

Opinion

The Battalion

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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.

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Movin' out

Once again, the nine-month residence hall contract is causing problems — this time because of the Interim Housing Program.

On-campus students can pay to be housed in a Keathley Hall room over the Christmas holidays. Keathley residents whose rooms will be used to house these students must either vacate their rooms or entrust their belongings to the interim resident.

In the past, students who needed interim housing used rooms left vacant by students moving off campus for the spring semester. Under the University's nine-month contract, however, not enough rooms have been left vacant — hence the need for current residents to make way for Christmas occupants.

The contracts Keathley residents signed made no mention of the possibility the rooms might have to be vacated over Christmas, and some residents have said they would have switched dorms had they known of the possibility. University officials say no mention is needed because students don't really pay for their dorm rooms during the month they're gone and are allowed to leave their belongings there only as a courtesy.

Worse than the contractual omission is the fact that students will get little notice that their rooms will be used. Students have until Monday to sign up for interim housing, meaning Keathley residents may be notified Monday that they have to move out before the dorms close Tuesday.

Officials expect students to be responsible enough to commit in March to living in a dorm until the following May — 14 months later — but apparently feel free to evict students on one day's notice. In doing this, A&M officials act less responsibly than the students they have forced into nine-month contracts — and end up looking like nothing but hypocrites.

— The Battalion Editorial Board

A responsible budget

The members of the Student Senate Finance Committee feel compelled to respond to the allegations of fiscal irresponsibility expressed in a recent *Battalion* editorial. The budget requests for next year totaled more than \$6.2 million, and we had only about \$5 million income to be allocated. Had we funded the entire \$6.2 million, the Student Service Fee would need to be increased to \$83 per semester for next year. Therefore, about \$1.2 million had to be cut from budget requests. Note that actual funding increased 2.35 percent. This will result in a \$2 increase in next year's fee.

The *Battalion* Editorial Board stated that our recommendation would "force" the Health Center to cut its "emergency after-hours service." Another article said we recommended the "elimination of all-night, inpatient care" and that "health care services from midnight to 8 a.m. be discontinued." All these statements are incorrect. We never considered eliminating all-night, inpatient care or after-hours emergency service. These services are not affected by our recommendation. The Health Center requested more than \$300,000 for a contract to keep a physician on location at all hours. We eliminated the on-site requirement from midnight to 8 a.m. and reduced the contract amount by \$120,00. Two nurses will remain on duty at all hours, and we recommended that several physicians be on call to admit emergencies. We also strongly recommended that the Health Center and the Student Counseling Service cooperate in the matter of after-hours service.

The *Battalion* also implied that health services received a lower priority than the MSC. The editors claim that we designated the MSC programs to be "more vital" than health care. In fact, the Health Center received a 37% increase in funding! The Health Center has now surpassed the MSC as the largest single recipient of Student Service Fees. This is the first time in at least five years that the MSC has not received the greatest allocation of fees. The Health Center received the largest dollar increase (\$384,139) and percent increase (37 percent) of any of the funded programs. In fact, the Health Center received more than 50 percent of the total recommended increases in funding over last year. Therefore, our priority was clearly and overwhelmingly on

