

Football ticket handout: a service to community

At Saturday's football game against Arkansas State, Kyle Field may see the biggest crowd of the young season. Tickets for the game are being distributed to children under 19 years old by Smith Dairy Queens in conjunction with the Texas A&M Athletic Department.

Attendance will be boosted; as many as 10,000 area youngsters will get the chance to watch the Aggies play in Kyle Field. The Dairy Queen on Villa Maria Road in Bryan says it has already handed out over 1,000 of the special tickets. This program is a welcome community service. It's also great public relations for both area Dairy Queens and the University. Nothing is more intimidating to an opponent than a full stadium. And nothing is better publicity than community service.

— The Battalion Editorial Board

Grading policy scrutinized by students and faculty

The Faculty Senate Subcommittee on Grading Policy in conjunction with the Student Senate Committee on Academic Affairs are studying the present grading policy on assignment of final grades. The purpose of this letter is to extend information and solicit facts and opinions on this issue.

Conversations with faculty members and the results of a limited student opinion survey indicate a significant dissatisfaction with our current grading system. For example, 70 percent of the student respondents (260 total) were either moderately or strongly dissatisfied with the present system, while only 25 percent were moderately or strongly satisfied with the system; five percent were indifferent.

Based on comments of fellow faculty members and students, there exists the need to evaluate the present grading system with regard to allowing finer gradations in final grades assigned in undergraduate and graduate courses, appearing on transcripts and used to calculate the GPR. Given the significance assigned to grades, the grading system used should be as fair and equitable as possible, in addition to providing an accurate measure of a student's performance relative to a course-dependent set of grading criteria. From this perspective, the present gradations of A, B, C, D, and F are inadequate.

Reader's Forum
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This present system both under and over-evaluates student performance in the upper and lower range of a grade interval, respectively; it promotes grade inflation and student/instructor antagonism; and it implicitly suggests an inherent inaccuracy in the assignment of grades by not providing for finer gradations.

A number of modifications of the present system are possible. For example, many schools use a +/- system (e.g. C+, B- each having a corresponding GPR weighing factor), whereas a few use a numerical system that permits even finer gradation (e.g. University of Washington uses a 0.0 to 4.5 system with 0.1 increments). Whichever system one suggests, however, should be consistent with the level of accuracy permitted by the grade evaluation process. The margin of error in some cases may not justify refinement of the system beyond a +/- division.

We recognize one data base is inadequate; correspondingly, we are seeking the opinion of other students and faculty both as to degree of satisfaction (or lack of) with the present system as well as to possible modifications.

Student opinions should be sent to the Student Government Office, 219 Pavilion (845-3051), and faculty opinions should be sent to the Faculty Senate Office, Goodwin Hall (845-9528).

Brann Johnson (Geophysics & Geology)
John Evans (Environmental Design)
Sean Royall (Economics)
Tom Urban (Aerospace Engineering)

LETTERS:

Gay issue shouldn't lead to name-calling

EDITOR:

Now that the Board of Regents has asked for an appeal in the Gay Student Services case, this seems like an especially opportune time to take note of the conduct and behavior of the leadership involved in both sides of this case.

Clearly the two sides disagree about what is or is not constitutional, but at no time has either side engaged in the low art of name calling.

At no time has either side engaged in the nasty invective that has been displayed in the letters to the editor column in recent days. Nothing can be gained by calling each other faggots or bigots — but a great deal can be lost.

Therefore, as one of the leaders in the gay community I offer you an olive branch on this issue and suggest a truce. The GSS suit is now entering its final stage.

When the last verdict is in and the final decision is implemented, both sides will have a great need for healing. We will have fought as only Aggies can, and we will be Aggies when it is over.

I implore those of you who will feel compelled to write a letter to the editor to put your emotions in check and give

your words some thought. Ask yourself, "Is this the sort of thing I want to say to a fellow Aggie?" If it isn't then don't say it.

I invite Dr. Koldus to give us his views on this matter and join me in this effort to ease the rising tensions between the gay and non-gay community.

Finally I have a request which I wish to direct towards the religious leaders in our area. I know that you have strong views on the subject of homosexuality, but surely people of good conscience can disagree with one another without also condemning each other to hell. For my part I will ask the members of the gay community and those non-gays who agree with our cause to tone down their rhetoric and refrain from attacking your beliefs.

