

Silver Taps a lasting Aggie tradition

As Texas A&M grows and changes, many of the cherished traditions of its military days are coming under fire. Bonfire, hazing, the "no hats in Kyle Field" rule, keeping off the MSC grass, the long-standing rivalry with t.u. — all have been criticized as being archaic or unnecessary.

But some traditions are immune to criticism. Silver Taps, the farewell ceremony for students who have died, is one of them.

The Battalion Editorial Board thanks all the students who took time out last night to bid farewell to Harris Jay Harlan, Michael Raymond Ludrick, Elizabeth Ann Reeves, Glenn Curtis House and Peggy Lois Kapchinski Drozd.

As Texas A&M has grown, the personal impact of the ceremony has decreased. A student body of 36,000 is a far cry from the all-male, all-military, close-knit group that originally gathered for Silver Taps.

But even though many of the students at the ceremony didn't know

these Aggies personally, the fact that they joined the crowd that gathered silently in front of the Academic Building shows that Silver Taps still has meaning.

Due to an oversight, the outside lights on the central campus were not turned off as usual. For once, students were able to see, in the eerie half-light, the faces — many of them teardrop-streaked — of friends and fellow students, the solemnity of the Ross Volunteers and the shadows of the buglers on the rotunda of the Academic Building.

Those who knew the ones who are gone remembered them. Those who didn't still felt a sense of loss.

The grief, and the sympathy for others' grief, expressed through Silver Taps binds Aggies together like no other tradition. This one should last as long as the school does — or at least as long as Aggies are willing to take a few minutes on the first Tuesday of a month to honor their fallen comrades.

— The Battalion Editorial Board



GIRL SCOUT COOKIES! WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO DO, KILL ME?

Letters

Relocate monument

Editor:
This letter is in response to the recent controversy surrounding the location of the West Gate War Memorial.

Since the Board of Regents in its infinite wisdom took such great time and care (maybe 30 minutes) in deciding on the location of the new Albritton Tower and looking at the subsequent problems (i.e., the relocation of the War Memorial) of that location, I feel that it is up to us — the students, faculty, and former students — to decide on an appropriate location for the War Memorial.

We feel that the most appropriate spot is right where it was originally. But since we did nothing to prevent this desecration, this site is no longer possible (or is it?).

However, we feel that the next most appropriate spot is on the east side of the Memorial Student Center, right where the Planned for the Future (whatever that means) statue stands.

We feel that this spot, on memorial grounds, is a proper spot for the War Memorial. It should not be left sitting in some construction lot.

A fitting place for it must be found now — not in six months, but now.

The Planned for the Future statue could be located in front of the YMCA Building or the Regent's Board Room so that they can look at it and remember why they were hired — to make this University a great place for the students.

If people feel that the Planned for the Future statue should stand where it is, we accept that. But at the very least, the

War Memorial should be placed right there on the same grass, next to it.

Paul A. Griffith, Jr., '85
Squadron 4

Editor's note: This letter was accompanied by 22 signatures.

Visitation rules archaic

Editor:
I feel it is time something is done about one of the most archaic rules at Texas A&M, restricted visitation.

Yes, in 1984 there is still a public university in the United States with restricted visitation hours for members of the opposite sex. Now, I can understand why colleges like Baylor or Notre Dame might feel this policy is necessary, but I cannot understand why a public university aspiring to world class would.

If you agree that restricted visitation is outdated and would like to see it changed, don't just think about it. Do something. Start a petition. Stop your Resident Adviser, Head Resident, or Area Coordinator and mention it to them. Write a letter to the editor.

Nothing will change if no one does anything to change it. The students here hold a lot of unused power. Ags, it's your University. Make it what you will.

Kevin Klein
Aston Hall

Editor's note: This letter was accompanied by five other signatures.

Health Center praised

Editor:
Recently I was confined to the living quarters of the A.P. Beutal Health Center for five days.

I entered with skepticism about what really went on at the "Quack Shack." Upon arrival, I received my own room with a fairly decent TV, a relatively private bath and many wonderful nurses.

Every three hours the nurses would come and talk with me and see how I was doing. They kept me posted on my condition at all times.

I know they must have found it difficult to deal with all the patients, but deal with us they did. At all times they maintained the highest degree of professionalism and courtesy. The little added things like a snack or something to drink at any hour made me feel right at home.

I would like to commend them on their outstanding performance and I sincerely hope they make all the patients feel as happy and comfortable as they made me feel during my stay.

Rick Lockett
Class of '86

Thanks for Big Event

Editor:
The Big Event was a great event. I witnessed only that part going on at St. Thomas Episcopal Church, but on the basis of this observation alone it is easy to conclude that it was a success. Congratulations and many thanks to all who participated!

