

Opinion

A columnist's Wish List of Christmas hopes

The Christmas Wish List:

• I wish people would stop calling Brian Frederick a communist. I think he does a good job of breaking the mold of ineffective government ideas.

Granted, his ideas are unorthodox, but at least they offer some alternatives to the programs currently in use. It is painfully obvious that many current government programs are woefully inadequate. The welfare system pays people to be unproductive. The education system caters only to the most promising students. The prison system doesn't incarcerate criminals. A good look at a few of these programs leads me to believe



D.A. Jensen

that it is time to break out of the government program rut.

• I wish the government would stop trying to save the world.

I realize we have a certain obligation to police the world as the guardians of democracy, and all that is right and good but I think we should start at home. While we send money and food all over the world there are people starving in our backyard. There is a lack of food, housing and health care in the United States. If we cannot solve our own problems, how can we expect to solve everyone else's? I think if we try to improve the condition of this country, we will be better able to help other countries.

• I wish people would really get into the Christmas spirit of giving.

During the Christmas season many people need the support of the community. A worthwhile gift is one of self-

The gift of time doesn't cost much, but the reward of self-satisfaction is bountiful. It only takes an hour to give blood. It only takes an afternoon to volunteer at a local food bank.

• I wish there was a solution to discrimination. I hate it. I despise silly men who insist on "a back hand" to prove their superiority. I detest apartheid.

• I wish people would accept the right of journalists to gather and report information.

I get tired of hearing cries of invasion from legitimate news sources. Just think of a world without journalism. There would be no network for the transfer of information. We would go back to the dark ages of censorship.

• I wish I could pay someone to do my Christmas shopping for me.

I usually save my shopping until the last minute when the crowds are rude and unbearable. I don't enjoy being

pushed and shoved. I would gladly pay to have this experience taken off my hands. As an alternative I would like to see people be kind to their fellow shoppers.

• I wish there was a book of unlimited column ideas. Writing a column every week is the hardest thing I've ever done. It may look easy, but I assure you it is tough to be intelligent or witty every week.

• I wish the presidential candidates would stop throwing stones at each other. I haven't decided if this is their tactic to divert attention from real issues so they don't have to commit to a particular viewpoint or if they just lack the self-confidence to stand on their own merits next to other good candidates.

• I wish there was a way to convince terrorists that their activities only make them look stupid and inhumane. Blowing people up or holding them as a hos-

tage does not do a lot to promote a cause.

• As my final wish I would like to see the return of the family unit. It surprises me to see many families falling apart because they aren't willing to weather the hard times together. Many family members stop helping each other because they aren't getting enough in return. The Christmas season is the perfect time to put aside family differences and think about giving instead of receiving.

I want a lot of things for Christmas, but I'll get any of the above things, but there is always that air of hope during this season. I'll be happy that I can still hope. There are many people in this country who don't have that capacity.

D.A. Jensen is a senior journalism major and a columnist for The Battalion.

Mail Call

Screaming bias

EDITOR:

I was disturbed to see that McFadden Hall intends to show the film "The Silent Scream" as part of a program titled "Abortion: Yes or No? You decide." The title of the program implies that both sides of the issue will be represented. However, anyone familiar with "The Silent Scream" knows that this film was once used by anti-abortion groups to intimidate women seeking abortions.

McFadden Hall has misled the public by using such an innocuous title and should title future programs more appropriately.

Elaine Wendt '88

Excellence in parking

EDITOR:

I would like to commend a certain Aggie who has a real talent for parking. Of course, that person should be an expert by now — my taupe Chevy Celebrity was in the slot next to the one used for practice a few weeks ago.

I know not who the person was who decided to test my paint job — which had just been redone last fall because someone backed into the car — for that considerate individual forgot to leave a note on my windshield to let me know that he was so much as sorry that he practiced parking too close to my car.

The damage is minimal, just a 10-inch long, deep scratch and dent on the back panel on the driver's side and some missing trim — but the rust that will now be able to attack my car will be expensive for me to fix. I already have a hard time making ends meet.

Thanks again to the considerate culprit! I hope you are proud of your artwork. I only hope I don't accidentally park too close to your car someday.

Carol Martin '90

Just say no to Ol' Sarge II

EDITOR:

I would like to take this opportunity to personally thank the 1139-plus students and former students who took the time to read and sign my petition opposing the Ol' Sarge idea. For those of you who did not have the opportunity to see the petition, it read as follows:

To whom it may concern:

The people whose names appear on the following pages find it in the better interest of Texas A&M University and its traditions not to create a seven-foot "Ol' Sarge" mascot costume to parade up and down the alumni side of Kyle Field. We feel that this would overshadow our first and only mascot, Reveille, and in turn receive more television coverage in any sports event which he would attend. Texas A&M is unique in the fact that we are not like any other university by having a meretricious, oversized caricature on our sidelines. We do, however, understand the need and desire of the alumni to be led with the student body in the yells and hope the problem will be solved in another fashion.

