

Opinion

For the best deal, mark ballots for I(b)

The University Center needs money.

Since 1973, the fee to raise revenue for upkeep of the complex has stayed at just \$10 per student. For that amount, each one of Texas A&M's 36,000 students gets a share in the Memorial Student Center and the University Center Complex — a place to eat, meet, be entertained or just hang out.

But that \$10 doesn't even begin to cover the expenses of maintaining the facilities needed to serve the student body. In the last ten years, expenses have escalated due to the rapid growth of enrollment, rising costs of maintenance, legislature-mandated salary increases, and the impact of inflation.

Item I(b) on the ballot in the student elections would give the center the money it needs by doubling the amount of student financial support it currently receives. The proposal would up the fee to \$20 over the next three years. Of the added \$10, \$6 would go to the University Center and \$4 would be put in a reserve fund.

The reserve fund will theoretically provide for more student input into the University Center services by providing a source of money for student

priorities. The Student Senate and student leaders from the MSC Council, Off-Campus Aggies, Residence Hall Association, International Students Association and the Corps of Cadets have voiced their support of the proposal.

The referendum may provide for greater student input into the administration of the University Center. Then again, it may not.

Students have never had much of an opportunity to participate in the management of the University Center. This proposal may not be strong enough to turn that around.

But even though student leaders may be overly optimistic about the administrative effects the proposal will have, students at Texas A&M should at least make the gesture of supporting Item I(b). Student input or not, the University Center needs funds.

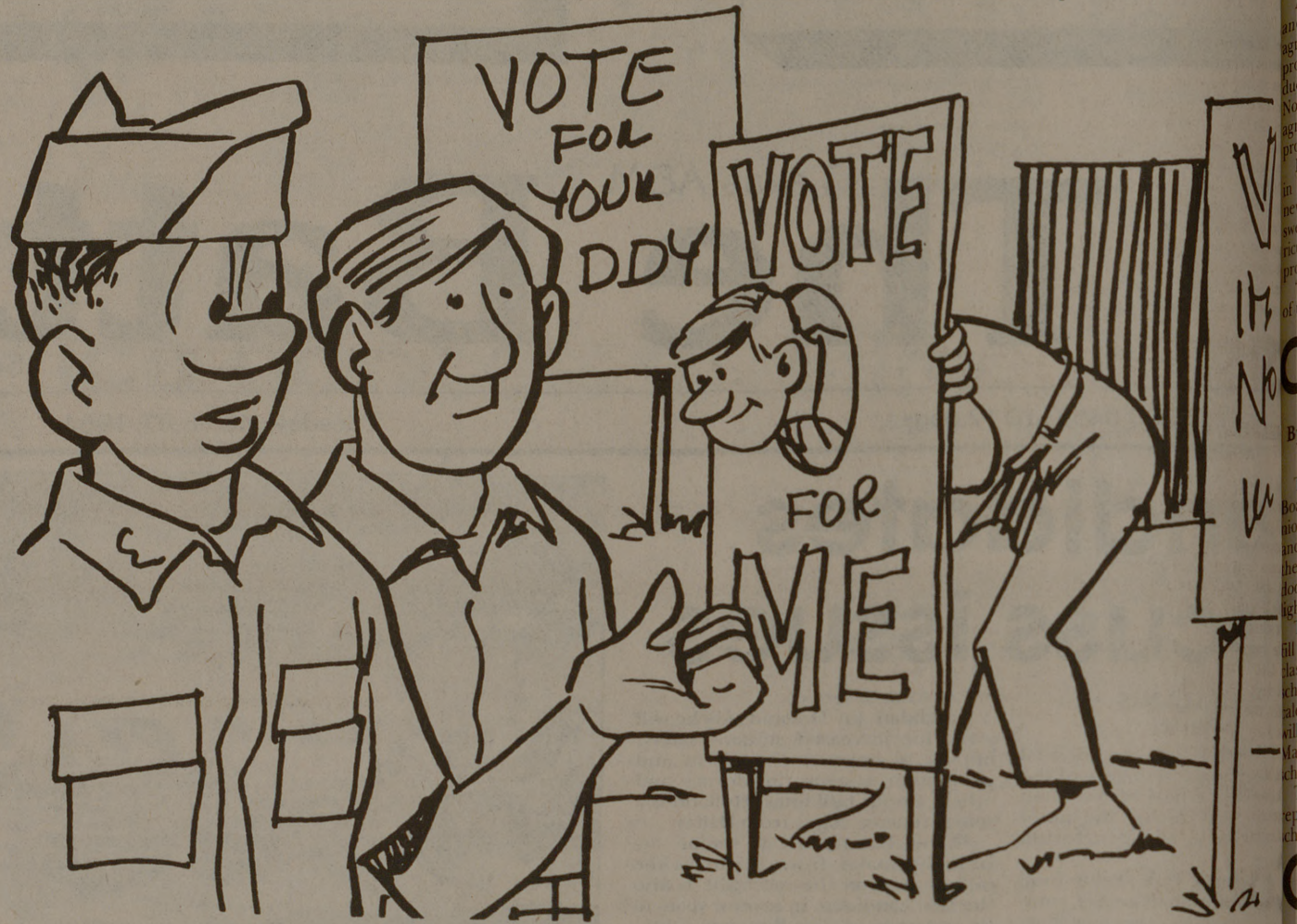
If it's a choice between a \$20 fee to support a top-notch facility with a minimum of student input and a \$10 fee for the current overcrowded, under-budgeted facility, the \$20 fee would still be the most logical pick.

