

OPINION

Editorials from around the state:

'Exit test' needed

The new mandatory high school graduation test is a good idea, but a tragic commentary on our educational system.

... There is no argument that the "exit tests" will ensure Texas graduates have competency in certain areas. But is this really enough? The test is a sad reminder that the school system cannot guarantee the skills of a student who has been promoted through the system without a final check.

And there is the possibility that passing the test will become the single focus of all the education that precedes it.

Ideally, each grade level should be a challenge for students, and their promotion from one to the other should rest on their ability to meet this challenge.

... But this is the real world and graduation tests are a concession to reality. In real life, students don't advance through grades because they are ready to do so. In real life, a graduation test is necessary. And that's a saddening fact.

The Odessa American

Good from bad

The tragic news that movie star Rock Hudson has contracted the usually fatal disease AIDS has stunned the world.

But sometimes bad news can bring some good.

Once considered a disease of gay men, hemophiliacs and Haitian refugees, AIDS has rapidly spread into the mainstream population. At least 11,871 Americans have been diagnosed as having AIDS, and half of them are now dead.

Now a famous, popular movie and television star has been diagnosed as having the virus that incapacitates the body's immune system, leaving it vulnerable to other diseases.

AIDS is suddenly considered a real threat because someone everyone knows has it.

The Galveston Daily News

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.

Sniff the java, Karl

EDITOR:

Throughout this summer I have read various columns of Karl Pallmeyer's, some were good, some were not so good. Your article Living In The Shadow Of A Mushroom Cloud dealing with the subject living with nuclear weapons caused me to reply. Your heart seems to be in the right place, but Karl, you really need to wake up and smell the coffee! Nuclear weapons are a reality, we cannot simply wish them away. Nuclear weapons will only disappear when new and more advanced weapons are developed to protect American core and middle range domestic and foreign policy goals.

Karl you keep harping on the fact that nuclear weapons will be the destruction of mankind, maybe they will, but did you ever consider the fact that nuclear deterrence value might be our only hope to peaceful coexistence. Currently the United States uses the deterrence strategy of mutual assured destruction (MAD) (balance of terror). MAD is the theory that, the United

States could absorb a 1st strike and retaliate with a 2nd strike that will yield unacceptable levels of damage upon the aggressor. Since the USA and the USSR both possess viable 1st and 2nd strike capability, neither country will have any rational incentive for a pre-emptive 1st strike since it would only lead to their own destruction.

I particularly don't like the people of the United States and the world being held as nuclear hostages and I really don't consider the policy of MAD to be all that sane but it is a very rational and effective policy.

Karl, I am not proclaiming nuclear weapons are the only solution, but that they are a viable component in the protection of Americas homeland and her vital interest.

In conclusion we feel that you should try to broaden your knowledge base as to the purposes of nuclear weapons and their impact on American and world security before you again start espousing your somewhat limited views on nuclear weapons.

Lance Fragomeli '85
Michael Wreaver '85

'Pronies' make an art out of accidents

I read somewhere there are no accident-prone people. This is simply not true. I know this because I am a "pronie."

Rhonda Rubin
Guest Columnist

Anybody can have an accident, but a pronie is creative. Pronies find new and innovative ways to hurt themselves.

I began to have "little" accidents as a small child. My mother has told me about the time I wanted to play with her keys and mistook an electrical outlet for a keyhole. This may explain why everyone in my family has straight hair and mine is curly.

When I was three years old, I saw Mommy "playing" with her new sewing

machine. She was making neat zig-zag patterns on some material. I decided to experiment after she left. Unfortunately, my feet found the switch and soon there were neat zig-zag patterns on my thumb.

Things didn't get much better as I got older. When people ask me how I got the scar on my chin, I say, "Which time?" Pronies also have a bad habit of not learning from their mistakes.

Then there was the time some friends and I were sliding down a hill on flattened cardboard boxes. My box suddenly stopped. I kept going and found a piece of glass sticking out of the ground. It was nearly a week before I was able to sit down again.

