Kevin Thomas "Waldo"

Keith Spera

The Battalion Staff

Remember the little geek who gets nt off to school in Van Halen's Hot For Teacher" video?

He became an inspiration to Ke-Thomas — an inspiration for

m to draw, anyway. The kid in the video gave Thomas e idea for his character Waldo, o is the star of Thomas' cartoon the same name.

First gracing the pages of The attalion in 1985, "Waldo" has

host of unusual characters. Thomas hopes that he can develop the characters and the strip as whole to the point that it is accepted by a newspa-per syndicate and distributed na-tionally.

Thomas said he considers drawing for The Battalion an invaluable learning experience, but he also says that it is not exactly a perfect situa-tion. He believes that the paper should be distributed earlier in the day, which he thinks would make it possible for more students to read

own over the years to encompass a win over the years to encompass a of reading it," he said. "They think

of it like those tabloids things that are free. Only a small percentage of the students can read it on a regular

This, he says, takes away from the readership of "Waldo."
"People can't follow it every day,"
Thomas said. "I do continuous stories. It's tough to expect people who want to read it to be able to actually follow it every day.

For those who do read "Waldo" this semester, they will get to hear about campus topics through the eyes of Waldo and friends. A new plot twist will be the springboard for Thomas' discussions of campus life.

"The basic plot is going to be that a robot is going to replace President Mobley," Thomas said.

By putting a character in a position of power, Thomas said he can address a variety of issues directly. Probable topics include sports and, more specifically, football ticket dis-tribution, the MSC oaks controversy (should they stay or should they go?)

and graduate student health insur-

Thomas is especially sensitive to the grad school issue.

"I'm considering going to grad school (he has a bachelor's degree in computer science and is currently working for the architecture department), but I don't know how I'd

Thomas said he tries to avoid be-

the University. They may not change the world, but they can make

people notice things. As an example of a cartoon reaching "the right person," Thomas cited a cartoon he drew for the opinion page of The Battalion. In the cartoon, Thomas contrasted a jampacked intramural weight room with.

he right people do read the cartoons. In their own small way, cartoons can have a positve effect on the University. - Kevin Thomas,

ing too preachy in his cartoons, and wants to stay away from the typical satirical targets, like A&M's tradi-

"I don't want to be on a soapbox,"
Thomas said. "But lots of issues
need to be pointed out. The right
people do read the cartoons sometimes. In their own small way, cartoons can have a positive effect on an unused athletic weight room.

Cartoonist

trators involved in making decisions about who uses athletic facilities was carrying that cartoon around with him," Thomas said.

Some of the feedback Thomas receives from his work is negative. A couple of years ago, a controversy erupted when a female student was

thrown out of the perimeter area at the bonfire site. Thomas did a "Waldo" cartoon that painted an unflat-tering portrait of the residents of Davis-Gary Hall by blaming them

for the incident. "Apparently the guys who actually did it had switched helmets with the guys from Davis-Gary, so the Davis-Gary guys were upset that I made fun of them when they hadn't actually actual

ally done anything," Thomas said.

The presence of four cartoonists working for *The Battalion* has intrigued Thomas, as it has the other cartoonists.

"There's going to be competition between us," Thomas said. "But if it's used in a positve way, it can push

the envelope in certain ways and give you new ideas.
Whatever it is that makes certain people enjoy "Waldo" is beyond the

grasp of its creator.

"There's a certain appeal to those who like it, but it's hard to put it in a word or phrase," Thomas said. "It's weird because whatever works, you just say, 'It works.'









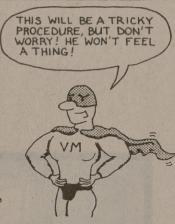


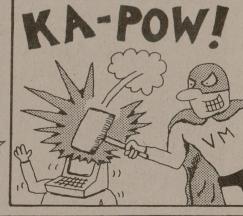






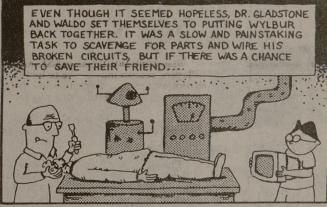








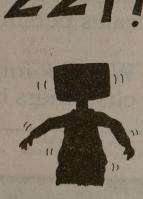


















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