With Item I(b), students will get their money's worth.

— The Battalion Editorial Board

Slouch

by Jim Earle



"If he wants to be elected that bad, maybe we should vote for him."

Demand more; you'll get more

"Student Government is a farce."
"Student Government doesn't do anything."

That's been a common phrase among students in the past few years, and it has provided a convenient excuse for students who didn't vote in student elections.

Student government is a farce — if we let it be.

But at a school with about 36,000 students, it doesn't have to be.

This year's student elections are vital — and we as students need to realize it. Only about 4,600 students voted in

— such as the statewide referendum on the Permanent University Fund in November — are of vital importance to the University.

Because these issues will be so important in the coming year, we have to be alert and concerned about our student leadership. We need to elect informed leaders who are willing to take stands.

In the past, we've seen the Student Senate pass bills on such issues as eating during meetings and spend hours debating whether to debate a resolution. These types of behavior have contributed to a poor image of Student Government.

Slow response to the senior final exemptions issue this year and a potential misunderstanding of the Faculty Senate have hampered Student Government's effectiveness. Because the Student Senate is merely an advisory board, some people feel the administration doesn't take the group seriously.

But to some extent, the fault lies as much with the student body as with the leaders. We seem to have a misguided view of representation. We elect student leaders to take stands. But when they don't take a stand, we don't pitch a fit because they're not representing us.

And that's our fault.

They can't always run back and take polls to find out what students think — even if students know about the issue in question. We need to let our leaders know that we expect action from them even if we aren't completely aware of everything involved in a situation.

After we elect them to represent us, they should be able to stand up and say, "We have 36,000 students with us." You can't tell me that won't get some sort of response.

The first step is simply to vote. But it doesn't stop there. We have to continually let our leaders know that we expect more from them than debate about debate.

Rebeca Zimmermann is editor of The Battalion and a senior journalism major.

Letters

15-hour rule unfair

Editor:
The Battalion is a source of news for students, and in a sense a forum for discussion of ideas and topics related to students' life.

Therefore, I would like to bring up an issue of interest to at least a few of the top-notch students here: the rule requiring a minimum of 15 credit hours for students eligible for the Dean's Honor List and other honors.

This requirement probably originated because the majority of students were taking 15 credit hours each semester.

According to University regulations a fulltime student must take at least 12 credit hours per semester. Yet this is not enough to qualify a straight-A student for the Dean's Honor List.

Some students make all A's and still are not eligible for honors. It appears to me this rule adds unnecessary pressure on those who like to do excellent work and learn more.

It would interest me to know how many other universities have similar requirements.

One of the reasons so many students do not perform well is because of unnecessary hardships imposed on them, such as short time schedules or too many credit hours each semester.

When advising students, I have always encouraged them to take fewer

courses per semester, enjoy these beautiful years in their life and do better as far as grades are concerned.

