

## Words can ease pain of death

Thursday afternoon The Battalion Editorial Board started out to write a light editorial. The Creamery will soon stop selling ice cream, and the ice cream loving members of the Board were mad. But once again the light news lost all importance with a single phone call.

Saturday we heard of the death of a Texas A&M student in a motorcycle accident. Wednesday we buried one of our own. Thursday the call came; another Aggie had died.

Cadet Bruce Goodrich of Outfit F-1 died Thursday afternoon. Goodrich was a sophomore who transferred from a Community College in New York to the Texas A&M Corps of Cadets. He had just a few short days at Texas A&M. Saturday's football game would have been his first as a member of the Twelfth Man. His first Silver Taps Tuesday will be his own.

Death is something that newspaper staffs deal with every day. When the report comes in from Kansas, or Mexico or across the globe, it isn't supposed to bother a journalist, but when the dateline reads College Station it's impossible not to be affected.

Yes, we're journalists, but more importantly we are people.

When Bryan Eagle reporter and former Battalion staff member Dan Puckett was working on the obituary for The Battalion's editor Bill Robinson, he told one staff member he felt like a media vulture.

Puckett was not a vulture. And neither is Battalion reporter Dainah Bullard, who worked feverishly Thursday evening trying to write an obituary for Goodrich.

The preacher at Robinson's funeral said, "No words can ease the pain nor the sorrow we all feel."

The preacher was only partially right. Words cannot make the pain go away. But they give those who are left behind a final piece, another memory to dearly hold on to. As friends and family gathered around Robinson's grave, his mother clutched the copy of The Battalion with Bill's obituary.

Words do make a difference.

Words last beyond the drive to the cemetery. They last past the hugs and tears. After normal routines resume, words remain to be read over and over again.

So maybe these words and the words in the obituaries that have been in The Battalion this past week, even if they won't ease the pain now, will someday yield a memory. A memory of a smiling face — a son or grandson lost.

— The Battalion Editorial Board

## College students face vital national issues

### reader's forum

As Americans, we are privileged to live in a democracy, one of the best forms of government on earth. But we take this for granted, assuming that the freedom we have always known will remain intact regardless of what we do, or rather, don't do.

We have become apathetic toward our government. Voting, the part of the system that makes this a participatory democracy, has become a victim of apathy.

The social group that traditionally has had the worst record for voting is the American youth. The fact that young people are poorly represented is unfortunate, since the policies that affect the economy and international relations ultimately have the greatest impact on youth.

In an economic slump, college students have little hope of finding a good job. Young people with little training have even less hope.

If the United States is forced into war, young people are called on to defend the country.

Either situation is less than desirable. So what will we do to see that our interests are protected? The record of the past indicates that we will do little. But does our lack of initiative accurately indicate the concern we have for our country?

For the past two decades we have seen the traditional values that are the foundation of our heritage be discarded like an old garment that is out of style. This has been fueled by a loss of national pride due to the futility of Vietnam, a depressed economy, and the disgrace of Watergate and the Iranian hostage crisis.

However, our generation has experienced a dramatic change in attitude. Re-

cently, there has been a revival of interest in traditional values. Not everyone would describe himself or herself as "conservative," but family and patriotism are two words that have been re-admitted into the American vocabulary.

In the past few years, the clouds that hung heavy over the country have begun to dissipate.

In 1980 we had little to look forward to. We had been humiliated at the hands of the Iranian terrorists, the economy was in worse shape than it had been since the Great Depression, and we had a president who blamed the failures of his administration on the American people.

Since then, we have experienced renewed international respect and an economic recovery unmatched since the recovery after the Korean War. Best of all, we have a president who has renewed our faith in our country and in ourselves.

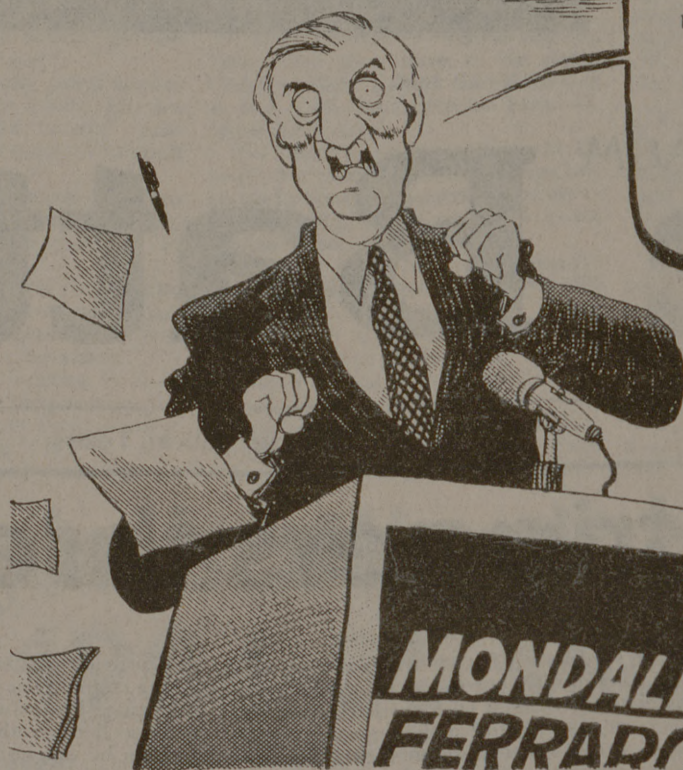
Many problems still exist in our country today, and it may be argued that the present administration is partially responsible. Although the problems are real and need solutions, they should not overshadow the overall effect of renewed patriotism felt by the American people.

