

Opinion

Backstabbing, pettiness obstruct fair ticket sales

EDITOR'S NOTE: Art Buchwald's column has been delayed in the mail, so Aggie-land's favorite columnist, Karl Palmeyer, has agreed to fill in.



Karl Palmeyer

Everyone is excited about the Cotton Bowl — maybe too excited.

Since Saturday people have been camping out to get tickets that didn't go on sale until this morning. People set up tents and brought couches, sleeping bags, radios, televisions, food and various other commodities to make their wait more comfortable.

Someone decided to be helpful. This person or persons started a list so that people who had to go to class, eat or get some sleep could leave the queue without losing their place. Unfortunately the list was bogus. This person or persons must have thought that it would be easier for them to save their place if they could get rid of some of the other people waiting in line.

When I heard about the list I called the Athletic Department's ticket office

to see if the list is valid. The woman who answered the phone said there was no list and that it was up to the students to "fight it out for tickets." She said the Athletic Department can't be held responsible for what the students do.

Despite the tremendous support the student body has given the football team this year, the Athletic Department seems intent on stabbing the 12th Man in the back. Of the 20,000 tickets allotted to Texas A&M, only 8,000 went to the students; the other 12,000 went to season ticket holders.

Students are only allowed to buy up to six tickets in one block while season ticket holders can buy up to 25. Students must have a ticket book for each ticket purchased and must have one graduate, senior or junior ticket book for each two tickets purchased.

By giving only 8,000 tickets to students, the Athletic Department is telling the students that they are not as important as the former students/season ticket holders. Aggie students don't even rate the same consideration as other Aggie fans and will have to go through a lot more hassle than the former students/season ticket holders to get their tickets. The \$5 discount on student tickets is an empty gesture since the Athletic Department is not making any financial loss

and most students won't get tickets anyway.

If there is anything worse than the Athletic Department's ticket policy it's the ticket scalpers. These people buy more tickets than they intend to use and sell the extra tickets at a huge profit. Ticket scalpers serve no purpose other than to destroy other peoples' chances of getting tickets in a legally and morally accepted fashion.

I overheard some potential ticket scalpers today who planned to charge \$100 per ticket. What right do these people have to make a profit off of an event that they are not responsible for or participate in. Ticket scalpers are the second lowest form of humanity on this earth. The lowest form of humanity is those who are too lazy to get tickets on their own and agree to pay the ticket scalpers so that the practice of ticket scalping is financially attractive.

Last week I wrote about how I had received a renewed dose of Aggie Spirit because of upcoming trip to the Cotton Bowl. Now after seeing the lack of consideration of the Athletic Department and the pettiness of some of my fellow students, I have recovered from this recent loss of sanity.

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

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.

Mormons not a cult

EDITOR:

Thank you for providing news, editorial comments and other interesting articles for the people of Aggie-land. I find it informative and at times humorous to read opinions and rebuttals in the Mail Call section of The Batt.

On Nov. 20, the letter from Mark Sheppard touched me, and concerns me a great deal.

I am a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. We are commonly called Mormons because of our belief in a volume of scriptures entitled The Book of Mormon (it is also a much shorter name, but is not derogatory in any way).

I served as a missionary in the Republic of Argentina for two years at my own expense to teach the Latin American people about Jesus Christ. I loved every minute of the time I spent in that country and developed an appreciation of many aspects of different lifestyles and life in general.

I do not consider my religion nor any other that teaches of Jesus Christ as savior and redeemer of all mankind to be a cult in the broadest sense of the word. All that teach true doctrines of Jesus are good for the spiritual progression of those people willing to obey those truths.

Sheppard suggests that people interested in seeking the truth read a book by J. McDowell and D. Stewart, or any other of the "numerous books on the market" that expose cults.

Unfortunately, some of the books to which the reader was directed have been written by former members of one or more of the religions they brand as cults. As one who is seeking truth, I would not ask a non-believer of a particular idea or doctrine to teach me about it.

I cannot speak for others, but if anyone would like to ask me a question about my choice of a church, I'd be delighted to explain the reasons that my search for complete and total truth have led me to this church. Christ taught that we not judge others but invite all to come unto him.

To the honest seekers of truth among us, I say: continue the search and don't settle on the words of men. Ask God for help to discover for yourself what complete truth is, and where to find it in this world.

Alan D. Simpson '87

Pride in the uniform

EDITOR:

First of all, this orange-blooded teapipper would like to extend his sincere congratulations to the Texas A&M football team for its impressive victory over my Texas Longhorns on Thanksgiving. The Southwest Conference will indeed be represented by its best team on Jan. 1, as it should be.

The Aggie win will make this great rivalry even more intense in the future, yet I hope it will always remain a friendly one. I call several A&M students, including members of the Corps of Cadets, my friends, and I can, based on my own experience, assure them that they will enjoy the Cotton Bowl celebration. I say all this and mean it, because I do not wish that what I have to say now be read as mere sour grapes.

After the game as I was preparing to head back to Austin, I witnessed an incident that gave me a great feeling of outrage and then dismay. I had earlier performed in my fifth consecutive UT-A&M halftime show as a member of the Longhorn Band, a show in which we paid tribute to the Aggie Corps of Cadets as well as members of the U.S. Armed Services.

