



Karl Pallmeyer, controversial columnist for The Battalion, starts another average working day with his fan mail.

Pallmeyer: The man Aggies love to hate

By **Suzie Brawley**
Reporter

Karl Pallmeyer is the man Aggies love to hate.

Infamous for his opinionated columns published in The Battalion, he has created for himself a reputation of hating everything, and anyone Aggie.

But far from being distressed by the animosity aimed at him, Pallmeyer loves it. A senior journalism major from Meridian, he thrives on the attention he receives, hate mail and all.

"People know who I am, and that's nice," Pallmeyer says.

If Pallmeyer's overlong bowl-cut hair and chubby body make him look like an overgrown Buster Brown, he acts more like Dennis the Menace.

True to his image, he's as troublesome around the newsroom as around campus. He's been known to string telephones and notebooks from the ceiling, and recently, in re-

sponse to the Libyan crisis, Pallmeyer constructed his own "Line of Death" across the newsroom in a search for privacy.

Whatever his personal idiosyncrasies, Pallmeyer says he likes to think his sometimes-wacky wit and flippant columns make a difference. He says he wants to do more than cause controversies.

He agrees with the writings of Henry David Thoreau who said, "He serves the state best who opposes it." By calling attention to problems, he hopes to inform students of things that affect them so they can do something about them.

This year Pallmeyer decided to run for student body president because he says he wanted to get student government more involved in the real issues. Pallmeyer, whose platform also included opening a bar on campus and divestment of University assets in South Africa, was turned down because his grade

point average was too low. Student government could be great, he says, but so far it hasn't been.

Pallmeyer says he enjoys the feedback he receives. About 70 percent is negative, he says, but at least he knows people read his column. If they don't agree with him, they can write and say so, he says.

He receives some positive feedback from students he sees on campus, but says most people will complain because "that's just human nature."

Pallmeyer began his writing career in 1984, in the fall of his junior year, with a column on the Gay Student Services's continuing fight for recognition on campus. His column criticized the recognition process encountered by the GSS by comparing it to the formation of the Meridian Hometown Club. Pallmeyer had organized the MHC the year before, with only four of the 15 members being from Meridian.

That was the beginning.

The second column was more humorous than the first.

Pallmeyer proposed a bar be opened in the Memorial Student Center after he visited the Texas Student Union in Austin. The editor's note for that story — written as a joke — accidentally ran, saying Pallmeyer was a communist, atheist and alcoholic junior journalism major. With that, the Pallmeyer persona was born.

Pallmeyer continued writing as a guest columnist for The Battalion, although at first he was afraid of running out of ideas. As it turned out, he couldn't get them down fast enough. When ideas come to him, Pallmeyer says, things just happen.

Last summer, he was hired by The Battalion and he says response to his column was surprisingly heavy for that time of year.

"It was very encouraging," he says.