

Life is tough when your roommate worships the ground you walk on

Editor's note: Dean Sueltenfuss is vacationing in Panama. This is a repeat of one of his columns that resulted in the least amount of death threats, hate mail and calls for his resignation.

Another editor's note: Actually, we think that Dean may have joined the press staff of Gen. Manuel Noriega. We're not sure that he will return to The Battalion, but we are certain that we don't care.

Well, this week I was going to write a column about a sports issue, so I went to The Battalion sports editor, thinking my column could run in the sports pages. Our sports editor, who we'll call Hector (he doesn't want his real name to appear in print), said that he didn't have any extra room in the sports pages this week and that he would not be able to run my sports column, "The Joy of Badminton."

"Hey Hector," I had asked, "you gonna have room for that badminton thing this week?"

He responded sheepishly, with an apologetic tone to his voice. It was obvious that he was embarrassed about the lack of space in the sports section.

"Yeah, we've got plenty of room," he said. "But we're not running any of your garbage. Now get the hell away from my desk."

So I understood. No space — it happens all the time. After all, sports is big at A&M.

Anyway, since a sports topic wouldn't be appropriate for this section, I'll have to write about something else. So this week I'm going to write about my roommate — more specifically, about a problem he encountered this week.

He came to me a few days ago looking very worried, very stressed. I could tell by the look on his face that he needed some advice from me. He always asks me for advice. You see, I'm older than he is, so he looks upon me as a father figure, always asking me for my opinion, looking to me for answers. My God, the guy just worships me.

Oh sure, if you confront him about it he'll deny it all; he'll call me a geek who's not worthy to be spit upon. He'll say that I still owe him \$107 and that I'm an S.O.B. and that I should be shot. But that's all just a ruse.

He loves me like a brother.

"OK Luther, what's wrong?" I asked in my usual sympathetic tone. Luther, by the way, is not his real name. It's just a cleverly conceived nickname intended to hide his identity and protect his innocence.

Luther responded as he always does, with a look of hope in his eye, knowing that I would have the right answers.

"Even if there was something wrong, what the hell makes you think I'd tell you about it?" he retorted as he spit in my face.

I couldn't believe it. He was



Dean Sueltenfuss
Lifestyles Editor

ashamed to admit his vulnerabilities to me. He held me in such high regard that he couldn't bring himself to bother me with his trivial problems.

I stood up and approached him, wiping the spit off my face as I prepared to offer him my words of wisdom.

"There, there," I said. "We can talk about this later after you've had more time to think about it."

"Yeah, right," he said. "Now bug off, jerk."

Clearly he was in a great deal of emotional distress, so I decided I'd leave him alone for a while. A few hours later, though, he came back to me, ready to spill his guts.

"Go ahead, spill your guts," I said.

"OK, but do you promise to shut up about this and quit bothering me?"

"Of course," I responded. "I wouldn't dream of bothering you about a subject you don't want to talk about. Go ahead."

"Well, it's about school."

Ah, good, my forté — academic affairs. (I have a 4.37 GPA, but of course I didn't remind him of it then. To do so would have been uncouth.)

"You see, I missed this exam," he continued. "I didn't know I had an exam and I missed the class."

He looked up at me with big, innocent eyes, knowing that I would have the answer, that I would make everything all right.

Realizing that he was looking to me for the solution to his problems, I adopted an authoritative, fatherly tone as I addressed the issue.

"Geez, what the hell are ya gonna do?" I advised, realizing the wisdom of my words even as they were spoken.

"I don't know, Einstein. Don't you have any ideas?"

Wow, Einstein. I knew my roommate looked up to me, but I guess I'd underestimated just how great a person he thinks I am. I was flattered.

"Toe cancer," I suggested.

"Yep, that's the ticket."

"Toe cancer? What?"

"Yeah, toe cancer," I repeated.

