

OPINION

Keep the hunger aid ball rolling

Live Aid, the megaconcert in Philadelphia and London to feed the hungry in Ethiopia, was without question the greatest musical endeavor of all time. The project raised about \$55 million, according to its producers.

Bob Geldof, the man behind the globe-spanning concert, has been nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize. Geldof is certainly deserving of the award.

But more importantly, the governments of the world should heed Geldof's words: "This is not the end of the effort. It should push governments into doing something." Geldof said he hopes governments will follow Live Aid's lead. He wants them to match the musicians' donations to the starving Africans.

Substantial government aid to Ethiopia has been too long in coming. What aid was sent usually got tied up in political red tape. The Ethiopian government seems reluctant to cooperate with the relief effort.

It's admirable that Geldof took the initiative and did what world leaders could not. The relief offerings from Live Aid will not be sent through government channels. Direct lines of food and developmental aid won't be slowed by politics. Now that the road has been paved, we must not allow it to go untraveled. It's time for governmental convoys from around the world to start rolling. Geldof has shown us how to get aid past politics, and now government relief must be sent along the same route.

Private citizens have shown their support. They have taken the first step. The stage has been set. The band has already played. Now the governments must go on for the encore.

The Battalion Editorial Board



Some days you just can't get rid of an old receipt

I have faced a few moral dilemmas in my life, but none were as devastating as the one I faced last Thursday night.

I left Half Price Books in Bryan with my purchase, an old album by an old band, in my right hand and my sales receipt in my left. As I walked to my car, parked in the back lot, I contemplated methods of getting rid of the sales receipt. I considered just throwing it down on the ground, I mean what's one more tiny piece of paper in an already filthy alleyway?

Then I remembered the lessons from my youth: Sunday school sermons on how God didn't want His beautiful world made ugly by trash, 4-H Club demonstrations on how good Americans always conserved our nation's natural resources, Boy Scout lectures on how good campers respected their campgrounds, pictures of an overgrown owl in grade school classrooms that says: "Give a hoot, don't pollute."

I decided to hold onto that little piece of paper until I got back to my apartment where I could dispose of it properly. But then I realized I would probably lose it once I got in my already messy

car. I remembered listening to the Beach Boys. One lesson I've learned from the Beach Boys is that a car is a man's best friend. I didn't want to mess up my car.

Confusion. Guilt. What should I do? Then I saw it . . . a trash dumpster! My problems were over! I could put my sales receipt in the dumpster and God, my county agent, my scoutmaster, Woody Owl and the Beach Boys would be pleased!

But there was a problem. On the front of the dumpster was a big yellow sign with huge black letters that read:

IT IS UNLAWFUL TO USE THIS CONTAINER UNLESS YOU ARE PAYING THE MONTHLY COLLECTION FEE.

CITY OF BRYAN CODE CHAPTER 12, SECTION II.

I remembered the lessons of my youth: Sunday school sermons on how God would punish those who broke the law, 4-H Club demonstrations on how good Americans always obeyed their nation's laws, Boy Scout lectures on how good campers respected the rules of their campgrounds, pictures of an overgrown dog wearing a trenchcoat in grade school classrooms that says: "Take a bite out of crime."

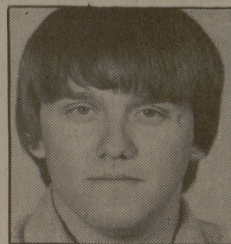
Confusion. Guilt. What should I do? Should I forget what I had been

taught by God, my county agent, scoutmaster and McGruff the Dog and become a criminal by using a dumpster? Or should I forget what had been taught by God, my county agent, my scoutmaster and Woody Owl, and become a litterbug? Or should I forget what I had been taught by the Beach Boys and not be true to my art? The question would baffle the greatest philosophical minds of the world. What would Solomon do? What would Plato do? What would Schopenhauer do? What would Spock do?

Confusion. Guilt. What should I do? After a long debate I made my decision. Now as I write this column, I faced with another moral decision: a good journalist is supposed to present the facts, fairly and accurately. But the closure of these facts could have dangerous repercussions. The question would baffle the greatest philosophical minds of the world. What would Plato do? What would Walter Gropius do? What would Woodward and Bernstein do? What would Lou Gehrig do?

"I have made my decision. Even though my next column may be written from my new home at the Bryan County Jail, I'll tell you what I did. I threw that damn piece of paper that trash dumpster!"

Karl Pallmeyer is a senior journalism major and a columnist for The Battalion.



Karl Pallmeyer

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.

Too late already

EDITOR: From Kara Brown's letter appearing in Thursday's "Battalion:" ". . . I hope that something is done before Aggies are too embarrassed to be Aggies."

Kara, letters such as yours ensure that it may already be too late.

Greg Parnell
Class of '76

A&M deserves better than bigoted image

EDITOR: In reading The Battalion Thursday, I noticed Kara Brown's letter indicating her displeasure with the GSS for "mocking our band, our traditions, and our university."

Apparently, she does not approve of the "Fighting Texas Aggie Gay Marching Band." It seems that the GSS deserves to use the word "fighting" far more than the original band does, as they have fought for a decade on campus and in the courts for the rights accorded to numerous other groups.

Also, Ms. Brown believes that GSS members are "ridiculing and belittling Texas A&M."