As my fellow bandmen and I were loading our buses, a small group of uniformed cadets stole or attempted to steal several of our white, western hats. Since I have seen this happen before, I am aware that this conduct is considered some kind of tradition within the Corps, however, like other recently unbecoming traditions, this one is ready for retirement.

The fact that upperclassmen give freshman cadets incentive to engage in public theft of state property, surely threatens the respect that many Texans hold for that organization. We in the Longhorn Band are aware of the responsibilities we assume when we wear our uniform, and of the image we must reflect. I know that the Corps also realizes the importance of their image, and I hope that they will strive to avoid such damaging incidents in the future.

Good luck, Ags! Beat the hell out of Auburn!

Scott Hendrix
UT Austin
Class of '86

Litter not a sin

EDITOR:

I was just waiting for the first activist to come along and complain about the "Cotton Bowl Party Weekend So Debbie Maggs was upset about the litter . . . too bad. Actually, I didn't see anything see anything extra ordinary; I had my eyes open that morning — and my schedule does take me all over campus.

I'm not saying that litter is an okay thing, but it is not an evil wicked sin either. It's just something that comes along with big crowds and good times — a fact of life. It's obvious her complaint is irrelevant. (By the way, is she a freshman? Her sentence structures — and reasoning — sound quite spontaneous and immature)

Just how does she suggest the University Police should apprehend 70,000 roaring fans . . . these litterbugs? Keep in mind there were thousands of fans of the other team on our campus that day. Maybe every bit of that trash she saw was distributed by them.

Yes! We should put our trash in a can. But did she see how many were full and overflowing? All of this is just simple evidence of a big crowd of excited fans. Well, I sure didn't see piles and piles of trash all about on Monday morning. Even if she did, she already knew what the campus looks like — we all do. I'm sure Grounds Maintenance was just around the corner from her working their hardest to correct the situation.

Ms. "Clean" was complaining about nothing. Her letter was weak and no one could hear her words. It was a meager attempt at activism. Then I think, she may be more than just a local activist — perhaps she's an anarchist. Is she trying to incite a new student movement? Perhaps it is one to overthrow the merrymaking and all-round "hoopla" of our festive weekends!

Brad Salinski



What to expect from Poindexter

The abrupt departure of Robert McFarlane as President Reagan's national security adviser breaks up the administration's foreign policy team and leaves an unknown, untested adviser in place.

Barry Schweid
AP News Analyst

Where Henry Kissinger and Zbigniew Brzezinski once exercised enormous influence on the presidents they advised, Vice Adm. John Poindexter now sits. And the battle to influence him — or override him — is about to get underway.

Administration hardliners wanted Jeane Kirkpatrick placed in the job last winter when she tired of being a

spokesperson for Washington at the United Nations.

They are likely now to step up their efforts to fill the vacancy created by McFarlane's departure and to win new influence over Reagan's decisions.

Whether they prevail could depend on Poindexter's world views and on the force of his personality. About both, little is known outside the tight little world of the staff of the National Security Council, where he served as deputy to McFarlane.

There, Poindexter concentrated on regional issues and managing U.S. actions in hijackings and other crises. He has little experience in the broad issues of foreign policy. He holds a doctorate in nuclear physics and has a reputation of being a low-keyed conservative.

McFarlane came into office in October 1983 with none of the academic credentials and distinctive personalities of a Kissinger or a Brzezinski. Many of the questions now being asked about Poindexter were asked about him:

But the former Marine combat veteran and student of international relations worked hard, steeped himself in the intricacies of arms control and gained Reagan's confidence.

They met three or four times a day, sometimes alone. Together with Secretary of State George Shultz, who shared his conservative outlook as well as his pragmatic instincts, McFarlane helped to persuade Reagan to lower his anti-Soviet rhetoric and commit the United States to nuclear weapons negotiations with Moscow.

The negotiations have not paid off yet, but there were strong indications that McFarlane — unlike Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger, other top Pentagon officials and possibly the president himself — did not want the Star

Wars anti-missile research program to become a barrier to an agreement to reduce strategic weapons on both sides.

When Weinberger and Shultz disagreed on U.S.-Soviet relations, Mideast policy, terrorism and other issues, McFarlane's views often were pivotal, and he usually came down on the side of Shultz and the State Department.

The public reason for McFarlane's departure was that he wished "to move on to new personal and professional challenges." The persistent speculation is that he was losing a battle over turf with Donald Regan, the president's chief of staff. At issue was whether he would keep his easy, unscheduled access to the Oval Office.

Regan moved over from Treasury in February to become the president's chief of staff. He quickly asserted himself, and along with Shultz, Weinberger and McFarlane, became a regular guest on the Sunday television talk shows that serve as a barometer of power in Washington.

McFarlane and Regan took charge of preparing the president for last month's summit meeting with Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, but apparently it was an uneasy, makeshift alliance.

A widely distributed photograph showed the chief of staff leaning over Regan and Gorbachev as they sat conferring on a couch after dinner. Regan was in the center of the picture, McFarlane off in the background.

A White House photographer took the picture, along with many others. The decision to distribute it was made by the White House under the supervision of Regan and Larry Speakes, the presidential spokesman.

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