"You go to your prof's office, tell her you were diagnosed as having toe cancer last week and that on the day of the test the cancer took a turn for the worse. They had to amputate," you'll say. Then offer to show her what a great job you

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TEAC seeks to involve Ags in environmental conservation



Illustration by Doug LaRue

By Don Kopf

Of The Battalion Staff

Toxic waste dump contaminates lake; Rainforests gone by year 2032; Protective ozone layer being destroyed; Huge oil spill in Alaska; Syringes found washed up on beach... and so the headlines of newspapers across America read.

Many people think there is nothing that can be done to save both the planet and human beings from our own destructiveness. The Texas Environmental Action Coalition disagrees.

TEAC is a Texas A&M student organization that provides a way for both students and others to get involved directly with environmental programs. TEAC members believe that global changes start with local action and that Texas A&M can be a world leader in environmental conservation.

The group works for environmental change by working toward three goals: starting environmental programs in the community, increasing public awareness and working with businesses and student groups in their conservation efforts.

The members of TEAC believe that A&M has the potential to take a leading role in the rapidly growing global environmental movement. Charley Albert, a graduate student in physics and a member of TEAC, said Texas A&M has world-renowned environmental experts, the facilities to carry out the necessary research and an active student body of 40,000. In short, A&M has every-

thing needed to become a world leader in environmental conservation, he said.

Scott Coles, co-president of TEAC, agreed with Albert.

"The time has come for a school of the caliber of A&M to take the lead," Coles said.

TEAC was started in February 1989 by a small group of students who felt that there was a need for a professional, objective, action-oriented environmental group at A&M.

"In the past, A&M was devoid of an environmental group," Elizabeth Edwards, co-president of TEAC, said. Concern for the Earth is growing all around the world, she said.

"We want environmental actions to become accessible for everyone," she said.

Following in the footsteps of now-defunct groups such as the Green Earth Society and the Bryan College Station Resource Group, TEAC members realize they started with a tarnished image. However, the members feel that TEAC will survive because it takes a different approach towards environmental action.

"If we're going to survive, we have to convince 'Joe Ag' that this is one of their traditions," Albert said.

Members say that TEAC is different from previous clubs in many ways. For one thing, the group organizes projects, such as stream clean-ups and recycling drives, in which members can get involved.

"The Green Earth Society was not action-oriented and didn't give their members anything to do after the

meetings," Alex Jordan, TEAC treasurer, explained. When they decided that something needed to be done, it was at the last minute, he said. He added that they usually threw something together that was too drastic and, as a result, the group got a bad image and nobody wanted to be involved.

Albert said TEAC members realize that Texas A&M is a conservative community where a group must work with, rather than against, the system.

"We are a very careful group," he emphasized. "You have to be to survive in this community."

TEAC isn't a radical left-wing group, Albert said. It is a broad-based group that wants to work with the community.

"We're realists and know that you must work with people to get changes done," Jordan added.

So far, TEAC has gotten a positive reception from the A&M community. Coalition members include students, faculty and citizens from both Bryan and College Station. TEAC also boasts members of the Corps of Cadets among their numbers.

"If we can appeal to Corps members, we can appeal to anyone," Albert said.

The club currently is working with both on-campus student groups and businesses in the local community to provide a means for people to get involved in environmental issues. Recently, several officers of TEAC spoke to the Rotary Club about how they can get involved with local recycling and conservation efforts in a

program called the Texas Environmental Alliance of Merchants.

TEAC is also planning another program called Project Learning Tree that will work with Bryan College Station schools. Project Learning Tree will help teachers in the school systems integrate environmental awareness into their teachings. Other projects include planting trees, promoting campus-wide recycling efforts and expanding education programs.

As part of their ongoing campaign to increase recycling on campus, coalition members are trying to get local businesses to donate recycling receptacles for aluminum cans. They plan to place these in each residence hall so that the residents can have a place to put recyclable aluminum cans. The hall would be responsible for trading in the cans for money and would get to keep the money.

TEAC is also planning to honor the 20th anniversary of Earth Day on April 22, 1990, with a large celebration. Because the original Earth Day was a major catalyst in initiating conservation efforts during the 1970s, coalition members hope to make Earth Day '90 a big event, Jordan said.