Nelson Duller

Fee increases give students the shaft

Thanks to the tireless efforts of the Texas A&M System Board of Regents, students enrolling in the University will once again be shelling out more money in the way of fees. This is due, in no small part, to the across-the-board increases passed by the regents March 27.

True, the increases may be justified, but the whole episode makes a person stop and wonder. While the regents say the increases are the result of operating

The board also passed a 6 percent increase in residence hall rates from last year. A big jump? Not hardly when you consider rooms in men's dorms which averaged \$309 per semester four years ago now average \$572. That's an 85 percent increase.

But the one that takes the cake is the increase in parking permits. A sticker for a female dorm student or a male dorm student with at least 60 hours of credit will be \$15 in 1980. Next fall the price will be \$78 for that same piece of red plastic with the adhesive on the front — a ridiculous 420 percent increase.

If the increases are needed then they are needed. But the problem lies in the Texas A&M has been behind the times in fee assessment — students have been getting off relatively cheap. The regents, realizing this, decided it was time to play catch-up.

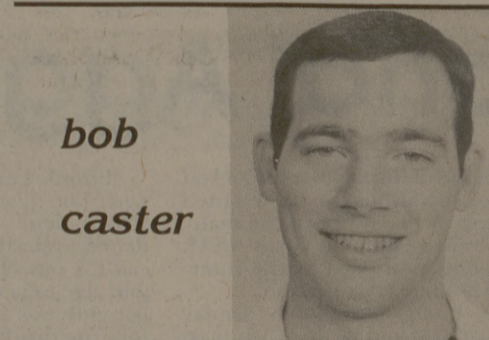
But they're not going to get caught up in one semester.

What they're doing is a grave injustice to the students enrolling next fall. Those students will be picking up the tab for the ones who have already graduated. Instead, the fee increases should be carried out in small increments spread over a period of several years.

But it seems that the regents and administration should have had the foresight to plan ahead for cost increases and likewise, should have taken the time and effort to arrive at a better solution to the problem.

That type of action may have resulted in a fair and more equitable deal for the students — most of whom have not had income increases over the last four years. And remember, most scholarships don't come with cost of living increases.

Bob Caster is a senior journalism major and senior sports writer for The Battalion.



bob
caster

costs and inflation, why does the poke at the pocketbook come all at once?

It seems that most eyebrows are being raised at fee hikes in three main areas: room, board and parking — the big three.

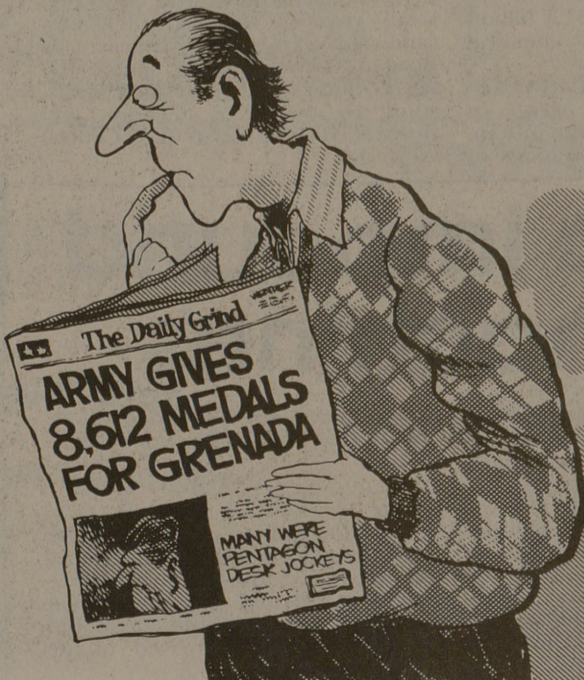
It's true that inflation and cost of living increases hit everyone in the pocketbook, even large state universities. So it's only natural that student fees go up occasionally, or once a year as is the case at Texas A&M. But take a look at the increases in room, board and parking over the last four years — when the 1984 seniors were just arriving at Texas A&M.

The regents passed a modest 5 percent average increase in board plan rates. Not bad? Four years ago the cost for seven-day board plan was \$501. Next fall it will be up to \$658 — a 31 percent increase. The five-day plan will increase 36 percent from four years ago.

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...AND THIS ONE'S FOR KEEPING THE MEDIA AWAY, AND THIS ONE'S FOR KEEPING THE WORLD SAFE FOR DIPLOMA MILLS, AND THIS.....



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The Battalion also serves as a laboratory newspaper for students in reporting, editing and photography classes within the Department of Communications.

Letter Policy

Letters to the Editor should not exceed 300 words in length. The editorial staff reserves the right to edit letters for style and length but will make every effort to maintain the author's intent. Each letter must be signed and must include the address and telephone number of the writer.

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

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