

OPINION

Many reasons for celebration

Thursday marks the 209th anniversary of the signing of the United States Declaration of Independence.

The Fourth of July is celebrated in different ways, but to all Americans, it's a celebration of freedom.

There will be no classes Thursday in recognition of the holiday. Also, The Battalion will not be published Thursday or Friday.

The freedom we will celebrate is more than just freedom from classes. It's the multitude of freedoms that go hand in hand with democracy. The importance of these freedoms was spotlighted when 39 Americans were released Monday from captivity in Beirut.

These hostages are now free to celebrate the Fourth of July however they choose, unlike seven Americans still captive in Lebanon.

While we celebrate our freedoms, we should not forget those around the world who are deprived of their basic human rights. We have much to be thankful for.

The Battalion Editorial Board



How can California appreciate our Fourth of July?

By ART BUCHWALD

Columnist for The Los Angeles Times Syndicate

I received a call from Michael Jackson, the syndicated talk show host, who owns the morning radio audience in Southern California. Michael was taping a program that had to do with the Fourth of July and wanted to discuss it.

I was surprised when Michael informed me that Californians celebrate our July Fourth with the same fervor as the 13 original states do.

"Why would that be?" I asked him. "California had nothing to do with the founding of the country."

Michael replied, "As long as I can remember Californians have always sup-

ported life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, and Independence Day does have a special meaning for us. We even have a greeting in Spanish out here, 'My Fourth of July is your Fourth of July.'"

"That's fine now. But where was California when our founding fathers needed you?" I asked.

Michael was slightly nonplussed. "We may not have fought in the revolution," he said, "but Californians have paid their dues. We gave the country two Presidents of the United States."

"And we gave you one back. Don't get me wrong. You people have a right to celebrate any American holiday you want to. But those of us who fomented revolution and put our lives on the line

to overthrow that rotter George III are suspicious of states who came into the Union after the hostilities ceased."

"California was not in a position in 1775 to fight the British," Michael said.

"I've heard the same story from Oregon and Montana. Everybody west of Pennsylvania sat it out until they saw which way the wind was blowing."

I could tell Michael wasn't quite sure he wanted to continue the conversation. "What did you expect us to do?"

"Did it ever occur to you to say thank you? Do you realize that if it hadn't been for our forefathers California would be no better off today than it was 200 years ago? While you people out there were getting tan, lifting weights and trading

real estate, Tommy Jefferson, Johnny Adams and Ben Franklin were sweating it out in Philadelphia trying to write a paper that would guarantee your rights as free men."

"There were 37 states that were not involved in the Revolution," Michael said. "Why pick on us?"

"Because Californians are always telling people along the East Coast what fools we are for living here. They keep bragging about their lifestyle. What they forget is that if George Washington hadn't crossed the Delaware, there would not be a California lifestyle."

"Is there anything that we can do now to make up to you for missing the Revolutionary War?" Michael asked.

"One thing you might do is tell your

President Reagan to stop attacking the 13 original states because they want to deduct their local income taxes from their federal returns. He goes out west ridiculing the government spending habits of the people back east and gets everyone mad at New York and New Jersey. We fought a lot of bloody battles against the redcoats so Ronald Reagan could sleep in the White House."

"Why don't you tell Reagan yourself?"

"Because he doesn't listen to us. He considers people who live in Washington part of the problem."

"Having said all that, may we Californians celebrate your Fourth of July?"

"I imagine so, if you don't make too much noise."

Fourth of July: more than just parties and fireworks

I've been given this space to inspire you about the Fourth of July.

Nancy Jumper

Guest Columnist

I have thought for over a week of an inspirational idea to motivate you, to inspire you or to kindle a spark of patriotism in you.

But how many times have you remembered or finished reading a column written to inspire you? If I have to light a fire under you to acknowledge the importance of our country's birthday then somewhere something is missing.

This celebration should come from within rather than without.

An analogy: A boy courting a girl. At first, he gives her flowers, maybe a card or some candy. These gifts are wonderful but if they aren't from the heart they have no real meaning.

The meaning of the Fourth of July needs to come from the heart.

I ask several friends, what was the first thing that they thought of concerning Independence Day.

Some think of the flag, having a paid holiday or an extra day to study for exams. Others think of having a party to celebrate with friends. The thoughts of fireworks, honor, pride and unity fill the hearts of many.

Yet, with all of this symbolism, have

we lost the true meaning of patriotism? The sense of patriotism the founders of America established.

The first settlers of Plymouth, fleeing from religious persecution, came across a vast ocean not knowing what to encounter from the "new world." Their descendants, the signers of the Declaration of Independence established a government that they believed to be fair, just and true. These strong people and more have influenced every breath we take as citizens of the United States of America. They set down guidelines and paths.

It's not our decision to walk the same path, but our FREEDOM to choose whether we want to walk that path or to make a new one for others to follow.

