

Voters need to know about candidates beforehand

On March 13, voters will cast their ballots in primaries for their party's gubernatorial candidates, the first leg in the race for the Texas governorship. But voters should begin making their decisions now.

All too often voters go to the polls uninformed. They wait until it is too late to learn about the candidates for whom they vote. Then they end up making uninformed choices or voting for a candidate only because the name sounds familiar to them.

The time to start looking at the candidates is now, while there is time to listen to their opinions, learn about the issues and make informed choices.

The Battalion Editorial Board

Mail Call

Dining hall dilemmas

EDITOR:
This is in response to Timm Doolen's article on Sbis dining hall on October 12.

Mr. Doolen dared to print those unanswerable questions my friends and I have often pondered. My only complaint is that Doolen focused all of his attention upon Sbis dining hall. I would like to remind him that there is another fairly large dining hall on the south side.

Also, I might add that the Commons is not without its own share of problems. Most south-side and Corps residents know that the University just completed improvements on the Commons eating facility. Well, I personally would like to know when those costly improvements are going to be in full working order.

The installment of monitors to give readings of the menu for each meal is a good idea, but when are they going to use them? The monitors have not been turned on yet.

Another added improvement is the installation of new, triple-decker conveyors to transport the used trays back to the wash room. Again, I ask when are they going to be fully operational? One whole side does not work and only two on the other side are functioning.

In closing, I would just like to know one other thing: Where do they breed those hamsters for the cordon bleu?

Kathleen "Ki-Ki" Jones '91

10 dumb ideas

EDITOR:
Top 10 Dumb Ideas of Texas A&M in recent years:

10. Build a t.u.-type bell tower.
9. Distribute football tickets randomly.
8. Abolish the seniority system for on-campus student parking.
7. Make resident hall students sign a two-semester lease.
6. Turn the Rudder Tower dining facility into a faculty-only club.
5. Reduce health center hours.
4. Reduce the number of shuttle buses servicing outlying parking areas (i.e. Olsen Field.)
3. Close the library on Saturday evenings.
2. Change bus route names to tradition names.
1. Kill some oak trees to expand the MSC.

Larry Odom '88

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.

Woodstock '89: The Yuppie Generation

Editor's note: Matt McBurnett is ill this week. This is a reprint of a column that originally ran in July 1989.

We heard a lot about the Woodstock Music and Arts Festival this past summer, because it was the 20th anniversary of the "weekend of peace and music," as its promoters called it. Yet even 20 years after the event, many people don't remember Woodstock as anything more than the bird in the *Peanuts* comic strip.

If something like Woodstock happened today, would it be anything more than comical?

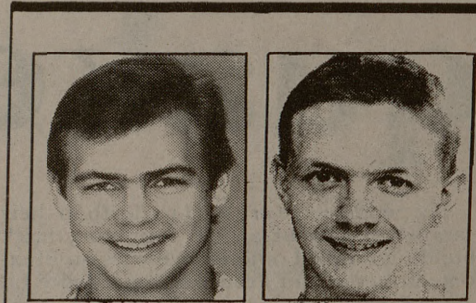
As Woodstock was a symbol of the '60s generation, Woodstock '89 would be a symbol of our generation.

Woodstock, New York, has unpredictable weather, so it would be held somewhere where the climate is dependable — like Palm Springs, but we'd still call it "Woodstock." But instead of holding it in Palm Springs, it'd be held 45 miles away at a place with a lot of parking — maybe a mall.

The biggest struggles would be over who gets the movie rights and who would be the biggest sponsor. Coca-Cola vs. Pepsi, IBM vs. AT&T, Miller vs. Coors — who would win? The fans, I'm sure. Trojan would surely be a major backer, supplying condom machines for the hundreds of thousands of fans. And the Red Cross would have to be on hand to provide AIDS testing — no more of that "free love" bit.

Instead of "three days of peace and music" as the theme, the theme could be "getting a piece of the pie, love of money and video music." Or they could be honest with the theme and call it "three days of sex, money and self-gratification."

Everyone would show up early in their BMWs and private planes. None of this *free* nonsense, the charge would be a \$30 minimum to cover expenses (Visa and Mastercard accepted but *no* American Express). And despite the heavy corporate sponsorship, a percentage of the profits from the extravaganza would have to go to charity, so it wouldn't look like they were doing it for the money.



Matt McBurnett Timm Doolen

Janis Joplin and Jimi Hendrix probably wouldn't show up, but many of the old greats would. The Who, the guys who didn't die before they got old, could put on a set, but I doubt anybody would be able to hear them, including Townshend.

Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young would probably perform, but David Crosby would have to be under the watchful eyes of his parole officer and the people at Nutri-Systems. Jefferson Airplane (or is it Jefferson Starship, or is it just Starship?) might fly in but Grace Slick's voice would be *in absentia*.

The Grateful Dead might play, but the audience might be better off dead than listening to Santa Claus (oops, I mean Jerry Garcia) try to play "Uncle John's Band" at the age of 135.

