

State and Local

Students offer alternative publication as outlet for aspiring writers at A&M

By Alan Sembera
Reporter

If a group of five Texas A&M students are successful, a new outlet for aspiring writers soon may be available in the Bryan-College Station area.

A journal, tentatively titled *Palimpsest*, will contain both socially-oriented and literary articles and will become the third independent publication to appear at A&M in the past 15 months.

In January 1986, the *Scannapiecan*, an underground newspaper, began publishing news and commentary about A&M. About six months later, *Purple Cabbage*, a magazine containing poetry, short stories and other art, also started publishing.

Dan Unger, a junior philosophy student working on *Palimpsest*, ex-

plains the need for these alternative publications.

"There's not a lot of freedom of expression on this campus," he says.

A need exists for an independent magazine that can offer writers more freedom, he says. He says *Litmus*, a campus journal published by

sen because purple cabbage is a substitute for litmus paper, he says, and the magazine's purpose is to enable anyone to get work published.

Brian Donovan, the other publisher of *Purple Cabbage*, agrees that there are not enough artistic outlets at A&M.

"There's not a lot of freedom of expression on this campus."

— Dan Unger, a student working on *Palimpsest*

the MSC Literary Arts Committee, does a good job of presenting literary work, but is too regulated and doesn't contain enough social commentary.

Jeff Newberry, a publisher of *Purple Cabbage*, says it also is an alternative to *Litmus*. Its name was cho-

"This university has a very conservative image and people are suppressed by that image," he says.

Marco Roberts, who created the *Scannapiecan*, now called the *Scannapiecan Times*, says his newspaper also was meant to provide an alter-

native forum for ideas. He says the paper tries to cover what *The Battalion* won't.

Some stories the *Scannapiecan Times* ran that *The Battalion* didn't run at the time, Roberts says, include a story about professors requiring new editions of the textbooks they wrote that change only cosmetically and a story about the tradition of sex in men's restrooms at A&M.

Roberts says the *Scannapiecan Times* has a circulation of about 500, and is supported by advertisements and donations.

Gilbert Gonzales, another of the students publishing *Palimpsest*, says anyone can submit articles to the magazine. The magazine will accept a variety of material, including short stories, poetry, editorials, essays and visual art, he says. It also might include a schedule listing events such as bands playing at local clubs.

Bryan schools give adults opportunity to earn diploma

By Suna Purser
Reporter

The Adult Basic Education Program offers a variety of continuing education courses for adults wanting to earn a high school diploma, says Larry Cox, community education director for the Bryan Independent School District.

ABE, funded by the Region Six Educational Center in Huntsville, offers training for pre-General Education Development and General Education Development. ABE also offers an individualized instruction program, which is similar to the GED programs, he says. These programs are designed to prepare students for the GED test. Once the test is passed, students are eligible to receive a high school diploma.

"Our programs offer a sense of accomplishment and esteem," he says. "The classroom environment is not competitive, and students work at their own pace."

The pre-GED is the lowest level available for preparing students to take the GED test, Cox says. Most of the students entering this program do not have as many years of education as someone entering at the GED level.

Students in the pre-GED level may not have completed junior high school and lack such skills as basic mathematics, grammar and English, he says.

Students enrolled in the GED program are at a more advanced skill level. Most have some high school education, and others are very close to earning a diploma, Cox says.

"Many people want to complete high school," he says. "Typically, they left school to get married or work. Most of our students are in the 18 to 24 age group."

During the enrollment process,

students are placed in the pre-GED or GED level. A counselor reviews the students' educational background, and after a brief interview, places the students in the appropriate level, Cox says.

More in-depth interviewing is done in the classroom by the instructor, he says. Instructors, who are paid with state funds, ask the students more detailed questions, such as how long they have been out of school or what kind of hands-on work experience they have had.

After determining if the student has been correctly placed, the state-certified instructor gives some preliminary tests to assess each student's capabilities, Cox says. This is the final step in ensuring the students' placement in the pre-GED or GED level.

"Both levels of instruction are structured so that students can progress at their own rate," he says. "Material is generalized so students may enter the program at any time and not feel behind."

"We try to determine their level of capability before placement," he says. "Hopefully this eliminates some of the worry and apprehension the students feel in the classroom."

For those wanting a less structured, more individualized approach to GED preparation, ABE offers the Individualized Instruction Program, Cox says.

"This is a newly developed program based strictly on individual assessment," he says. "IIP is also geared toward preparing the student for the GED test, but it is not structured as a formal classroom setting."

The program is "non-scheduled," meaning students do not have to attend a formal class and may set a flexible schedule, but instructors are available five days a week if needed.

Paper questions lawyer-judge campaign ties

DALLAS (AP) — Seven incumbent Dallas County civil judges received from 75 percent to 96 percent of their identifiable campaign contributions from lawyers, the *Dallas Morning News* reported in a copyright story.

Two out of three of those lawyer-contributors eventually appeared before the judges on cases that have been settled or still are pending, according to an analysis of case filings by the *News* in Sunday's edition.

The findings underscore a debate in the Texas Legislature over whether judges should be elected or appointed. Texas is one of only nine states that select all of its judges in partisan elections.

Many lawyers tapped by judges for campaign contributions say their intent is not to buy influence but to assure a stable, quality judiciary for them, their clients and the public.

Judges say financial supporters should expect nothing more than courtesy and diligence in return.

But backers of legislative efforts to reform Texas' judicial elections say political and financial relationships between lawyers and judges raise ethical questions about the integrity of the bench.

"It's a corrupt system," said John Hauer, a past president of the Dallas Bar Association. Dallas judges have not been corrupted, he said, but

costly partisan elections "don't lead to impartiality, to say the least."

State Supreme Court Chief Justice John Hill — who was elected — is a leading advocate of appointing judges through a screening commission. That plan, he said, would curtail at least the ap-

"Anybody who makes a contribution to a candidate for public office expects some kind of a return. There are as many expectations about the return you expect as there are people who make contributions."

— Lawyer Lee Simpson

pearance of impropriety that now taints judicial campaigns.

"Unfortunately, no matter how hard a judge may try to be fair to contributors and non-contributors alike, the necessity and practicalities of campaign fund-raising can only create the public perception that the judges will not be impartial," Hill said.

The *News*' study focused on the seven civil court judges who were on their benches before Jan. 1: Republicans Joe B. Burnett, Catherine Crier, Craig Enoch, Gary Hall, John Marshall, Harlan Martin and John Whittington. There are no Democratic civil district judges in Dallas County.

Court records show Martin once appointed Billy Gunter, his longtime friend and former campaign treasurer, as legal guardian for a minor in a personal injury suit. Martin appointed Gunter's brother, Rex, also a lawyer, 16 times.

A comparison was made of campaign disclosure reports filed by the judges and 100,000 cases randomly assigned by the Dallas County district clerk's office to the same seven courts between Jan. 1, 1981, and Dec. 31, 1986.

While records reviewed by the *News* showed that many lawyers received favorable decisions from judges to whom they had contributed, because of judicial discretion, decisions by juries and other factors, no pattern could be established on whether contributors consistently fared better than non-contributors.

"Anybody who makes a contribution to a candidate for public office expects some kind of a return," said lawyer Lee Simpson, a former Dallas City Council member.



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