

Are bum steer awards good bull?

Every year, Texas Monthly magazine gives Bum Steer awards for odd deeds and misdeeds performed and perpetuated by Texans throughout the previous year. In the January issue of Texas Monthly, Texas A&M was awarded seven of the somewhat du-

Bay of Pigs

by Kathy Doyle
Battalion reporter

Texas A&M got a "bum deal" from Texas Monthly magazine, says Dr. Daniel M. Bragg of the Texas A&M Center for Strategic Technology.

The Strategic center was the target of one of the 1983 Bum Steer awards in the January issue of Texas Monthly.

The magazine reported that the Strategic Center sent the U.S. Defense Department an "unsolicited plan for the invasion of Cuba."

Bragg, assistant director of the Strategic Center, said that the award was either a deliberate spoof against Texas A&M, or the result of misinformation received by the staff of Texas Monthly.

Bragg said staff apparently misunderstood the content of the report "Cobalt: Strategic Alternatives for Supply," written by Dr. Richard E. Thomas, director of the Center for Strategic Technology, and Mark Gamache, a graduate student.

The report listed possible sources of cobalt, a silvery metal that, when alloyed with steel, makes it resistant to abrasion, corrosion and high temperatures. Bragg said cobalt was identified as strategic because the cobalt-steel alloy is used to make jet turbine engine blades.

Bragg said that since the U.S. supply of cobalt would last only one year in the event of war, it must look for outside sources to be transported into the United States.

One of the richest deposits of cobalt mentioned in Thomas' report is in Zaire, Africa, Bragg said, but Zaire does not have a landing strip large enough to accommodate the CX transport.

Bragg said that for these and other reasons the report suggested the Defense Department look into the world's largest cobalt deposit, which is in Cuba.

Although Thomas' report did not mention an invasion of Cuba, it did suggest that the United States "take appropriate measures to deny the Soviets a base for military operations only 90 miles from the United States coast."

Invasion or not, Bragg said the report was in earnest, and that the article in Texas Monthly was "misleading to say the least."

"Texas A&M is a favorite target of spoofs from the staff of Texas Monthly," he said.

Retaliating would have been like having a "spitting contest," Bragg said, since the magazine would ultimately have last word.

Nevertheless, Thomas did retaliate in a letter to the "Roar of the Crowd" department of Texas Monthly magazine. In his letter, dated Jan. 14, Thomas referred to the "shocking falsehood" contained in the article. He also wrote: "Your Bum Steer Award does a disservice to your readers, this institution and to the individuals and agencies which support the Center for Strategic Technology."

Heeerrre's Jackie



Jackie Sherrill's hiring received nearly as much publicity as the signing of the Treaty of Versailles, the Nazi invasion of Poland and the bombing of Pearl Harbor. But the events which transpired after Sherrill received his mega-buck contract weren't nearly as drastic as these earth-rattling incidents connected

with World War I and World War II.

Or were they? Lots of Aggies thought so after seeing the Aggies begin the 1982 season with losses.

And as a result, Sherrill received the bummiest of the Texas Monthly "Bum Steer Awards" — a No. 1 tribute to his season that wasn't what some people thought it was cracked up to be. Sherrill, however, didn't even know that he'd been honored with Texas Monthly's biggie.

"The what?" he said with a laugh before hitting the road for a recruiting trip this week. "The Bum Steer Award? What's that? Is it supposed to be good or bad? If I knew what it was, I'd make a comment about it. Bring me a copy of it and I'll make a comment about it."

We'll be sure to do that, Jackie.

bious honors, including THE Bum Steer Award of 1983.

Battalion reporters approached the recipients of the seven Texas A&M awards to find out their reactions to the honor.

From "Texas Monthly should be renamed Texas Enquirer and sold on the newsstand," to "The Bum Steer award? What's that?" the responses were many and varied.

But if you read on, we think you'll agree that Texas Monthly deserves one of their own Bum Steer awards for misrepresenting Texas A&M five out of seven times.

Bogus guacamole

by Joel deGuzman
Battalion reporter

Once again, the annual Texas Monthly Bum Steer Awards have a little more "bull" about the Aggies.

One entry in this year's list of dubious honors concerns guacamole made of peas instead of avocados. Without any further information, even the most maroon-blooded Aggie would chuckle after reading this. But there's more to this tale than meets the tongue.

The original entry in the January issue of Texas Monthly says "Students in a food science and technology course at Texas A&M have developed

guacamole made from English peas."

But actually, the guacamole isn't made of peas — its main ingredient is squash — and only one person in the food science class actually developed the stuff.

The 1983 Bum Steer award was given to a project developed by Ann Whitely in 1976 for Food Science and Technology 446.

Dr. Edward E. Burns, who has taught the course for the last 26 years, was not surprised to see that a student from his class had received mention in this year's awards.

"We've been in (the magazine) before," Burns said, "they are just looking for

something newsworthy and humorous."

Whitely's project was entitled, "Synthetic Guacamole."

The text of her project stated that high food prices and the quick browning aspect of the avocado prompted the creation of a substitute for the tropical treat.

In her report, Whitely concluded that her recipe for synthetic guacamole was not perfect. Certain problems with consistency prevented commercial production.

It seems that one of this year's Bum Steer award's took a wrong turn on the way to publication.

Good and bad bull

by Dena L. Brown
Battalion staff

Texas Monthly magazine has admitted that maybe — just maybe — they have been wrong about the Aggies all these years.

Of the seven "1983 Bum Steer" awards given to Texas A&M, three are listed under the title, "Maybe we've been wrong about the Aggies...all these years..."

So what, according to TM, has Texas A&M done *right* this time?

Scholastic Aptitude Test scores for freshmen at Texas A&M are higher than those of any other public university in the state. Also, TM listed the Bryan Public Library as having the highest ratio in the nation of books checked out per population it serves.

Now for the bad news. The Aggies blew it under the next headline which says, "...Then again, maybe not."

Unfortunately, the Association of Former Students produced a 1982 calendar that had two Junes, two Julys, two Augusts, two Septembers and completely left out April, May, October and November.

Usually Texas Monthly gets the information about these and other Bum Steers from a compilation of bizarre or humorous newspaper clippings and press releases that are sent to Texas Monthly throughout the year.

A group effort is made by the Bum Steer Award staff to come up with the headlines and humorous entries and fact checkers go through the nominations to make sure the infor-

mation is correct.

Pat Booker, a fact checker for Texas Monthly, said the SAT story came from an article in the Houston Chronicle that was published after the fall of 1981.

The Texas A&M Director of Admissions, Bill Lay, said the SAT information is correct and that the average score on SAT's for freshmen at Texas A&M is always above the national average.

The article about Bryan libraries came from a syndicated newspaper column, Booker said.

Clara Mounce, librarian for the Bryan Public Library, said the ratio used for Bryan by Texas Monthly, however, could not have been the highest in 1982.

Mounce said she thought the information came from the "Places Rated Almanac," an

almanac which listed Bryan as having the highest reading quotient — the number of books checked out added to the number of books in the library, then divided by population.

Information on the calendar came from a calendar that was sent to Texas Monthly, Booker said.

Randy Matson, Executive Director for the Association of Former Students, said that he has no idea where the mixed-up calendar came from.

In 1982, he said, out of the 110,000 calendars printed, only 20 or 30 — compared to the 50 or 100 of past years — were put together crooked or with pages missing.

Matson said, "I felt better about this calendar than any one we've done."



The second annual Texas A&M Bad Bull awards.....