

Opinion

Mail Call

But we make contributions

EDITOR:

I am writing in response to Daniel W. Martillotti's letter concerning the faculty club. Mr. Martillotti attacked the fraternities and sororities of Texas A&M stating that they should spend less time passing petitions to halt completion of the faculty club and spend more time helping our community. Mr. Martillotti's charges are incorrect.

The head "petition passer" is Student Body President Mason Hogan. Mason is not a member of the Greek system at Texas A&M. In the Student Senate, only one member has spoken in favor of the faculty club. I am that senator, and I am also the vice-president of one of the largest fraternities at A&M.

On the issue of community service, fraternities and sororities do more for philanthropies and for our community than any other group at A&M.

For example, my fraternity, Kappa Alpha, raises thousands of dollars each year for the Muscular Dystrophy Association through a haunted house, football game and volleyball tournament. We are active with the Bryan Boys Club, and we are planning on working with Special Olympics in April. My fraternity is not alone in working to help others. Each fraternity and sorority at A&M makes significant contributions to charities and to our community.

Daniel L. Sparks '89

Watch your back

EDITOR:

To all of you "leaders" and aspiring officers presently in the Corps of Cadets and the Aggie Band who believe that it is correct and proper to deal with unproductive subordinates by "screwing them out" of your unit, remember:

Proper and fair treatment of your noncommissioned officers and your enlisted men can, in times of combat, determine whether you end up with copper medals on your chest or copper-jacketed 5.56 mm metal in your back.

John Diederhoben '90

Far from being female

EDITOR:

In reference to Wednesday's "Lacking awareness" letter, first of all, I am very far from being female. I would appreciate a small word or two in Mail Call explaining such. As for Jeff Farmer... well...

Joe Shannon Bower '90

An example of A&M's failings

EDITOR:

Jill Galarneau's account of her trip to the Rio Grande Valley is a painful reminder of our institutional failings. Somewhere along the way Ms. Galarneau, a senior, missed lessons on accurate and responsible reporting ("Megan told me... Mexican girls love to have babies..."), lessons on the nuances of languages ("Swarms of Mexican students..."), and lessons on American pluralism ("I asked... if we were still in America. Finally, I spotted one white girl..."). She seems unaware of the dehumanization inherent in swarms. However, before one recognizes the full implications of a term, he or she must learn that words have connotations. Such an understanding is basic and presumably one of the reasons most universities require students to take literature and language courses in which this understanding is addressed.

And what is *The Battalion's* editorial responsibility? Apparently the editors missed these lessons also.

Although our newsworthy behavior often suggests otherwise, the fact remains that we do not live hermetic existences here at Texas A&M. If, as is standard, journalism departments at universities throughout the US receive *The Battalion*, we have once again sent a message to the nation that this institution has not moved beyond the misguided notion of noblesse oblige. That message perpetuates an image that is incompatible with the image of a "world class" educational and research institution.

Robert Campbell
Department of English

Those vampires at Wadley

EDITOR:

Recently, I gave blood at our Savior's Lutheran Church. I have O negative, and on the news there was a desperate plea for that type. I am a campus minister, and some of my students have also participated. While I was there at the Lutheran Church, I learned that the blood I gave to The Blood Center at Wadley in October for the campus blood drive was used for other purposes. The Red Cross nurse at Our Savior's Lutheran informed me that Wadley sells my blood to cosmetic companies, research labs and hospitals. I was outraged. No one told me my blood was being sold for profit last October. I certainly did not receive any gratuity nor do I want any. I give blood to benefit people — in some cases to save their lives.

Wadley grossly takes advantage of the generosity and benevolence of the students at A&M. Like the students, I thought that giving to Wadley was the same as giving to the Red Cross. The Red Cross gives the blood freely to Brazos County people — A&M students are included. Brazos people do not have to give blood in order to receive it either. The only charge is by the hospitals for handling and administration. Wadley, on the other hand, gets approximately \$100 per unit from labs, corporations or from patients in the hospital. In a four day blood drive, Wadley may get 300-800 units. That's big money. In talking with Emily Stitler, the Brazos Red Cross representative, I have learned that it is extremely hard for the Red Cross to get on campus.

Why is Wadley allowed on campus? Students get T-shirts and beer cozies from Wadley in return for valuable blood that is wasted on cosmetics and profits people who are virtually stealing blood away from an area that could use it to save lives. Someone at A&M needs to be held accountable for this great injustice and misrepresentation. Wadley is draining the life blood away from A&M students and the Brazos Valley residents. Support the Red Cross; they are international and non-profit. The Red Cross saves lives. Boycott Wadley.

Melvin G. Brinkley

Cultural disagreements can occur with cats, cops and dinner reservations

In a society as ethnically and racially diverse as ours, there are bound to be occasional cultural misunderstandings.

As an example, consider the recent case of the man, the cat and the cop in Tulsa.

An off-duty policeman was sitting home one day when he got a phone call from a neighbor.

The neighbor said that she saw something strange — a man walking down the street carrying a cat by its neck. The cat appeared to be unhappy.

The cop hopped in his car and drove a couple of blocks. Sure enough, there was a man — later identified as one Huy Van Nguyen — with a plump cat. But now he was carrying the cat by its hind legs.

