

# Opinion

## Regent Mobley keeps public's trust in mind

During the Texas A&M University Board of Regents meeting Friday the building and planning committee selected a route for the relocation of the railroad tracks. The proposed relocation would cost more than \$58 million.

Most of the regents agreed the funding would probably not arrive and that the tracks would stay put.

John Mobley was the only regent that voted against approving the site. He disagrees with giving the impression the project is moving forward when it does not look like funding will ever be found for the project.

"I think we are deceiving the public if they're making plans based on what we do," Mobley said.

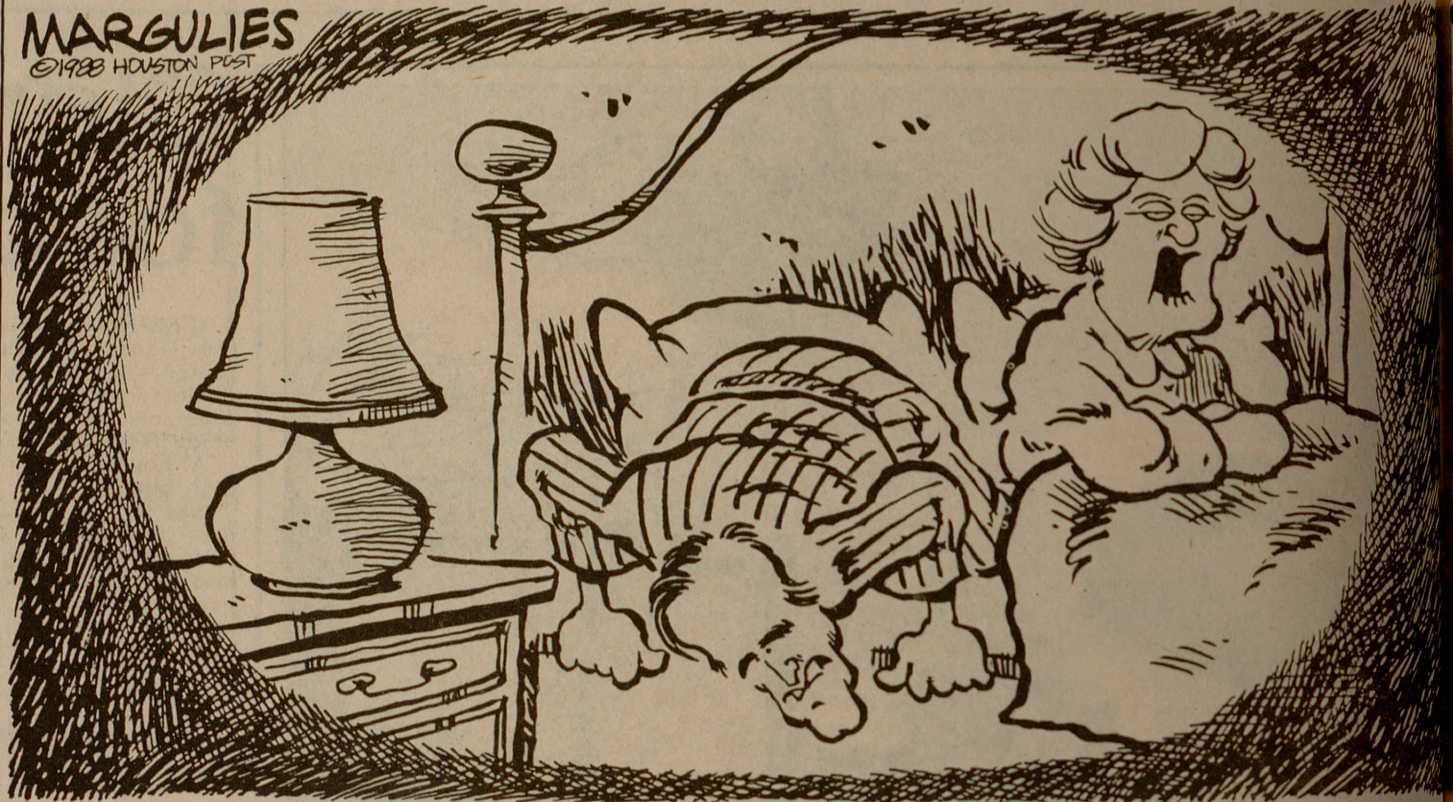
Mobley also told *The Battalion* that in this time of budget restraints even if A&M could work with the local, state and federal governments to find \$58 million, the money could be put to better use.

In an age when many Americans have lost faith in public officials it is refreshing to see a member of our Board take a stand because he wants to keep the public's trust and spend the public's money wisely.

Thanks, John Mobley.

The Battalion Editorial Board

MARGULIES  
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"For heaven's sake, George, turn off the light... There are no ACLU members under the bed!..."