Perry A. Liston, II '90

Illogical bike policy

EDITOR:

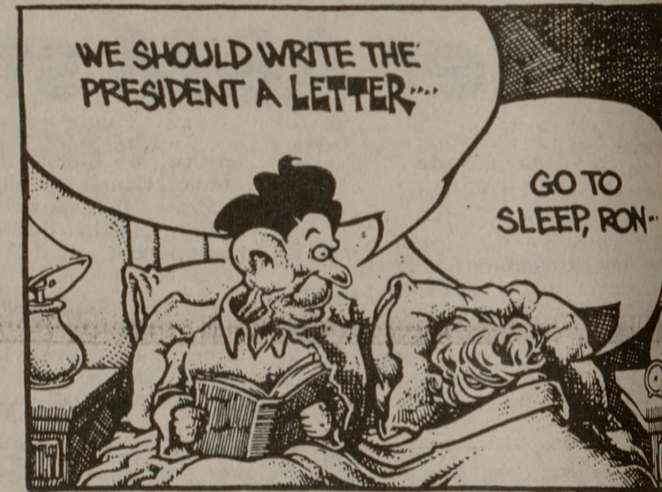
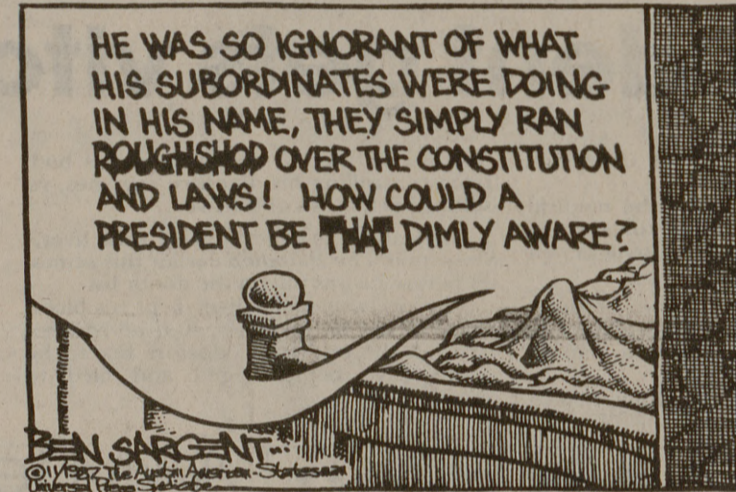
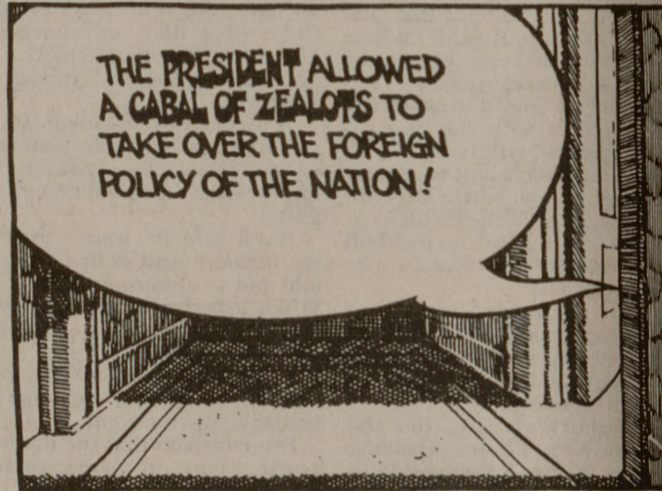
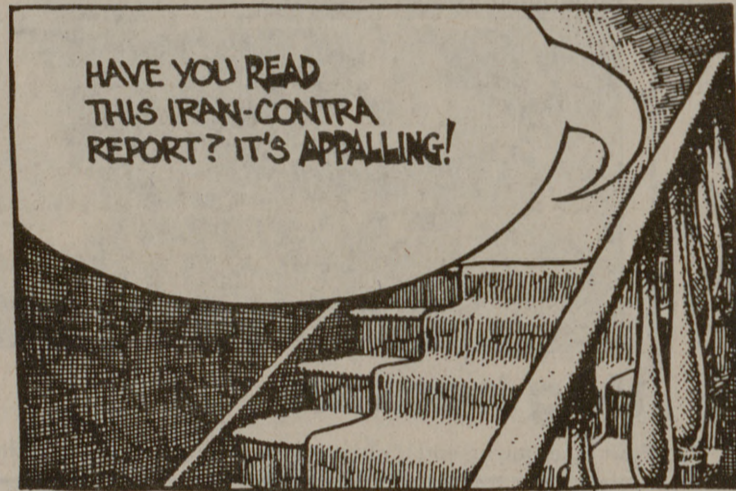
I decided to take this time to write about the latest policy of our beloved University Police.

About two weeks ago, I saw little yellow slips affixed to various bicycles around the Architecture Center. They described how University regulations state that bicycles shall not be chained to shrubs, architectural structures, or appear abandoned or they will be towed! Owner to bear lock removal expense, of course. There are two flaws to this policy. One: Bicycle rack shortage! There are numerous places on campus that could do with more racks, such as Langford Building, Reed McDonald, Sbis, and various others. Two: How to reclaim your bike after it has been impounded. To get your bike, you must register it. Describing your bike's appearance is not proof enough. So, therefore, one your bike is impounded, chances are, you're out one bike.