Since this isn't the way cats are usually handled, the policeman became suspicious. So he stopped his car and ran up to the man and asked: "Is that your pet?"

"Yes," the man said, continuing to walk.

The cop had his doubts, especially since the cat was twisting around to bite and claw the man's hand.

It wasn't clear what law the man was violating, but the cop was sure he was doing something wrong. That's the way cops think.

So he decided to question the man further. But before he got very far, the man became agitated and swung the angry cat at the cop like a club.

The policeman managed to duck the cat and grab the man and they fell to the pavement, where they wrestled a bit.

The policeman eventually prevailed. He pinned the man down, while the cat, its paw still in the man's grip, clawed and bit the man's head.

Finally the cat-holder said: "I let cat go, you let me go."

He released the cat, which streaked away, bounding over a high fence.

After handcuffing Mr. Nguyen, the policeman asked: "What were you doing with that cat?"

Mr. Nguyen calmly answered: "I was going to eat that cat."

Horrified, the policeman said: "You were going to eat a cat?"

"Yes," Mr. Nguyen replied, "I was going to eat that cat."

Well, even in Oklahoma's Dust Bowl days, folks didn't eat their house pets. So the cop took Mr. Nguyen to the station.

At first they weren't sure what charges to place against him. It is against the law to steal a cat, but since the cat had escaped, they had no evidence that it was stolen.

And a glance through the law books showed that it is an Oklahoma crime to work an animal to death, but there's nothing to prevent anyone from dining on a cat.

So Mr. Nguyen was finally charged with assault — trying to hit the cop with a cat — and resisting arrest.

Apparently this incident created a bit of a stir in Tulsa. A woman phoned me from there and said: "What is this country coming to when we have people eating cats? I hope you expose this."

And a man sent me news stories about it with a note that said: "My wife is afraid to let our cat out by itself. Why aren't there laws to prevent this sort of thing?"

The answer to that is if you make laws forbidding the eating of cats, some vegetarians will demand that there be laws

preventing the consumption of lambs, ducks, rabbits and other little creatures.

If you think about it, what animal is nicer than a lamb? Has a lamb ever bitten or clawed a human? Yet, we eat them by the millions. Or cute little ducks? As you eat a duck, do you ever think of Donald? And people not only eat deer without regard for Bambi's memory, they go out and shoot them for the fun of it.

In contrast, if the average little cat was the size of a deer, it might gobble up its owner, or at least a few of the neighbor's children.

Mr. Nguyen was just doing what comes naturally. He is from a part of the world where people think there is nothing unusual about eating cats, dogs and anything else that isn't quick enough to escape.

And in recent years, many Asians have brought this taste with them. A few years ago, there were so many dogs and cats being stewed or sautéed on California that the state legislature passed a law against the eating of house pets.

But nervous politicians with large Asian voting blocs said this would discriminate against their constituents, and the bill was defeated.

I'm sure the story of Mr. Nguyen and the cat will upset many cat lovers. But they should remember that, eventually, all immigrant groups become assimilated and take to our ways. Another generation or so, and the Nguyens won't even consider eating a cat.

They'll become true Americans and eat something like a veal chop.

C'm here, you cute little calfie, and get on my plate.

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Mike Royko

WELL, I'LL HAVE COFFEE-- NO, MAKE THAT TEA-- NO, MAKE THAT COFFEE AND TEA-- AND PUT SUGAR AND CREAM IN IT, ALTHOUGH I LIKE IT BLACK AS MUCH AS ANYONE-- AND PUT ME DOWN FOR SOME ORANGE JUICE--AND GRAPEFRUIT JUICE--AND PRUNE JUICE-- AND TOMATO JUICE-- HASH BROWNS? SURE, I WANT HASH BROWNS, BUT I WANT GRITS, TOO-- AND JUST BECAUSE I MAY SAY "TOAST" DOESN'T MEAN THERE'S NOT ROOM AT THIS GREAT TABLE FOR "BISCUITS" OR "MUFFINS"-- NOW, I DEFINITELY WANT SCRAMBLED EGGS, UNLESS THE POACHED EGGS LOOK GOOD-- WHICH IS NOT TO REJECT FRIED EGGS OR BOILED EGGS, HARD OR SOFT-- AND I KNOW I'VE ASKED FOR SAUSAGE IN THE PAST, AND MAYBE CHANGED TO BACON, BUT AS I'VE MATURED I'VE COME TO SEE THE MERITS OF HAM-- MAKE THAT STEAK--

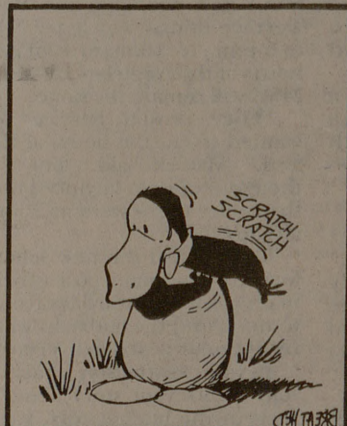


I HATE IT WHEN YOU LET HIM ORDER FOR HIMSELF--

GEPHARDT CAMPAIGN

BEN SARGENT
2/11

BLOOM COUNTY



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(USPS 045 360)

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by Berke Breathed