"The time is ripe for that to happen again," she added.

The public is invited to attend TEAC meetings, which take place at 7 p.m. every Wednesday in room 118 of the Civil Engineering building.

Provost McDonald juggles duties, wears many hats at A&M



Photo by Phelan M. Ebenhack

By Katsy Pittman

Of The Battalion Staff

Dr. Donald McDonald, provost and vice president for Academic Affairs at Texas A&M, had never even heard of A&M when he graduated from Auburn University in 1952.

Later that same year he learned about Aggie spirit firsthand when he served as an Air Force lieutenant during the Korean war.

While on leave with a friend in Tokyo, McDonald met a number of other lieutenants from A&M who left him with quite an impression about a small school in College Station. Although these soldiers were a little on the wild side, McDonald said they were some of the most capable fighters he had ever met.

McDonald runs into his old war buddies from time to time, but the last time he saw one of his old pals, the reunion wasn't exactly monumental.

"I don't think he remembered me," McDonald smiled, "so I didn't say anything."

Not that McDonald is usually a reticent man. He served as the head of Texas A&M's Civil Engineering Department for four years. In 1986, he was named provost and vice president for Academic Affairs.

In the past three years as the chief academic officer of Texas A&M, McDonald has been responsible for finding solutions to some of the toughest problems around.

So what does the provost and vice president for Academic Affairs do?

For one thing, he recommends professors for tenure and promotion.

"I can't know everything about them," McDonald said. "It's a judgment call in a lot of cases."

McDonald also deals with the Study Abroad office, the Honors Program, and approves the selection of editors of The Battalion, "The AggieLand," and AggieVision.

One of his toughest jobs is resource allocation.

This means when all of the academic colleges beg the system for more money, McDonald must decide who gets the money and how much they actually get.

"It's hard," McDonald admitted. "It would be easier if it was a matter of deciding who needed the money and who didn't. Unfortunately, they all need it."

The problem is compounded by certain colleges that grow at much more rapid rates than

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— Donald McDonald
Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

others. For instance, several beginning liberal arts and science classes were filled at the beginning of the fall semester before many freshmen had a chance to enroll. McDonald said that when a beginning-of-the-semester boom like this happens, the University must funnel out funds as fast as it can to hire additional instructors.

Luckily for A&M, the enrollment struggle was much easier to overcome here than it was at some other schools. McDonald said this is due to the enrollment management plan instituted last year.

"We've had microproblems compared to other schools," McDonald said. "In fact, we had about 800 less freshmen enroll this fall semester than we did in the fall of '87."

Now McDonald is trying to get five or six hun-

dred more students — but not in this country.

Koriyama, a Japanese city located 140 miles north of Tokyo, will be home to several hundred students in the future. In fact, McDonald, along with President Mobley and a few other A&M executives, will leave Sunday for a trip to Tokyo and a week later travel to Koriyama.

The original concept for the school was developed by a group of Japanese educators who recognized a need to teach young Japanese students more about American culture, and were concerned about competitiveness in Japanese higher education.

U.S. Rep. Richard Gephardt and former North Carolina Governor James Hunt are involved with getting the Koriyama project off the ground.

Japanese high school students will start a program on the Koriyama campus for two years, McDonald said. They are also expected to take intensive English language courses. The next two years will be spent on the A&M campus.

A&M students who go to Koriyama are expected to take courses in Japanese language and Asian history and culture.

Meanwhile, McDonald is immersed in improving education on the home front.

"The main thing we need to remember is to expand the graduate and research programs that we have a strong undergraduate program and we need to keep it that way," he said.

Undergraduates deserve a high quality education and we have to give it to them." McDonald has future education plans as well. He said the "Commitment to Education" program, which President Mobley instigated, will strengthen education, especially in science and mathematics.

"This is what commitment to education is all about," McDonald said. "We're going to do our share and maybe more."