

Local

Lawyer gets Aggie briefing

By JENNIFER AFFLERBACH
Battalion Staff
While advising students of legal alternatives to their problems, the new student legal advisor at Texas A&M University is getting briefed himself, on Aggie traditions.

Dan Usiak, who was hired a month ago to assist Jim Locke, the Student Legal Advisor, said he is not entirely familiar with the traditions at Texas A&M.

"Something will come up where I'll have to ask one of the secretaries what's going on," he said. Usiak was puzzled, for instance, the week freshmen cadets walked around campus wearing makeshift spurs fashioned from bottle caps. He was asking, "Why are the cadets' shoes making funny noises?"

The "spurs" on cadets' shoes are traditionally worn before the football game against Southern Methodist University, whose mascot is the Mustang.

But the Aggie mug on the desk in his still slightly bare office is proof of his newfound loyalty.

He is supportive of the Texas A&M student body as well.

"The students are great," he said. "A lot of them are real happy to go through the motions it takes to solve their legal problems and that's real encouraging. It shows a lot of motivation on their part."

This is Usiak's first full-time job since graduating from the University of Houston law school in May. He clerked for four different Houston law firms while attending law school, he said. He took the Texas state bar exam in July and is awaiting the results.

The most common problem Usiak has dealt with so far is landlord-tenant disputes. He said he also sees a lot of students interested in their legal alternatives concerning car wrecks, traffic tickets and arrests for public intoxication.

A more optimistic case he handled concerned a student possibly receiving an \$8,000 inheritance.

Since he joined the staff, Usiak said, the backlog for an appointment with a legal advisor has been reduced to about a three-day wait, "but I'm sure we'll never completely catch up."

He cannot give advice to a student

who wants to take action against another student. In addition, the student legal advisors do not provide actual court representation except in consumer protection cases, such as a serious landlord-tenant case. And then representation is limited to Brazos County.

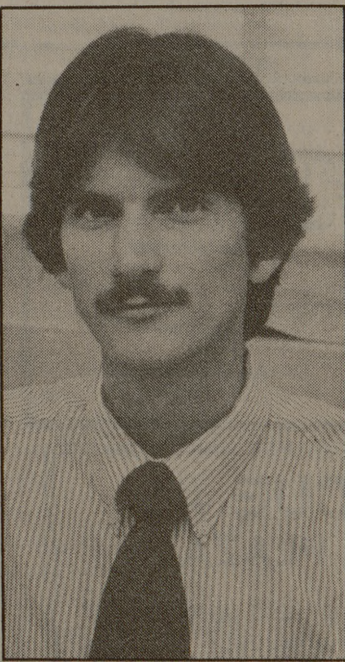
He can, however, write letters for students, advise them on going to small claims court, and put them in touch with an attorney.

Counseling students is an important and satisfying part of the job, Usiak said.

"A lot of times, it just helps if they get a chance to tell somebody," he said. "Some people come up here and say 'Well, this happened to me. I want to know what my legal rights are.'"

"While we really can't do anything for them, they've gone out a lot less frustrated than when they came in just not knowing where they stood."

Usiak has one counseling tip displayed on a plaque in his office. It reads in Latin: "Illegitimi non carborundum," which Usiak translated as "Don't let the bastards get you down."



Dan Usiak

Safari to 'Remember the Alamo' set Saturday for photographers

The MSC Camera Committee still has openings for the San Antonio photo safari Saturday.

Up to 40 people can take the bus trip to see San Antonio's river walk, zoo, missions, Sunken Gardens and the Alamo. On-the-scene seminars, conducted by photographers from Bryan-College Station and San Antonio, will examine architecture photography, available light photography, wildlife photography, flash photography and outdoor portraiture.

Cost of the trip is \$5 for committee members and \$7 for other Texas A&M University students and faculty. That price covers transportation cost. Individuals must provide their own film, camera equipment and food.

Chairman Ed Martinez said students may visit restaurants along the river between seminars.

People may sign up in the Student Programs Office in the MSC. Payment is required at time of sign-up.

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Travel planning European tour

By MARY ANN HINNANT
Battalion Reporter

The MSC Travel Committee has planned another excursion for Aggies who want to see the world without joining the navy. The European Grand tour will begin May 20 with the first stop in Greece and from there the tour will continue on to Italy, Switzerland, Austria, Germany and ending June 15 in France.

The price for the tour is \$1499 and includes transportation to and from airports, all hotel accommodations, sightseeing, continental breakfast, dinner each night except while in Paris and Rome and all service charges and gratuities. Due to the variances in airfares from now until May, the airfare for the tour will not be known until one month prior to

departure when flight reservations are made.

Five people have already signed up for the tour and paid the required \$500 deposit. Anyone interested in going may sign up in the Student Programs Office in the MSC. Students have from now until one month before the tour leaves to sign up so that they will have a flight reservation.

The travel committee needs at least 22 people to sign up for the tour and will take as many people as there is space. In previous years Texas A&M has offered European trips in conjunction with other schools, but this trip will be only for Aggies if the 22 people needed sign up. If not, the committee will seek out students from other schools to fill the space.

Preservation group to see Dallas project

The Citizens for Historic Preservation (CHP) will meet at 7 tonight in the City National Bank meeting room to see a slide presentation on restoration of Swiss Avenue in Dallas.

The program will be given by

Mustie Roller of Austin and Judy Dooley of Dallas.

A special student membership is available for CHP. For more information contact Dr. Rand Evans, 845-6027, or Dr. Paul Van Riper, 845-2525.

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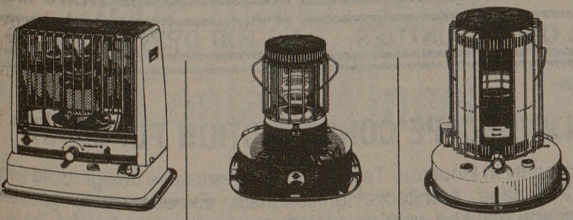
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