My request is that you talk to your flocks and do the same. Let us display the best in Christian behavior, not the worst.

Lenny DePalma
President of Alternative

Noisy garbage trucks bother dorm resident

EDITOR:

I'd like to describe a little situation to you.

A classical display of music

Before the last bars of the music crashed to a close, the audience was on its feet. Cheering, shouting, clapping, waving arms in the air. The auditorium was packed; many had stood throughout the performance.

I heard a thundering noise above me and looked up from my seat in the first tier. The boxes were vibrating to the rhythm of stamping feet as the fans clamored for an encore.

The cause of the uproar wasn't a performance by Alabama in G. Rollie White Coliseum. It wasn't the last concert tour of Mick Jagger and the Stones. It wasn't even Michael Jackson and his brothers live at the Cotton Bowl in Dallas.

It was the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, performing Symphony No. 7 by Dvorak in London's Albert Hall.

Such an enthusiastic display of appreciation is rare in this country — at least, at a performance of classical music.

Here, when the music is good, people clap politely. When it's very good, they clap harder. If it's great, they stand and clap. And if it's superlative, you may hear a timid "bravo" or two.

What makes the difference? My guess is that it's the social class that attends the concerts. Here, the high price of concerts limits the audience.



Kathy Wiesepape

Smithsonian space museum a bit other-worldly

By DICK WEST

Columnist for United Press International

WASHINGTON — If the National Air and Space Museum seems more other-worldly than usual these days, it may be because of Robert McCall.

This part Buck Rogerish, part backward-looking, branch of the Smithsonian Institution has just put on exhibit for the next 12 months 48 of McCall's paintings and drawings, including sky pavilions and lunar bases.

Part of the artwork is, by the artist's

own admission, pretty far-out — even for someone who has trained himself to think up to 1,000 years ahead of his time.

The trick of being a leading science-fiction painter, McCall told me, is not only to reduce the future to canvas, but to make it believable.

His sense of futuristic verisimilitude may be one of the reasons he was chosen to design U.S. postage stamps as well as a Disney World mural. But when I interviewed him at a preview of the exhibit, he looked exceptionally ordinary — just about how you might expect a

65-year-old man of average build with reddish hair that is both thinning and graying to look.

Frankly, this part of the museum with its collection of rockets, press suits, nose cones and other space paraphernalia has always seemed to me a bit out of touch with reality. McCall, however, was perfectly down-to-earth.

"I try to anticipate what is coming at 50 or 1,000 years from now," he said. "Most people are too caught up in everyday happenings to peer into the distant future. Yet, we have an infinitely time before us."

P.S. I'm betting you wimpy editorial types won't have the nerve to print this one...

Marc D. McSwain
Class of '85

Ugly Bell Tower a nice, musical gift

EDITOR:

I would like to take this opportunity to single myself out as (seemingly) the only existing Ag that does not resent the Albritton Bell Tower.

As a matter of fact, I very much enjoy hearing the "Spirit of Aggieland" tolling across the campus.

I realize not everyone agrees with the form of Mr. Albritton's donation, and I'll have to agree that there are more worthy causes than the construction of a bell tower. But I don't believe that is the point.

The point is that the bell tower was a gift, and it takes a pretty ungrateful person to complain about a gift. Personally, I enjoy the music, and I say thank you Mr. Albritton, even if it is an ugly bell tower.

Stoney Smith
Class of '86

Application for Who's Who

NOTE: Due to recent changes, a student can now nominate himself.

NAME: Reveille

MAJOR: Aggie

CLASS: Senior

MORE IRRELEVANT DATA:

Highest ranking cadet, First Lady of the Corps, etc.



Photograph

LANE CA

The Battalion
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Southwest Journalism Conference

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Opinions expressed in The Battalion are those of the Editorial Board or the author, and do not necessarily represent the opinions of Texas A&M administrators, faculty or the Board of Regents.
The Battalion also serves as a laboratory newspaper for students in reporting, editing and photography classes within the Department of Communications.

Letters 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 include the address and telephone number of the writer.
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