Gone would be the Indian gurus of the '60s. Woodstock '89 could feature the spiritual leader of contemporary pop, Debbie Gibson. Our teenage pundit could show by example that it is possible to be mega-popular with eighth-grade lyrics. Her right-hand men could be any of the Euro-dance groups such as New Order.

The stage would be easy to set up because everything would be computer-generated. In fact, most of the show could proceed without the use of a single guitar or drum set.

The dance/pop "music" segment could conclude with a rousing performance by Depeche Mode highlighted by a band member playing the synthesizer with his teeth and then setting on fire and smashing it against the stage.

Next would come the poster-portion of the entertainment. Two years after Ten Years After's Alvin Sellsy dazzled the crowd with what was called "the fastest fingers at Woodstock," the gals from Poison, devoted talent, could strum their way into the hearts of those spectators who are devoid of musical taste.

Of course Posin' (oops, Poison couldn't compare to the big stars of the festival, Pistils 'N Flowers and Bon Jese, singing songs that are incomprehensible but obviously sexual.

There is always a chance that the music would rear its ugly head at the '89 festivities. Highlights of the show would be Eazy E's performance featuring an actual drive-by killing of Run D.M.C.'s on-the-spot filming of an Adidas commercial.

Whereas almost everybody at Woodstock was on drugs, most of the people at the '89 festival would be on diets. Instead of the "freakout tent" for people on bad acid trips, they'd have the "kout tent" for people who had broken their diets and had eaten real ice cream instead of yogurt. An announcement over the loudspeakers: "The brownie gurt now circulating among us is specifically too good."

On Sunday morning they'd have the "breakfast in bed for 400,000" but this time it would be egg McMuffins and diet Coke, special-ordered and helicoptered in from the local McDonald's.

Eventually the music groups would finish and the crowds would wander back to their suburbs, but the youth of our generation would have a symbolic rally around for 20 years or more. Well, maybe.

Timm Doolen and Matt McBurnett are junior engineering majors and columnists for The Battalion.

Miami: melting pot of Cuban, Haitian, Jewish culture

Must be Florida — pick up the paper and learn that Disney World is offering a special bargain package for Sukkot, the Jewish holy day. Mickey Mouse and the Mosaic tradition in one swell foop — why not?

Whole place is like that, bizarre juxtapositions of cultures never before seen in the melting pot, much less together. Any old town on the East Coast can have a mixture of, say, Italians and Poles — that's like throwing in tomatoes and onions. But who knows what it does to the flavor when you add Haitians, Cubans, New York Jews and retired tire salesmen from Terre Haute to base of rednecks and real estate developers. It's like throwing jicama, curry and dill into the chicken noodle. It may turn out great, but it sure won't be the same soup.

Strange new permutations and combinations appear daily. There was some excitement in the newsroom of the Miami Herald this week when a reporter discovered three Haitian Republicans, a genus never before seen. The city of Miami is now 59 percent Hispanic, 21 percent black and 19 percent Anglo. The now-dominant Hispanics have created a mutant political culture that resembles nothing else in America.

Molly Ivins Syndicated Columnist

Miami Mayor Xavier Suarez, a Cuban-American, is now involved in a classic fight with the mostly-Anglo fire department over implementing an affirmative action plan. He has a strong progressive record in race relations, which are greatly complicated here by inter-minority resentments.

All exile communities have much the same feel — the same paranoia, the endless plotting, schisms between factions and schisms within factions and intense patriotic fervor for the lost country. The white Russians in Paris, who finally died off just a few years ago (how one wishes they could have lived to see the Soviet Union now), were a classic example of the genre.

The intensity of the exiles' love for their country and of their hatred for the usurper who has made it impossible for them to live there gives them an aura of glamour and romance denied those whose biggest gripe with their government is some pedestrian complaint like high taxes. The rather eerie thing about Miami's Cubans is their hatred for Castro — on which they seem to focus much more than they do on their love for Cuba — is just as intense as it was 30 years ago, and it seems to be passing undiminished to at least part of the second generation. So far the Irish hold the world's record for keeping old grudges going through generations, but Miami's got some contenders here.

Some true Cuban-Americans — not Cuban exiles but people who grew up speaking English, eating white bread, getting MBAs and becoming yuppies — spend every weekend in the swamps wearing military uniforms and sloshing around in training for some future invasion of Cuba. On the other hand, there are also Cuban-Americans beginning to speak out in favor of dialogue with Castro, and while it still takes great courage to do that in Miami, these folks are in good health as of this writing. To listen to Cuban radio,