If I remember correctly from my American history, it was the need for freedom that aroused the people of the 18th Century. The mother country was placing a firm hand on the young colonies, as all mothers do. But the colonists became rebellious and desired more freedom, thus creating what we now call America.

My holiday away from this institution of higher learning will be spent camping with family as well as partying with friends. I do plan to sit and think about this special day because 209 years ago somebody wanted to make this country a better place.

It is a nation like no other — with free enterprise, new technology, scientific

advancements and people bonding together to help others.

In the history books, America is called the "melting pot of the world." You and I are a part of this history and the feelings of support for our country must come from the heart for the traditions and customs to continue.

So when the fireworks go off as if the bombs were bursting in air, raise your glass and make a toast to America — land of the free, home of the brave. Feel pride and honor with your countrymen. Hold your head high not just on the Fourth of July but every day of the year.

Nancy Jumper is a senior journalism major.

I want my MRS.

The other day I was wearing my "I want my MSC" button (you know, the ones that look like the "I want my MTV" logo), and this guy says to me, "It should say, 'I want my MRS.'" — how rude is that!

Wendy Johnson

Guest Columnist

But I had to laugh. I was one of those girls who always wanted to get married. When I graduated from high school I announced to my father that I didn't want to go to college — I wanted to get married instead. He asked if I had any prospects in view, and I had to admit that I didn't. Dad then proceeded to convince me that I needed to go to college, if for no other reason than to be "exposed" to the right kind of men.

After all, he reasoned, I wanted to marry an educated man, someone who could support me so I wouldn't have to be a cashier at Piggly Wiggly for the rest of my life.

Well, I fell for it. And here I am — six years, three universities and 13 majors later, with no degree and no husband. At least I'll get the degree in December.

Initially, I think I was in competition with my mother. I just knew I could outdo her. She and my dad eloped on the way to her senior prom. She was married at 18, before she graduated from high school. By the time she was my age she had me and my little brother. Their 25th wedding anniversary was last month so they must've done something

right. My cousin got married in April. My grandpa was there for the wedding and discovered that I am almost 24 and not seriously dating anyone. He reminded me that I was pushing 25 and that is the official "old maid" deadline. My grandma used to try to shame me into action by telling me she wanted great-grandchildren before she died. I guess now, at least, she has hope, even though it wasn't me who came through for her.

My little brother didn't help matters much either. He had the nerve to get married in May (I was a bridesmaid of course — small consolation). Didn't anyone ever tell him about the natural order of things? Big sisters are supposed to get married before little brothers.

Mom keeps telling me "God is saving you for somebody special." That's what I'm holding on to. All of my old roommates, best friends and even old boyfriends are married — some are even on their first round of children by now. But I wouldn't trade with them. I've learned lots of lessons already that I won't have to learn later, in the middle of a marriage. I still want to marry and have children, but I'm going to leave the timing to someone else. I'll wait as long as it takes for Mr. Right to find me. I'm too busy chasing that elusive degree right now to look for him.

Wendy Johnson is a senior journalism major.

Mail Call

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.

A 'Tang-ier' view of freshman chemistry

EDITOR: As a student of Dr. Tang's Chem 101 class this summer session, I can't believe how Michael Coad can once again attack the freshman chemistry program.

In my opinion, Dr. Tang is doing everything in his power to make chemistry bearable for his students. He offers many opportunities for students to receive FREE help. In addition to his scheduled office hours and his weekly review sessions given before each exam, he has asked Dr. Kolar to assist him in conducting Group Help Sessions. Furthermore, both Dr. Tang and Dr. Kolar have added supplementary office hours. If that isn't enough, Dr. Tang has just re-instated his "Late Bloomer" program specifically geared towards helping those students with averages of 60 or below.

As far as the book is concerned, let us examine some facts. The text is used by such prestigious schools as M.I.T. and some not so prestigious ones as San Antonio College. Remember also that this particular text has only been used since the fall of 1984.

Now consider the assigned homework problems. It is a proven fact that those who complete the homework before the exam score higher than those who do not. Students also receive up to 2 bonus points which are added to the course average.

It is true that the course is curved, but the curving system is one that is used and accepted by many other courses.

As a final note, I would like to say that Dr. Tang should be praised for his efforts in improving the freshman chemistry program.

Ferdinand R. Karbowski, Jr.

All Aggies not proud of GSS's 'gay pride'

EDITOR: This letter is in protest to the homosexual club called "GSS" parading in Houston. The homosexuals carried a banner proclaiming them "The Fighting Texas Aggie Gay Marching Band."

First of all, let it be known that there are many, many Aggies that are ashamed and appalled that the University was forced to recognize the group. Therefore, when this group publicly displays their association with our Alma Mater, we cringe in embarrassment.

We are also surprised that they decided to ridicule the fine name of the Fighting Texas Aggie Band. The Aggie Band has always stood for what is best at Texas A&M, and we have had reason to be proud of it. I wonder how the members of the real Band feel?

Now we have just one more reason to not be proud of "Gay Pride."

Benito Flores-Meath Michael Couch

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