## Mail Call

### Sophomore sets fish straight

EDITOR:

I just read Ms. Keller's reply to the Sept. 15 column on tuition and fees, and frankly, people like her are a disgrace. Listen, fish — how else do you think that Texas A&M is able to provide you with the quality education that you can get here? You stated that you paid \$442 in tuition and fees for a semester. That's \$47 more than one month's rent on my apartment. There wouldn't even be enough left over to pay the bills. Feed the squirrels? Come on!

I work 30 hours a week for the privilege of attending school here. I'm getting the best education that my money can buy. If you'd pull your head out of the ground, I'd have one thing to say to you. Highway 6 runs both ways. Why don't you get on it and go get a no fee, \$12-a-credit hour community college education. I think it will suit you just fine.

### Yet another Fish Camp rebuttal

EDITOR:

This letter is in response to Becky Weisenfels' column in the Sept. 29 *Battalion*. In one instance at least, she is correct — Fish Camp is not enjoyed by every single person who attends. However, I must disagree with her other major assertions: That Fish Camp is unenjoyable for most people and serves no useful purpose.

Ms. Weisenfels has not attended camp. I have, both as a freshman and twice more as a counselor. I was neither outgoing nor popular in high school, and I got a great deal out of camp. For the first few weeks of classes, it was the presence of fellow Fish Campers who kept me from feeling lost and alone at A&M.

In fact, just about everyone I know loved Fish Camp. They did not find it a worthless experience, either. Both as a freshman and a counselor, I had the opportunity to observe my fellow campers for three years, and the vast majority did find it to be the "soul-moving, hear-stopping, ultimate Aggie experience" it was supposed to be.

The only folks I ever saw not enjoying themselves were the kind of cold-hearted cynics who would not enjoy having their dream lover appear, tell them that they had loved that person from afar for years, and invite that person to join them on their yacht in the Bahamas.

No, Fish Camp is not for everyone, unfortunately. No one ever claimed it was. But useless and worthless to all but those who don't need it? I think not. Next time, Becky, when you trash a generally loved institution, I hope you at least go and see for yourself.

Jimmy Miller '89

### Why corner markers?

EDITOR:

Driving down Texas Avenue a few days ago, I was puzzled to notice yet more campus construction taking place — on the golf course. Upon closer inspection, I found that the project at hand is the building of campus markers, so that all corners of the campus will be clearly designated as the property of TAMU.

My question is why? Is there someone out there who is confused about where the campus is? Are people having trouble finding their way to school and work? I have nothing against campus beautification, or against easing the way for those who visit TAMU, but these markers seem utterly extraneous. Surely there is some better way for the University to expend its vast resources: deserving students could be provided with scholarships, for example; and the library has some journals that are badly in need of adoption.

Mary Beth Butler  
Graduate student

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.

## Give him that ol' time rock &-roll and hold the Tiffany



Timm Doolen

In this decade the greatest downfall of civilization has begun. I'm not talking about AIDS, the crime rate, the loosening moral fabric of our society, or anything of that sort. What I'm speaking of is a fundamental change in our society that is an indicator of the breakdown of our civilization: popular music has deteriorated to an embarrassing point.

Yes, the music that our generation is growing up with is far inferior to that of generations before.

Elvis, Buddy Holly, Chuck Berry, and a handful of other American greats created rock-and-roll music in the fifties, transforming popular music into music for the young and young-at-heart.

In the sixties, rock music greatly accelerated. History says the Beatles dominated the decade, yet most of the great groups and individuals of rock-and-roll began their careers in the sixties, such as the Rolling Stones, David Bowie, Eric Clapton, Led Zeppelin, Pink Floyd and the Who.

During that decade, rock music was transformed from the purely popular (and mostly superficial) into an art form. Rock music was being hailed as an art form, not just an annoying hobby of the young. Even older people began appreciating the sounds of rock-and-roll music.

In the early seventies, rock music had its heyday. The bands who started in the sixties, matured in the seventies to give maximum quality. New music from Rush, the Eagles, and Boston continued to bring us to new heights of musical excellence.

But by the end of the seventies popular music was on a downward trend. The Bee Gees were at the top of the charts — disco music was king. It carried over into the eighties when music kept sliding down the long and winding road of demise. We now have artists like Madonna, Tiffany and Prince, whose musical abilities are roughly equivalent to their last names.

I'm not saying the new music is bad, or unpleasant. I'm just saying the quality of rock music as we know it has gone down the tubes.

Rock artists from the sixties and seventies wrote their own music and lyrics. I'd be surprised if Tiffany could write simple chords or lyrics having to deal with something besides teenage romances.

Many current artists have little talent in the areas of music or lyrics. The guitars which defined rock in the sixties, have all but disappeared from the rock scene, being replaced by heartless synthesizers and drum machines. Rock lyrics used to be real, but the quality of pop lyrics today, mostly concerning sex or romance, have become almost as bad as country music's lyrics.

