

Continued from p. 9

of violence and I thought, 'I'm sick of it. I want to come here (to A&M).'

Wiatt's lived in the Bryan-College Station area for 28 years, so he knew something about what to expect when he accepted the job.

He has a quick broad smile that disappears just a quickly when he discusses what he's discovered in the last few years at A&M.

"I've had no violence here at A&M," Wiatt says, "but the perception of violence is more volatile on these parking lots and involving some of the 'prima donnas' who don't want to walk five more feet than they have to.

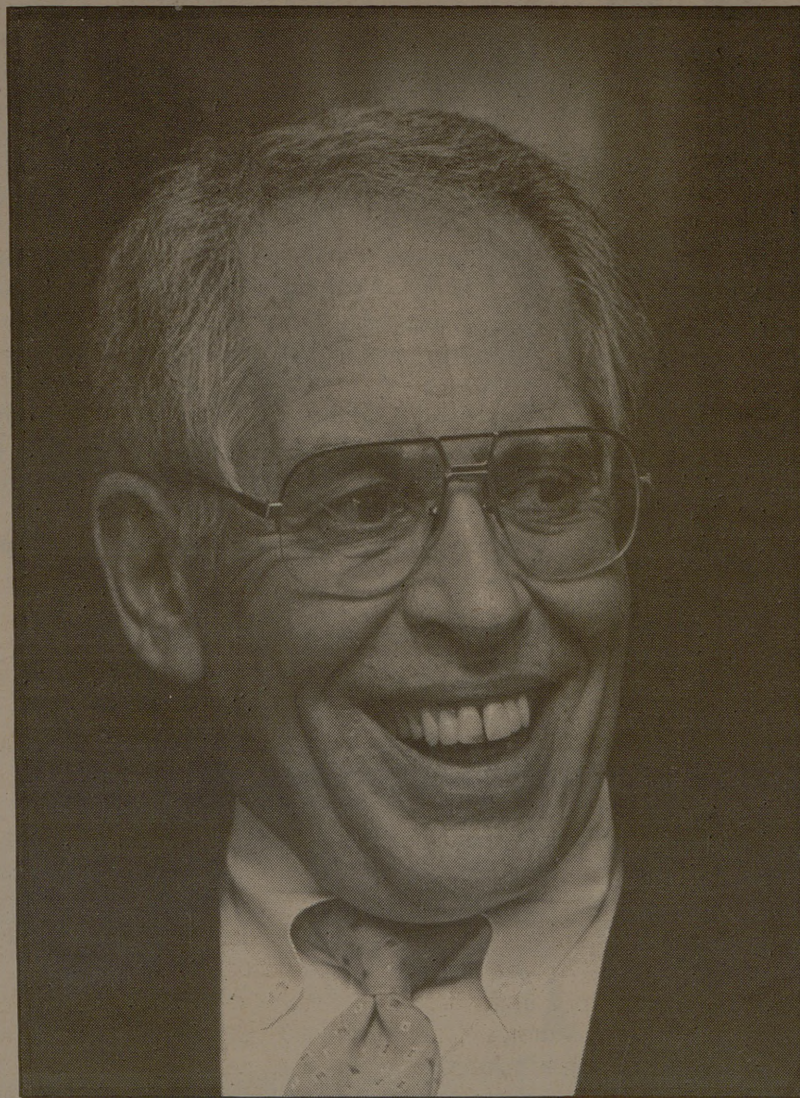
"And there's the volatility when a student will go into a faculty lot and keep a faculty member from his parking space. What I hear (from the faculty member) is, 'I want to draw, quarter and eviscerate the little son-of-a-bitch.' And that is violent to me.

"The excitement that you would think from the life I've led is not here, but the turmoil is probably as great as I've ever seen. There is a consistency of unhappy people, self-serving people and people who really don't give a tinker's damn about their fellow man. They just want what's good for them."

There's no mistaking what Wiatt is saying. He speaks clearly and reinforces his point with his expressive face and hand gestures.

Spending 12 hours a day at his job is not required, but Wiatt does it because he likes what he does. And he genuinely likes college students and people in general.

"I would say that the people here obviously are head and shoulders above others," Wiatt



University Police Director Bob Wiatt knows he won't be winning any popularity contests because of the nature of his job.

says. "I am not an expert to other areas, but from what I have heard from my peers in security director positions, they have more troubles with students on the campus than we have experienced.

"That's not to say that we don't have some hellacious problems with maybe a hardcore small group. But on the whole, obviously A&M is head and shoulders above other campuses."

Wiatt explains that when he came to A&M, President Frank Vandiver agreed that Wiatt would run the University Police

Department as a law enforcement agency. That was something that Wiatt insisted on. It would require an expert in law enforcement to pull it off and a re-education of the 45,000 people served by the UPD. Wiatt tackled the job and thinks they've come a long way.

"When I came here, this department was as denegated as any," Wiatt says. "We were the pits. We still are perceived by some as the pits. But we have professionalized it (the department). We have gotten people with education who want to make a career in law enforce-

ment. That is the big attitudinal adjustment I've had to make en masse throughout the entire campus community.

"Prior to coming here it was, 'You get a ticket. Screw it. Throw it away.' You had privileged individuals. You don't do anything to an athlete. You had certain people in the faculty. 'Don't touch them. If you see them do something wrong, let them go.'

"You don't work like that in law enforcement. Through the entire department, we enforce whatever law or regulation is on the book. We enforce it justifiably. We enforce it with parity. We do not make exceptions because you are some big muckety-muck. We're going to be intimidated by you? No way."

Ask President Vandiver. Ask Coach Jackie Sherrill.

Vandiver recently tried to get a current parking sticker and was refused because he had four outstanding tickets.

"I had to call over to his office," Wiatt says, "and say he cannot drive his car on campus until (he pays his tickets). He sent over his check for four tickets — \$60. I treat everybody with parity."

Actually, Wiatt and Jackie Sherrill, A&M's head football coach and another maroon-jacketed winner, have similar stories. They both came to A&M after great successes elsewhere and took their respective programs to new heights.

Sherrill has bought respect on the gridiron while Wiatt has bought it through his expert knowledge of law enforcement.

One reaps accolades while the other knows that he'll never be a popular guy on the campus.

Chances are that Wiatt and Sherrill don't talk about their successes over frosty mugs of beer, either. Wiatt says Sherrill's been towed by A&M's finest a couple of times.