The 15-credit hours minimum rule is contrary to my philosophy.

George Raczowski
Associate Professor,
Mechanical Engineering

What price victory?

Editor:
This statement is addressed to Texas A&M Board of Regents Chairman H.R. "Bum" Bright: Well, "Bum", we had a losing football team, so you bought a coach; we still have a losing football team (their record last season was not all that good).

Is that why you bought the Dallas Cowboys - to replace the Aggie football team?

Matthew Simpson
Class of '84

Investigate parking

Editor:
Well, Ms. Oates, you hit the nail on the head. We definitely have a towing alert.

Instead of rambling a repeat of Campus Cop ideology and the University Motor Vehicle Regulations, why not kick up some journalistic dust about this less than new problem? I don't expect

this publication to read like the Morning News, but it would be interesting to see a staff writer take on the establishment.

It wouldn't have taken that much search to find out how long it's been since the lethargic Board of Regents have reviewed a solution to this (which isn't correcting itself and asking the register over at the stationing in the profit.)

Here's the kicker: 250 cars towed month alone. We have to hand it to them. They're doing their job charging college students a minimum ten dollars for driving across campus (and we do keep wreckers on campus times).

Frank Kalimec (owner of Aggie) you're reading this, I've come in with one of your ten-dollar leeches and as an Aggie I can't say what happens to your business.

I can say to the KK that you're hurting either, at ten dollars a pop, talizing on the situation further by bringing out your fleet of ticket toters everything standing still (driving new Bronco II's, no less). Once law enforcement must be highly challenging.

Ms. Oates, if you think you're analist enough to tackle it, I'd say you found your calling. Remember the pen.

Ken Ho
Class of '84

Failure of prayer amendment upholds Constitutional freedoms

The first amendment begins by stating, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof."

Apparently the majority of Senators feel this portion of the constitution needs amending, however, for 56 voted in favor of an amendment authorizing "voluntary" prayer in public schools. This was shy of the necessary two-thirds needed, no thanks to our Senators Tower and Bentsen who voted for it.

There are several reasons that the amendment failed. For one thing, organized prayer in front of a captive audience is not considered by everyone to be purely voluntary. The alternative to captivity, letting the children who offended leave the room, would cause stigmatization and divisiveness. Moreover, such a practice that so obviously caters to only a portion of the students has no place in the curriculum of a public school.

Furthermore, I question the motives of those who are so fervently calling for such an amendment. Although they claim that all they want to do is allow children the right to pray, the fact is that the children have always been able to do so as long as they didn't disrupt class-

room activities. It seems to me that these proponents want something more. They want to spread their religion to children who would otherwise not be exposed to it.

My claim is supported by some of the statements these people use in defense of their view. They regularly associate everything from increasing juvenile

writing the prayers, but that would result in no real difference.

Something else which is often said is that a little prayer never hurt anybody. Jerry Falwell says he participated in prayers while in school and that it hurt him. I will let the reader decide that for himself, but seriously, religiously insignificant aspects of a religion can lead to divisiveness. Just look at the continued fighting between Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland and between different Islamic sects in the Middle East.

Any prayer that is likely to be meaningful would certainly lead to divisiveness, while one that would be accepted to all would have to be so bland that it would be essentially meaningless.

I have to agree with Dr. Maples, pastor of the First Baptist Church of Bryan who wrote that a far better answer is to let religious groups have access to facilities before or after school just any other group. Anything more involves the school in "establishing a religion," while anything less is to inhibit the free expression thereof.

Brian Ste
Class of '84



rebeca zimmermann

last year's election. But if you didn't vote, you have no room to criticize Student Government. Unless we let our leaders know that we expect things from them, life will go on as it has.

We as students must put aside our apathy. We need to tell our leaders that we care about what happens to this University. We need to help set Texas A&M on the right track for its growing up process.

Texas A&M is having some growing pains: student fee increases, parking crises, the emergence of the Faculty Senate and talk about a core curriculum for all students. These issues and others

The Battalion
USPS 045 360

Member of
Texas Press Association
Southwest Journalism Conference

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Reader's Forum columns and guest editorials also are welcome. Address all inquiries to the Editorial Page Editor.

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