Earlier rock artists had theme albums and concept albums. We had quality music coming from The Beatles' "Sgt. Pepper's" to Pink Floyd's "Dark Side of the Moon." Today's albums aren't albums, they're just a collection of songs that the record companies want to release as singles. Can you imagine a Debbie Gibson concept album — "Don't Nuke My Teddy Bear," full of songs about teenagers who are desperately trying to protect their beloved stuffed animals from the ravages of nuclear destruction?

Once on a KANM radio show, a personal friend and music aficionado, Matt McBurnett, commented on the decline in the quality of black musicians. Speaking in regards to the slide downhill from Jimi Hendrix to Prince, he said, "From Purple Haze to Purple Rain, that's a letdown folks."

What caused it? No one can honestly say they know for sure, but several factors aided the decline. The listening audience of radio has changed. Currently, the target audience for commercial radio is 18- to 35-year-old females. The kind of music which many of these females like is Madonna, Whitney Houston, etc. These individuals get more airplay, which means that other artists start to copy them and soon all of rock is headed downhill.

In a way, it's also a product of our conforming society. Some people feel they should conform and listen to what the "in-crowd" is listening to. Top 40 (or is it Pop 40?) provides the best conduit to that end, because it is so mainstream and few risks are taken.

More and more groups are "selling out" and making albums full of ballads and dance songs, which pleases the record companies. The last few Chicago albums sound like lullabys compared to

the driving music of their early albums. Luckily, many of the classic groups up before they sold out.

In the sixties and seventies, musicians entered their profession because they loved music and had a strong ability for playing good music. The career artists get into music as a source of revenue. Not to say that many great artists never made money. But they had a deeper desire, a sense of conviction of themselves to the world through music.

On a purely musical level, in the past, musicians would copy great drummers like Neil Peart, John Bonham, and Alan White. In this age of technology one hears few people compliment the man who programmed the drum machine on the latest pop single.

There are still a few groups around who retain their sound. But some of it's just not the same. And there are a few heavy metal bands who call great musicianship and really put into their music, such as Metallica, Priest and Iron Maiden.

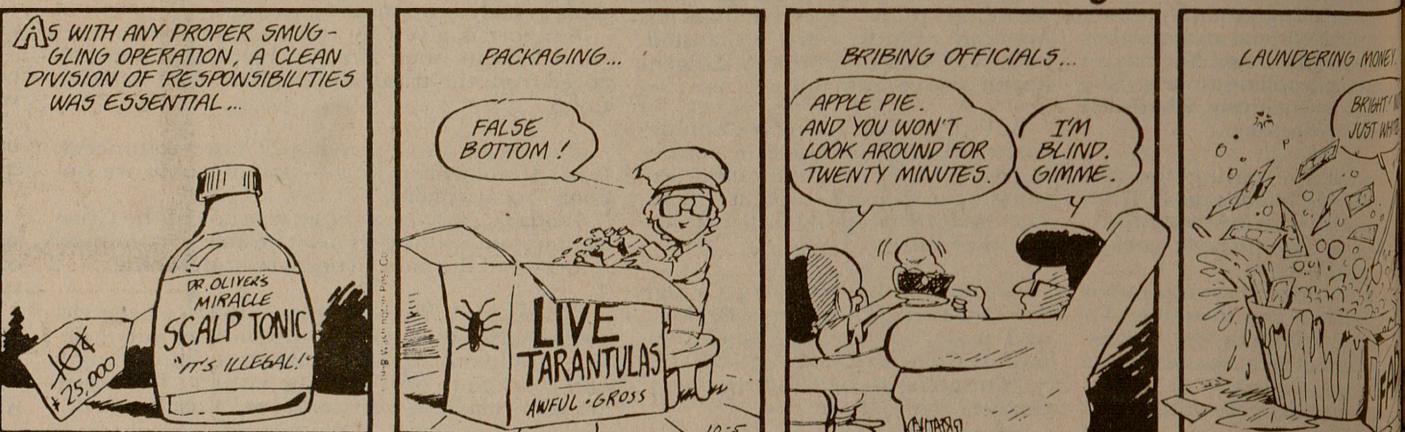
The decline shows no signs of stopping, but there are alternatives. In large cities have music stations that play classic rock, further showing that there is a desire for the old music that is being satisfied by the new. There is an alternative to the local Pop 40 stations in College Station: KANM station, 99.9 FM cable. The music played on the commercial-free KANM will be heard on any commercial radio station.

Rock-and-roll will never be what it once was as long as we can hear Tiffany's "I Saw Him Standing There" never realize that twenty-five years later that same song (with a different word or two) helped launch the career of an upstart, hard-driving, rock-and-roll band who dared to be different in a forgotten age of conformity. The Beatles are no longer with us, but music is still enjoyed, as is the music of songs generated by the musicians from the sixties and seventies. As I put into my headphones and listen to old music — the good music — so long for the golden era of rock, and I regret rock-and-roll's unfortunate demise.

Timm Doolen is a sophomore computer science major and columnist for *The Battalion*.

## BLOOM COUNTY

by Berke Breathed



## The Battalion

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