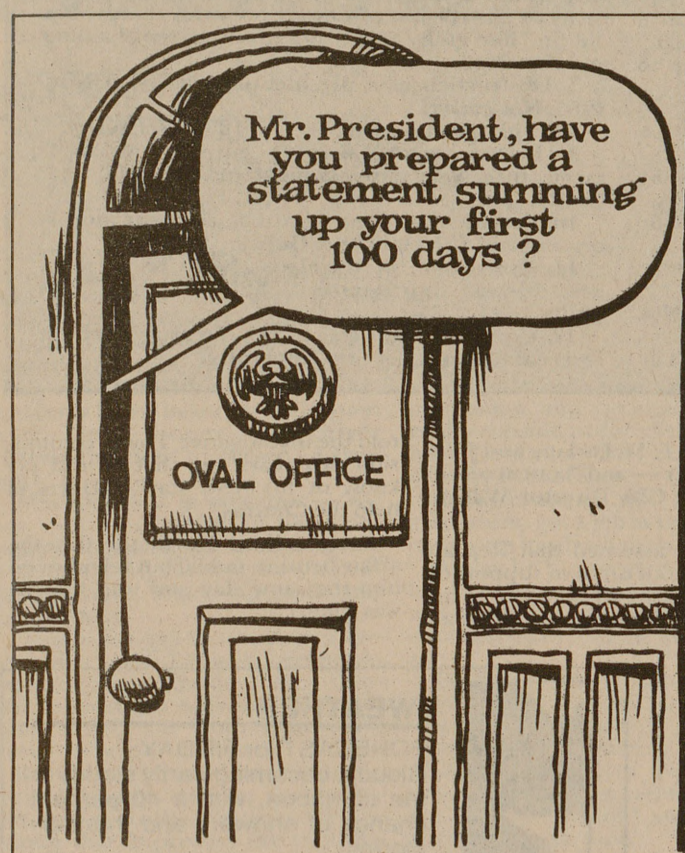


Friday, May 5, 1989



Postal service delivers junk

Mike Royko
Columnist

An interview would probably sound like this:

"Why can't the mailman call it junk mail?"

"Because it is the policy of the U.S. Postal Service to call it 'bulk-rate business mail,' or 'BBM.'"

"Why?"

"Because."

"Why because?"

"Because that is what we call it."

"But nobody else calls it that. When the average American sorts through his mail, he doesn't say: 'Doggone all the bulk-rate business mail, or BBM.' He says: 'Doggone all this junk mail.' Why can't a mailman call it what everybody else calls it?"

"He is not a mailman. He is a postal carrier."

"Why do you call them postal carriers? They don't carry posts."

"Because that is what our policy is."

"Why?"

"Because."

"I see. But is it really 'unbecoming conduct' for someone to call junk mail what it is — junk mail? What is so unbecoming about it? I mean, the man didn't moon the post office when he said it. How can two non-obscene, non-erotic words be considered 'unbecoming conduct'?"

"Because that is what our policy is."

"Why?"

"Because."

"Ah, I see. Now, you prefer that it be called 'BBM,' is that correct?"

"Under our policy, we find that acceptable."

"But are you now aware there are those who use the combination of letters, 'BM,' to refer to a bowel movement? And we could take it one step further, by adding another 'b' and we would have 'big bowel movement.' That the sort of thing you want your postal carriers saying?"

"That is not covered in our postal manual."

"I find this shocking. You suspended a man for using a common phrase, while encouraging him to use what could be interpreted as scatological. Why don't you reverse his suspension like a good fellow?"

"No, he has violated postal policy. He must be punished."

"Then you, sir, are a real bureaucratic BBM."
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by Berke Breathed

Mail Call

Liberal views not wanted

EDITOR:

This letter is in response to Adam Mathieu's column on our civil rights and the war on drugs. I sincerely hope that Mr. Mathieu's bleeding-heart liberal views are not what we students should expect from next semester's opinion page.

Mr. Mathieu, it is people like you and the American Civil Liberties Union that are going to drive the United States into the ground.

If someone acts suspicious, then I believe he or she should be investigated. If a person has something to hide, then being searched should not bother them too much. I realize that being secretly investigated or searched is not a fun experience, but I am willing to let airport guards search me if it keeps a real terrorist off the plane.

Since the beginning of time, suspicious looking people have been investigated. If a person looks like a criminal because of the way his face looks, the clothes he wears or the way he acts, then investigate.

A friend of mine once said, "Hey man, then they'll start searching people for the way the pattern is on their tie."