Doug Baumann
Guest Columnist

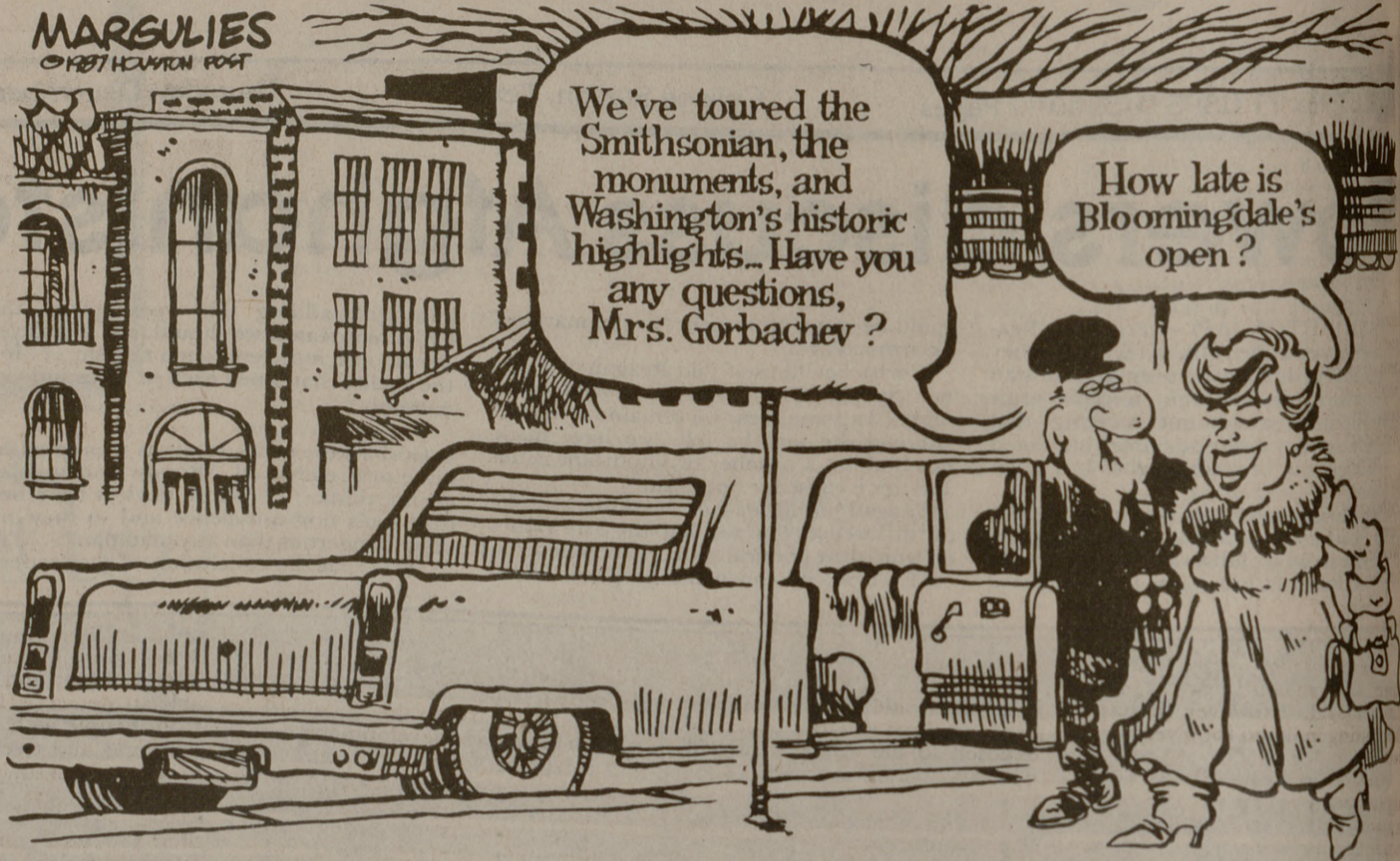
health services. The recommendations concerning the Multicultural Services Center were also criticized by *The Battalion*. The *Battalion* editors claim that we "judged the Multicultural Services Center not on its merits but on its potential as a weapon in a political power game." Actually, we never considered this to be a political issue. We were charged with the responsibility of recommending fee allocations in the best interests of the student body. The Multicultural Services Center was, from conception to allocation of funding, entirely an administrative enterprise. No students were consulted or even notified of these proceedings. The Finance Committee stated dissatisfaction with these actions in our cover letter that accompanied the bill. There was no "smoke screen" for our "real objection" as *The Battalion* editors claimed. They also asserted that we are "foisting the issues onto the administration" by not funding the multicultural program. On the contrary, it was the administration who foisted the program on the student body without due process or consultation. We are not "cutting" the funding of this program; we decided not to fund a program that has never been funded by us.

Nevertheless, the manner in which the program was created was not used as a justification for our recommendation concerning the Multicultural Services Center. Although the Drug Prevention and Education Program was established in a similar manner, we recommended funding of the program's entire budget needs. The reasons for funding this program and not the other are clear: The drug program is a beneficial service that is not duplicated elsewhere in the University; the multicultural program does not meet this criteria. We did not state that the multicultural program was of no benefit to the student body. However, these benefits are already provided by several organizations that receive Student Service Fee funding.

The program also would help the administration meet its minority recruitment goals, most of which are mandated by the government. We believe it is the responsibility of the administration to fund these benefits.

We hope that these explanations will alleviate some of the concerns about the recommended allocation of Student Service Fees.

Doug Baumann, a senior, is chairman of the Student Government Finance Committee.



Student life can be difficult when you're Unpronounceable

The other day, my history professor was passing back our graded take-home tests, and as I waited for him to call my name, I knew he would say it wrong. He did. Everybody says my last name wrong.



Amy Couvillon

It's not easy going through life with an unpronounceable last name. It gets to be a little annoying when everyone from professors to phone solicitors completely butchers the name you've had since birth.