How can we expect a president to make everyone happy in four short years? That would be humanly impossible — yes, we do have human presidents.

I don't want to bore you with political rhetoric. We all have more of that than we care to. Instead, I want this article to serve as a catalyst, causing each of you to stop and seriously consider whether you feel the country is being led in the right direction.

This is not a partisan issue, but an issue of conscience. I urge each of you to get involved and actively support the candidate that you believe best represents your interests and the interests of the American people. As individuals we won't make much of an impact, but if we combine our efforts and energies, together we can make a difference.

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THE REPUBLICANS ARE THE PARTY OF WEALTH, TAX SHELTERS, AND MILLIONAIRES!!!

COOL YOUR JETS, POOR BOY...

## Patriotism stirred by bird

When the Olympic Flame was extinguished August 12, ending the 23rd Olympiad, it marked the end of the greatest display of American patriotism in 20 years.



Kevin Inda

For fellow Aggie Mark Rudolph and myself, it meant the end of a 9-month, 30,000 mile tour across the United States. For those nine months we gave up college life to be Sam, The Olympic Eagle — official mascot for the 1984 Summer Olympics.

During our tour across America we travelled in a 30-foot long diesel, adorned with life-sized depictions of Sam, through 43 states as part of a promotional program for the Southland Corp. We left many friends and experiences behind as we travelled through those states. Through our endeavors, a small part of the Olympic spirit was brought in person to children and adults alike who otherwise would have had to settle for ABC's coverage of the Olympics on television.

The first few months of our trip were sometimes frustrating. Nobody knew who the mascot for the Summer Olympics was, and many didn't care.

We were always being called a "big chicken or owl." But the situation changed as summer neared and the Torch Run began.

The change came suddenly. Thousands of people from all walks of life started to greet the Olympic Torch as it made its cross-country journey to its final destination in Los Angeles.

We were lucky enough to cross paths with the Olympic Torch relay three times during our trip. One encounter displayed the true meaning of pride in America and Olympic spirit.

We were driving along a backroad in Idaho during a thunderstorm when we came upon the torch runner, still holding the flame high through the driving rain and lightning. We pulled ahead of the caravan and stood in the rain to applaud the runner as he ran by. The Torch Relay and Sam the Eagle had a common destination and goal — to promote pride in our country and the Olympics all the way to Los Angeles.

The boycott of the Summer Olympics by the Soviets just added to the fervor of the Games. Americans wanted to show

the boycotting nations the pride they felt for their country and demonstrate the true Olympic spirit.

It was a good feeling to see and be a part of this rejuvenation of pride in America. Never before have I seen the American people pull together for one common cause such as the Olympics.

During the Games the pride and patriotism was at its peak. American athletes were taking a commanding lead in medals won, but still, every time the United States added another gold to the record the feeling was still there. Every time the band started to play our national anthem and our flag was raised, I was proud to be an American.

The Olympic Flame atop Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum is now extinguished. The athletes and spectators are all gone. But still, I believe a small flame burns in the hearts of all Americans.

We are proud of our country and we love to show it when we get the chance. The Summer Olympics provided that chance. But should it take the Olympics to get Americans to display how proud they are of our country?

Kevin Inda is a senior journalism major who spent the last nine months traveling the United States as Sam The Olympic Eagle.

## Letters

### Student vote decisive in community issues

Editor:

As election day approaches, so do many choices and issues that directly affect the students of Texas A&M University.

Every student's vote will be a factor not only in the national election, but also in our community and more importantly right here at Texas A&M. Obviously, the presidential election bears great importance to us all and could serve as a sufficient reason for Aggies to vote. There are, however, many local issues and elections that demand student attention as well.

Most notably is Proposition 2, which will decide if our Permanent University Fund (PUF) will remain solely in the possession of the Texas A&M University and the University of Texas Systems. To lose the PUF could have devastating effects on the Texas A&M System.

One can't stress the importance of the student vote strongly enough. To ignore the responsibility of such a simple duty of citizenship as voting is not only failing as an American, but also as an Aggie.

Many students feel that their vote is insignificant; however, when we remember that two recent elections were decided by less than a 300 vote margin and four recent local elections were decided by margins of less than 50 votes, we find that every vote does count and that Aggies can make a difference.

There are 41,000 registered voters in Brazos County and 36,000 Aggies. We have tremendous potential to influence local policy for the benefit of students and their needs. Obviously, students must be registered before they can vote, and we have little time to achieve the goal of a sizeable student registration

before the Nov. 6 election.

Student Government, in conjunction with several other campus organizations, will be working vigorously in the next month to register as many students as possible. We certainly hope that you will opt to register in Brazos County as it is your home for for nine months out of the year.

The convenience of voting on campus (or near your off-campus residence) is also an advantage of registering at your school address.

These single acts of voting can combine to determine our destiny. We sincerely hope that all Aggies will exercise their right to vote Nov. 6.

Brett Shine  
Student Vice President for External Affairs

### Keep off MSC grass

Editor:

Recently, because of all the construction going on around the Memorial Student Center, many students (I refuse to call them Aggies) have taken it upon themselves to blaze walkways and make bicycle parking spaces on the surrounding grass.

Students, your initiative is outstanding. Not only are you upholding all those traditions that Texas A&M stands for, but you are also setting an excellent example for the new students as well.

I'm sure that our war veterans would rest easier knowing they had prevented students from suffering sore legs and tired aching bodies by allowing them to save an ex. 20 steps and park on their memorial.

I do think that we should spray some white parking lines on the grass so that bikes will be lined up in a neat and orderly fashion. After all, it is a memorial and Aggies have a reputation for excellence to uphold.

James R. Tibbetts  
Class of '87

### The Battalion

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