I truly believe that people won't be searched for the pattern of their shirts or the color of their ties.

Every time you think that suspicious people shouldn't be searched in airports, think of a mother and her child. Then think of a Pan Am plane that was blown out of the sky over Lockerbe, Scotland.

Steve O'Brien '92

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. Editor should not exceed 300 words.

Health center needs support

It's a tradition to criticize the A.P. Beutel Health Center here at Texas A&M.

Even the doctors at the clinic affectionately call it the "Quack Shack."

But the "Shack" deserves a lot more credit than it gets.

Granted, the wait is often long, and examinations seem hurried, but the quality of the doctor's care is adequate, if not excellent.

Some people say the doctors are not qualified to practice anywhere else so they come to the "Shack." Perhaps this is part of the tradition of criticizing the clinic, but few people can question the qualifications of the doctors.

All of the doctors are licensed to practice medicine in Texas, which means they have gone through college, graduated from accredited medical schools and have all had internships and post-graduate training. Four of the seven doctors are qualified to take board examinations to be licensed as specialists. Most of the doctors have had post-graduate training in one or more specialties and have held teaching positions ranging from instructor to clinical professor. All of the doctors are required to take continuing-education classes.

In addition to the full-time staff, many specialists from Bryan and College Station also offer their services at the clinic. There are specialists in: general surgery; urology; ear, nose and throat; dermatology; obstetrics; gynecology; orthopedics; pathology and X-ray.

Wade See
Managing Editor

In addition to the qualifications of these doctors, the clinic is also supported by a good staff of nurses and a top rate laboratory with state-of-the-art equipment.

Most people don't have the luxury of so many specialists and such quick and convenient lab service. Certainly, almost no students would if it weren't for the "Quack Shack."

The problem is not in the quality of the doctors we currently have. The problem is that there are not enough of them to go around.

According to health center records, an average of 155 patients per day visited the clinic last summer, 289 patients per day visited last spring and 365 patients visited each day last fall.

Including urgent care, the health center saw roughly 68,500 patients last year. Those patients were seen by the current staff of seven doctors, two of which only work part time. Thus, five full-time doctors take care of an inordinate amount of people each day.

In fact, the health center's patient load exceeded the number of patients admitted to the University of Texas Health Science Center's three teaching hospitals.

In 1988, M.D. Anderson in Houston,

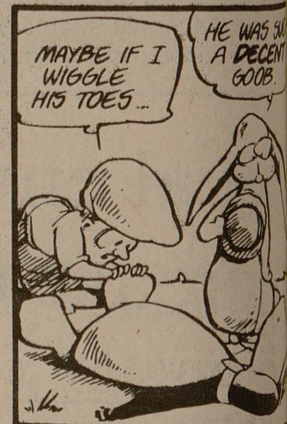
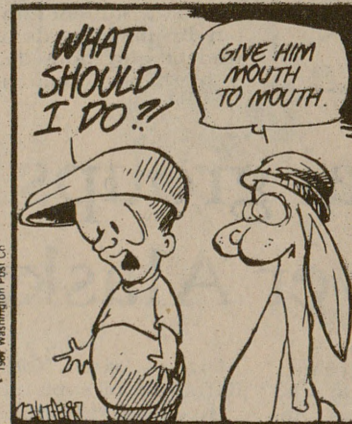
the Tyler Health Center and the University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston, had a combined patient load of approximately 52,700. And they probably had a few more than seven doctors to take care of all the patients.

A bill has been introduced into the Texas Legislature to raise the student health fee from \$15 to \$25 during the regular session. Apparently, the bill will allow students to vote on the increase before it is passed.

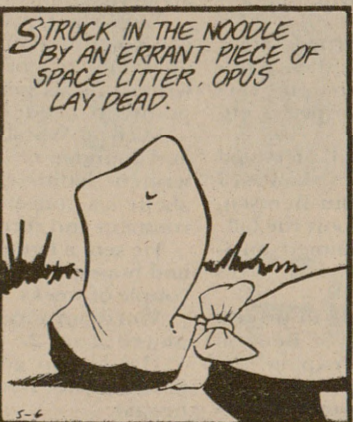
If that opportunity should arise, every student who has waited in the "Quack Shack" for three hours should vote for the fee increase. And that increase should go toward hiring more doctors.

Oh, and every student who has waited for three hours should thank their doctors when they do get to see them. God knows they've been working their tails off while we've been sitting on ours.

BLOOM COUNTY



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The Battalion

(USPS 045 360)

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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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