a low of 50. Winds will be westerly at 10-15 mph.

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 Letters to the Editor, The Battalion, Room 216, Reed McDonald Building, College Station, Texas 77843.

Represented nationally by National Educational Advertising Services, Inc., New York City, Chicago and Los Angeles.

The Battalion is published Monday through Friday from September through May except during exam and holiday periods and the summer, when it is published on Tuesday through Thursday.

Mail subscriptions are \$16.75 per semester; \$33.25 per school year; \$35.00 per full year. Advertising rates furnished on request. Address: The Battalion, Room 216, Reed McDonald Building, College Station, Texas 77843.

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- ✓ Not exceed 300 words or 1800 characters in length.
- ✓ Be neatly typed whenever possible. Hand-written letters are acceptable.
- ✓ Include the author's name, address and telephone number for verification.

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- Typed triple space
- Limited to 60 characters per line
- Limited to 100 lines