My family is from Baton Rouge, so I'm an honest-to-goodness Cajun who just happened to grow up in Texas. People in Louisiana can pronounce "Couvillon" (for you non-coonasses out there, it's Coo-Vee-On) without making me cringe, but with most Texans, it will come up sounding closer to "Co-Vile-Un" or, God forbid, "Cow Villain." I may be unpronounceable, but I've never stolen any livestock.

But I've learned to deal with it. Since I came to A&M more than three years ago, I've developed some defensive tactics that can prevent the mispronunciation. When my professors call roll on the first day of class, I'm listening, waiting, as soon as they enter the C's.

"Caballero. Chaddick. Clark," the professor reads. Then there is a confused pause, a squint. The professor's

brow wrinkles, and his mouth opens again. That's my cue.

I raise my hand and ask, "Could that possibly be Couvillon?" — usually much to the professor's and my relief. Another merciless mutilation of my family name has been averted.

When I started working at *The Battalion* during my junior year, I found that I was not alone in my Unpronounceable Name affliction. One of the reporters I worked with had the honor to be known as Olivier Uyttebrouck. (It doesn't look like it's spelled right, but it is. I couldn't spell it, but I asked the girl who was night news editor when Olivier worked here and had to type in his nightmarish byline whenever he forgot to put it in his stories — which apparently was quite often.) On many occasions Olivier and I sat at adjacent desks, spelling our names for sources over the phone — again and again and again.

"U-y-t-t . . ." Olivier would be saying over one phone, while on the next phone, I was repeating for the thousandth time, "c-o-u, v-as-in-Victor, i-l-l-o-n. Did you get that?"

By the time I was promoted from staff writer to assistant city editor, Olivier had graduated. So, to continue the Reporter-With-The-Unpronounceable-Name tradition, I hired Lee Schexnaider. We called him "Lee the Unpronounceable" for months. To this day, I still can't spell his name, although I finally learned to say it.

Our city editor that semester was Jens Koepke. He's German, and his name is pronounced "Yenz Kepkey," but people

never seemed to get it right. Whenever people phoned the *Batt* office and asked for a "Jeans Cupcake," I knew who to call.

Sondra Pickard, our recently-departed editor, has a name that seems anyone could pronounce. But for some reason, people who send press releases to *The Battalion* can't seem to spell Sondra's name. Mail came in addressed to Sandra Pickard, Sandra Packard, Sandra Tickard, and one day, — to the glee and amusement of everyone in the newsroom — we got a letter addressed to Saundra Pritchard. Sondra loved it. She kept a running tally of the errors, displaying the address labels on the door of the editor's office.

It just gets worse. At Ease, our weekly magazine, has had a proud legacy of Unpronounceable staffers, including Karen Kroesche, Nancy Neukirchner and Randy Marquardt. A few weeks ago, Lee the Unpronounceable — perhaps pulled by this sheer concentration of fellow Unpronounceables — left city desk to work on At Ease next semester along with the magazine's new editor, Lydia Berzsenyi.

Lee's defection left city desk bereft of an Unpronounceable — but not for long. Last week, I hired a staff writer with the formidable name of Todd Riemenschneider. Now, *that's* a name. If it were any longer, we'd have to hyphenate this byline.

The tradition continues. Amy Couvillon is a senior journalism major, city editor and columnist for *The Battalion*.

Mail Call

Give me a light

EDITOR:

If Texas A&M University can afford to build a new parking garage and a new Aerospace building, why can't it provide adequate lighting on campus at night? A number of lights which already exist on campus burn out. Many have since the beginning of the semester.

The lighting on the Military Walk particularly concerns me. One of the pylon lights by Sbis has been decapitated, and no efforts have been taken to repair it other than some duct tape. Also, the lights which are supposed to light the way on the Military Walk are almost nonexistent. The cost to replace the lights certainly doesn't exceed the cost of a new Aerospace building or parking garage. The University can certainly reserve funds to replace the damaged lights.

Lighting on campus is a student service, and all students pay student service fees. So, why aren't some of these fees used to fix the lighting? The lack of lighting not only causes a safety hazard to students walking on campus at night but also detracts from the beauty of Texas A&M

University. Therefore, efforts should be taken to eliminate this hazard and provide light for students at night.

Mike Petix '91

Health Center: true or false

EDITOR:

Now that finals are here, it's time to take one more test: one question - 100 points.

True or False: The A.P. Beutel Health Center should be a service for the students' general health and overall welfare (open 24 hours a day).

If you answered "true" — welcome to the general population of Texas A&M University.

If you answered "false" — you must be a member of our oligarchical Student Senate.

Karin Richeson '90

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.

BLOOM COUNTY

by Berke Breathed