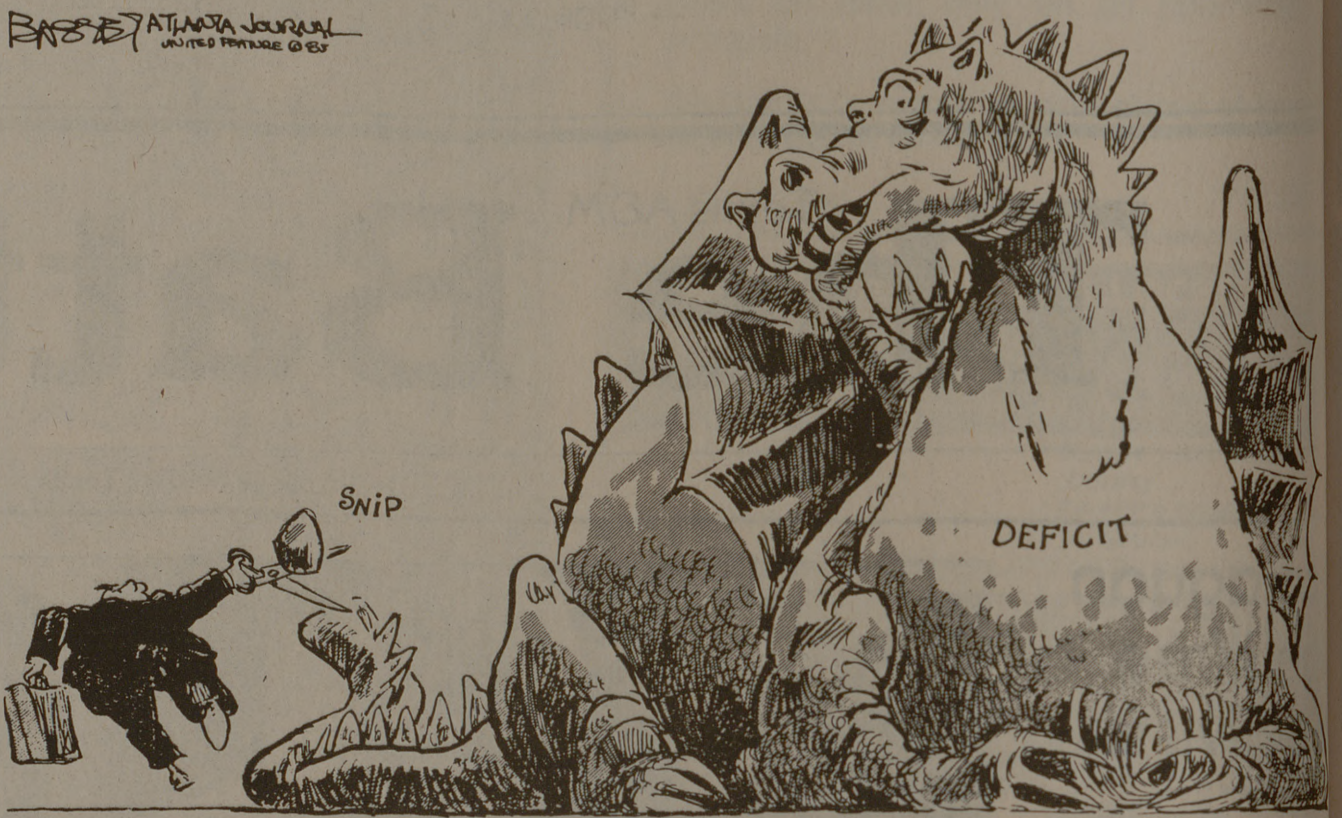
In elementary school I managed to be

the first person injured in a game of four-square. In junior high I was kicked in the head during gym class when someone tried to jump over me. In high school I was voted "Most Likely to be Run Over By Stampeding Llamas."