Although I find their type of sexuality extremely distasteful, I believe that their actions with respect to the University have been meritorious. By establishing themselves as a recognized student organization, they have forced Texas A&M to fulfill a major role of a university: that of a forum where dissident views may be freely expressed.

It seems that those that have damaged the University's image are the individuals who repeatedly appealed court decisions in the GSS's favor. Because of these people, Texas A&M is now known nationwide as a place where unpopular groups are harassed to the limit of the law, and beyond.

Ms. Brown herself, by calling the gays "little fairies" and by advocating that they "shouldn't be tolerated" promotes the worst possible (and traditional) image of Texas A&M: one of a backward southern school filled with profound bigots.

A&M deserves a far better image, one which represents many of its current students. It deserves an image of change and tolerance.

Whitney White
Senior, Electrical Engineering

Where's the support?

EDITOR: This letter is in response to Kara Brown's anti-gay letter of July 11. Ms. Brown, what ever gave you the idea that the members of GSS "don't care about A&M" and "obviously dislike" it? If, in fact, they did not like A&M why would they carry a banner that proclaimed their affiliation with this school? You called this a "disgusting exhibition." Since when is Aggie pride considered disgusting, unless this pride is associated with the prejudiced actions of some of the groups that exist here on campus. I'm sure that their banner was not to mock the A&M band. If any of the other student organizations — say the Pre-Law Society — entered a parade with other pre-law societies in this state and carried a banner saying, "The Fighting Texas Aggie Pre-Law Society Marching Band," would you want to kick them off campus?

Nowhere in your letter do you offer any evidence or support to your allegations of the GSS slandering A&M, or how their members do not support A&M. Your letter was a collection of unsubstantiated, narrow-minded statements.

It is Aggies with bigoted attitudes like yours that embarrass and belittle A&M.

Georgette Nicolaides

Batt phones changed

The Battalion re-arranged its newsroom over the weekend. Consequently, our phone numbers have changed. The new numbers are:

Editor.....	845-2647
City Editor (for story ideas).....	845-3316
Asst. City Editor.....	845-3314
Opinion Page Editor (for letters and columns).....	845-3315
Sports.....	845-2688
	845-2630
Reporters.....	845-2665
	845-3313
At Ease.....	845-3312

Bonus mile build-up made easy

By ART BUCHWALD
Columnist for The Los Angeles Times Syndicate

I see where several airline companies are being taken over. Frankly, I don't know why anyone would want to buy an airline nowadays. The way they're all handing out free tickets I predict in two years everyone will be flying for nothing anyway.

What happened was that some sales promotion genius thought up the idea of awarding frequent flyer mileage credits equal to the number of miles the passenger flew. These credits, when built up, could then be exchanged either for free flights or upgrades to a better class of travel. For example, if you earn a credit of 60,000 miles you can fly coach to any destination in the United States; for 100,000 miles you can fly first class. And for 150,000 miles, you get to take your entire family, plus the dog, anywhere in the world.

If the airlines had just stuck to the original idea it would have made some sense. But they started giving out "bonus" miles, not just for flying, but for renting a car, staying in a hotel or eating a certain kind of pizza 30 days in a row.

I hadn't realized how easy it was to build up bonus mileage until I went into an airline office on Fifth Avenue last week.

I told the lady behind the counter, "I'd like to ask about a trip to Paris."

The lady handed me a coupon.

"What's this?" I asked.

"You're entitled to 5,000 bonus miles for coming in and inquiring about our flight to Paris."

"That's wonderful," I declared.

Then she gave me another coupon for 5,000 bonus miles.

"This is for wearing a tie. Are you an American?" she asked.

"Of course I am," I said hotly.

"Then I can credit you with 10,000 more bonus miles. Do you have a hotel room in Paris?"

"Yes, here is my confirmation."

"People with confirmed Paris hotel rooms are entitled to 7,500 miles."

"Listen, can we forget all this mileage stuff? I want to buy a ticket."

"Are you going to pay by check or credit card?"

"What's the difference?"

"If you pay by check you will receive 10,000 extra miles, while a credit card only entitles you to 9,000."

"Okay, I'll pay by check. Are there any seats available?"

"Smoking or nonsmoking?"

"Nonsmoking."

She gave me a bonus coupon for 13,500 bonus miles.

I was getting embarrassed. "I don't want to look a gift horse in the mouth, but I haven't even taken off yet and you're crediting me with thousands of flying miles. I feel like a fraud."

"It's not out of my pocket," she said.

"I'm just following instructions. The airline business is very competitive, and if we didn't issue extra bonus miles you would buy your flight from one of our competitors."

"Well, as long as you put it that way I guess I'll accept. I'll be returning on August 6."

Damned if she didn't give me another coupon.

Fifteen minutes later she handed me my ticket.

I got out my checkbook. "How much do I owe you?"

She hit the keys on her computer several times and then said, "There's no charge. You have enough credited miles now to entitle you to a free round-trip ticket to Paris."

I took the ticket and shoved it in my

pocket. "Can I ask you one question. How's business?"

"Wonderful," she said. "Before our frequent flyer bonus program we were carrying less than 25 percent passenger loads. Now that we're offering free flights you can't get a seat on our planes."

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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.

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