Once again, University policies trip themselves up in their illogical structure.

Jeff Frank '91

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 classification, address and telephone number of the writer.



Some air travelers need 'incompetent flier' program

I'm always goofing up when I fly. Sometimes I forget to bring my seat back to its original locked and upright position for takeoff and landings.



Lewis Grizzard

Probably the worst thing I do when I fly, however, is in the unlikely event there is a loss of cabin pressure, I don't breathe normally when I place the oxygen mask over my head and face. I breathe Secretariat down the stretch.

The other day, I goofed up something new. I boarded my flight a few minutes before it was scheduled to take off.

When it came time to push back from the gate, however, the plane just sat there. The last time an airplane pushed back from the gate on time was when Wilbur and Orville lugged their flying contraption out of their workshop in Kitty Hawk.

I'm not sure why my flight didn't push back on time. Perhaps the pilot wasn't in the mood or one of the flight attendants had broken a nail.

We can send a man to the moon, but

we can't figure out how to get the 3:13 flight to Kansas City in the air before 5:30.

After sitting in my unmoving seat for nearly an hour, I had to go to the bathroom.

Bad timing has been my entire life story.

I was inside the restroom maybe 11 seconds, when there was a loud banging on the door.

"Sir! Sir!" cried a female voice, obviously that of one of the flight attendants, "we can't pull back from the gate while you're in there."

Wait a second. We'd been sitting here all this time, and as soon as I get inside the restroom they can't wait a few more seconds so nature can take its course?

I hurried as fast as I could and then returned to my seat as all the other passengers stared at me.

I could hear their thoughts:

"Nice going, weak-bladder."

After we finally had taken off, one of the flight attendants came to my seat and apologized.

"It's a new directive we just got from the FAA," she explained. "We can't push back until everyone is seated."

She even showed me a computer printout of the dictum.

Certainly the flight attendant was doing her job, but I had to wonder: Is it really all that important that a flight attendant held up a few more seconds because paying customer has to go to the bathroom in light of the horrendous on-time performance of the airlines and the fact that airplanes are coming closer and closer to running into each other at 30,000 feet?

Where could all this lead? Do we have to start raising our hands to go to the bathroom while the plane is on the ground?

"OK, 14B," the flight attendant might say, "you can be excused but make it snappy."

Some things can't be accomplished snappily, especially if there is pressure that one might hold up an entire flight.

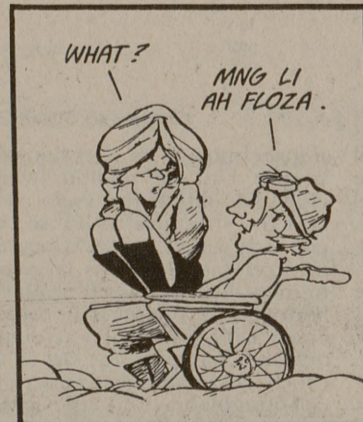
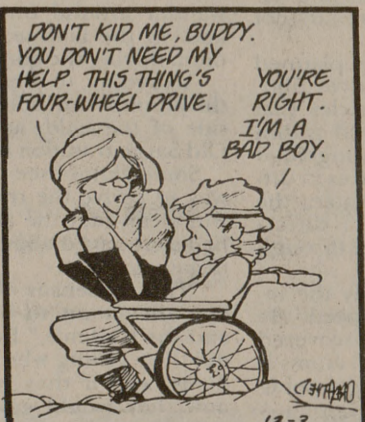
Of course, something like this does give the airlines another excuse for being late.

"Sorry, folks," the pilot could say. "We could have been on time if 14B had remembered to go to the bathroom before he left home."

Copyright 1987, Cowles Syndicate

BLOOM COUNTY

by Berke Breathed



The Battalion

(USPS 045 360)

Member of Texas Press Association Southwest Journalism Conference

The Battalion Editorial Board

Sondra Pickard, Editor
John Jarvis, Managing Editor
Joe Krenek, Opinion Page Editor
Rodney Rather, City Editor
Robbly Lister, News Editor
Lloyd Brumfield, Sports Editor
Tracy Staton, Photo Editor

Editorial Policy

The Battalion is a non-profit, self-supporting newspaper operated as a community service to Texas A&M and Bryan-College Station.

Opinions expressed in The Battalion are those of the editorial board or the author, and do not necessarily represent the opinions of Texas A&M administrators, faculty or the Board of Regents.

The Battalion also serves as a laboratory newspaper for students in reporting, editing and photography classes within the Department of Journalism.

The Battalion is published Monday through Friday during Texas A&M regular semesters, except for holiday and examination periods.

Mail subscriptions are \$17.44 per semester, \$34.62 per school year and \$36.44 per full year. Advertising rates furnished on request.

Our address: The Battalion, 216 Reed McDonald, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX 77843-4111.

Second class postage paid at College Station, TX 77843. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Battalion, 216 Reed McDonald, Texas A&M University, College Station TX 77843-4111.