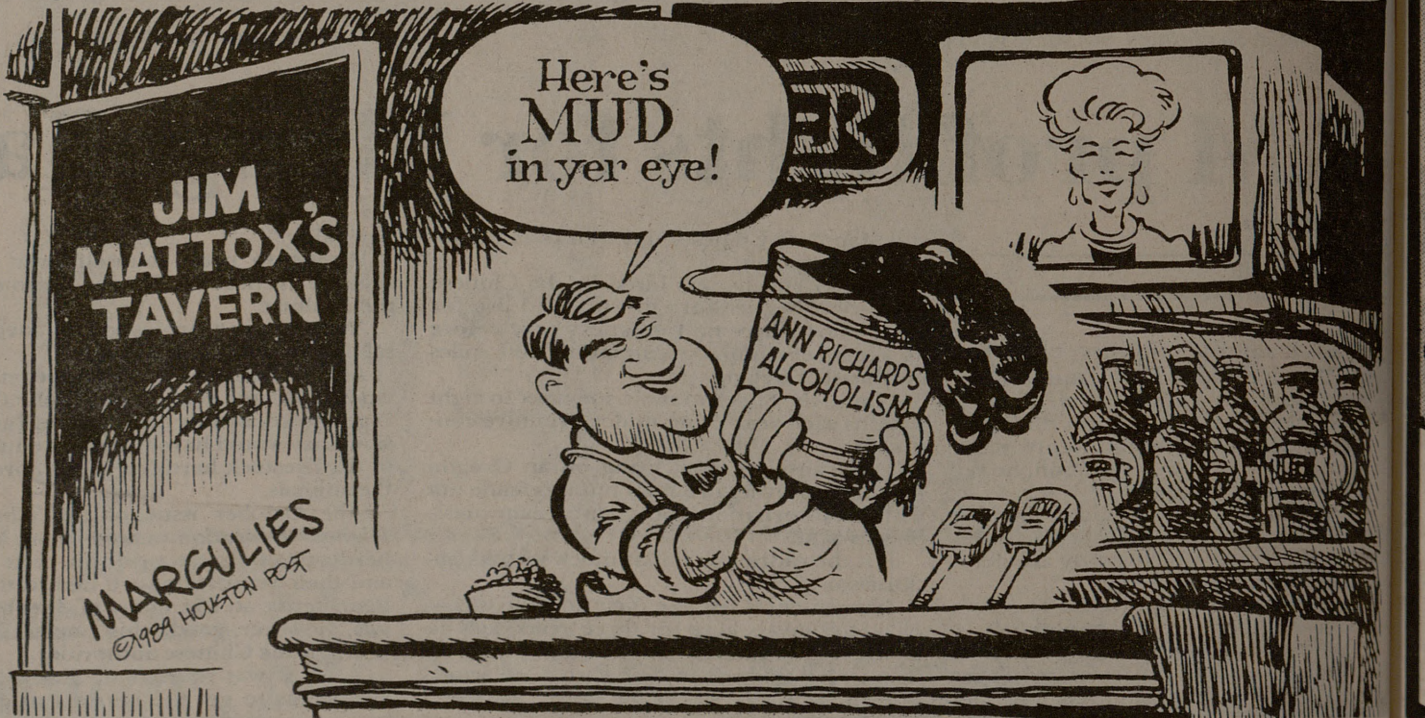
you'd think Orlando Bosch, the man accused of blowing up the Cuban airliner, was a great hero of the people. But when you ask young Cuban-Americans about him, their response is that he's a frail, old man now and shouldn't be persecuted on humanitarian grounds.

The talk shows here are full of excited people demanding to know why the United States went after Noriega, albeit unsuccessfully, when Castro is so much worse and he's been around so much longer. But 30 years is not, as these things go, a very long time for the passions of a revolution to settle.

Although Miami's Hispanic community is largely Cuban-American, it's bizarre politics are periodically reinforced by another wave of anti-communists diehards from some other Latin country that has been taken over by left-wingers. Thousands of right-wing Nicaraguans are now here plotting away merrily. I suspect the result of these exiles will be harder to integrate into the country than most immigrants because they come here involuntarily. They are driven here by bad political fortune, they do not come in search of a better life, as do the Mexican-Americans we see coming across the Rio Grande, and all other immigrant groups before them.

Cubans are the majority in Miami and since they were middle class to begin with, their immigrant experience here is most unusual.

I have no idea how it will turn out — just got here myself and feel like a character in one of Evelyn Waugh's satires of journalism, an expert in 48 hours. But I do know that America has been successfully absorbing people of different races, viewpoints, languages and religions for a long time because we are united by a common devotion to the political principles set out in the Constitution.



The Battalion
(USPS 045 360)
Member of Texas Press Association
Southwest Journalism Conference

The Battalion Editorial Board
Scot Walker, Editor
Wade See, Managing Editor
Juliette Rizzo, Opinion Page Editor
Fiona Soltes, City Editor
Ellen Hobbs, Chuck Squatriglia, News Editors
Tom Kehoe, Sports Editor
Jay Janner, Art Director
Dean Sueltenfuss, Lifestyles Editor

Editorial Policy
The Battalion is a non-profit, self-supporting newspaper operated as a community service to Texas A&M and Bryan-College Station.

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.

The Battalion is published Monday through Friday during Texas A&M regular semesters, except for holiday and examination periods.

Mail subscriptions are \$17.44 per semester, \$34.62 per school year and \$36.44 per full year. Advertising rates furnished on request.

Our address: *The Battalion*, 230 Reed McDonald, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX 77843-1111.

Second class postage paid at College Station, TX 77843.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *The Battalion*, 216 Reed McDonald, Texas A&M University, College Station TX 77843-1111.