Right after high school, I managed to keep the emergency room staff of a Houston hospital laughing for two hours after I showed up with their first musical injury. As I was stringing my guitar, a string broke and wound up in my thumb. I told the desk nurse it was a wire to avoid embarrassment. She wanted to know what kind of wire it was, and when I told her, she laughed for five minutes.

When the doctor showed up he giggled and said, "Oh, an E-string."

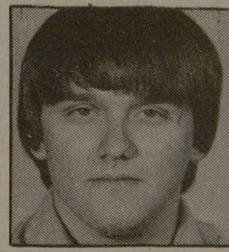
BASSBYATHANJA JOURNAL
UNITED FRONTIER COLLEGE



NEWS ITEM: CONGRESS APPROVES A 1986 BUDGET AS IT GOES ON VACATION.

Must students pay price for new computer woes?

Once upon a time there was a young man named Fred J. Alpheratz. Fred was a student at Texas A&M about to begin his senior year. Fred had preregistered for the Fall semester but he didn't get all the classes he needed. Fred would have to go through drop-add.



Karl Pallmeyer

Fred had gone through drop-add before, it was not the most fun thing in the world. All Fred had to do was add the one class he needed, but he was worried. Fred was going to leave for his vacation in Japan on August 6 and he wouldn't be back until school started on September 2. Usually the drop-add period didn't open until a week before school started.

When Fred got his fall fee slip he was pleased to discover that there would be an open registration period starting Monday. His problems were over. He felt that he would be able to drop-add on August 5 then catch his plane to Hiroshima the next day.

Fred woke up bright and early Monday morning; he had a long drive ahead of him. He had been on the road for six hours when he arrived in College Station at 10 a.m. He parked his car and went to see his adviser.

At his adviser's office he picked up the printout to see if there was any space left in the class he wanted to take. He was in luck, there was room for 15 more students. Fred had his adviser fill out his drop-add card and headed over to the Pavilion.

When Fred got to the Pavilion he was

thunderstruck. Hundreds of his fellow students were lined up to get into the place. He had thought, like many other students, that he would beat the crowd by coming early. Unfortunately, the registrar's office had the same idea. They didn't think that many students would come to open registration on the first day. They were not prepared for the crowds that came on Monday. The fact that the new computer system they had just started using for registration kept breaking down didn't help matters much.

For Fred, Monday was a disaster. There were hundreds of students waiting to drop-add or register. Fred waited in line until noon when the registration people put up a sign that said: "Registration is closed until 8:00 a.m. tomorrow." Fred was upset. Fred was confused and angry. Fred was mad as hell. He had driven 300 miles, spent six hours on the road and stood in a long line in 90 degree heat for almost two hours. What for? Nothing. He had to go back home tonight so he could go leave for his vacation, so he couldn't wait overnight even if he could find a place to stay in College Station.

Fred went home. He didn't get to add his class and his plans for graduation had to be changed. Fred was a depressed man. When he got to Hiroshima Tuesday he went to the first bar he could find and got bombed.

Fred is not a real person. He is just a character I use from time to time to make a point. But the situation Fred faced was not uncommon.

Many students wanted to go through free registration Monday. Some of these students needed to register for the fall. Some of these students wanted to get a jump on adding the classes they needed for the fall. Some of these students were

going to summer school and wanted to take advantage of this early registration period. Some of these students had driven a long way so that they could take advantage of this early registration period. Some of these students would be able to drop-add later. What their reasons, there were hundreds of students wanting to go through registration Monday.

Had Fred waited just a little bit longer he probably would have been able to add his class. The registration people took down their "closed" sign and their best to take care of everyone who came to drop-add Monday. On Tuesday the registration people set up new computer terminals to help make registration easier.

The problems Fred and other students faced Monday were uncalled for. The registrar's office should have been prepared for any number of students. The new computer system that was supposed to save time actually wasted time. Maybe the new system will be better when all the bugs are worked out. Why did we have to be the guinea pig?

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

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