

Shelby's reassignment angers A&M alumni

The events of the past few days and the consequential firing of Coach Shelby Metcalf greatly angers me. I realize that the firing may not be reversed at this time; however, I would like to discuss the events leading up to this and the media coverage. It is also apparent Athletic Director John D. Crow, handled this event poorly.

I can only report on the events as I have seen them from the public perspective and the alumni perspective. Undoubtedly there are circumstances and issues which I do not have privilege to know.

I think it very unfair that a man who was within one year of qualifying for state teacher retirement and who probably would have retired gracefully after such time, was publicly humiliated — "reassigned" or fired. Coach Metcalf has been at Texas A&M for a long time. He has won several conference titles and even led his teams to several NCAA Tournament appearances. He was called the "Dean" of SWC coaches and the "winningest" coach ever! A very distinguished career that deserves better than this.

Texas A&M deserves better than this. Now alumni will be answering barrages from those around them who expected more out of Texas A&M also.

Since 1972, I have seen several changes of the coaching personnel — Emery Ballard, Tom Wilson, Jackie Sherrill and now Shelby Metcalf — and each change seems to have been progressively more heated and controversial. I have been disappointed before and even irritated at such changes due to alumni pressure.

Now I am just plain angry. I am angry that our dirty laundry is being aired over every newspaper and TV station all over the state.

The Times Herald reported that Crow was telling "boosters" that Metcalf was going to be dismissed. This type of behavior is intolerable. Athletic directors should learn to keep their mouths shut!

Metcalf had every right to take this to

Christopher E. Stueck

Reader's Opinion

the media to air his opinion.

The Houston Chronicle reported that Crow was upset at game attendance and the poor performance of the basketball team. These things may be true, but by causing a chasm in the program at mid-season, he may have damaged it all the more.

Mickey Herskowitz of the Post termed it a "cold impatient act" adding that "a huge hunk of honor, loyalty and Aggie pride went out the gymnasium window." Herskowitz is quite right. We seem to find ways to sink even lower each time a "coaching change" comes up.

It is time to stop, step back and look at what you're doing to the people involved, the players and especially the alumni who ultimately are blamed for it all.

Aggie pride and spirit are what set A&M apart from the rest. Let's not damage this pride or spirit any more by such irresponsible acts.

So what if the basketball program doesn't take first place this year — even next year. The point is, some things are more important. Allowing Metcalf to retire at the end of his contract and a gracious changing of the reigns would have been more beneficial.

Many Aggies have looked forward to the day when Metcalf would be "immortalized" for his service and dedication to our university. This is, indeed, a very sad and tragic finale for someone who has given Texas A&M 32 years of distinguished service.

Christopher E. Stueck is a graduate of Texas A&M.

As with all columns, viewpoints expressed in Reader's Opinions are not necessarily those of The Battalion. Persons interested in submitting a Reader's Opinion should contact the Opinion Page editor at 845-3314.

Aggies say 'get well' to grad; try to beat the hell outta t.u.

Damon Arhos

Assistant Opinion Page Editor

Once again, the A&M/t.u. rivalry is escalating.

Roddy Stinson, columnist for the San Antonio Express News, created the contest after receiving the following letter from a very dedicated Aggie mom:

"Dear Roddy:

"Juan Basombrio, a 1989 honor graduate and former commander of the 6th Battalion at Texas A&M, is in Wilford Hall Medical Center, having just been diagnosed with leukemia.

"It would really mean a lot to this extremely nice young man if fellow Aggies would send him get-well cards and notes of encouragement. He is not a San Antonio native and has no family living here.

"So, how about it Aggies? Let's show Juan what it means to be an Aggie. Let him know that Aggies do, indeed, stick together.

"Cards can be sent to him at this address: Wilford Hall Medical Center, Lackland Air Force Base, San Antonio, Texas, 78236/5300; Attention: Juan Basombrio, Room 660.

"Thanks and 'Gig 'em.'

"Alice S. Crawford, Aggie Mom, (Classes of '90 and '92)"

This letter was published in Stinson's column on January 3, accompanied by the following "contest" and its rules:

"The Contest: To see who can send Juan Basombrio the most cards and letters:

"1. The students, alumni and fans of Texas A&M.

"2. The students, alumni and supporters of the rival (and wooing) school, the University of Texas.

"The Rules: 1. Each card/letter must bear a drawing of either a "Hook 'em" or "Gig 'em" sign. Non-artists may simply print the words "Horns (Aggies) Wish You Well" or some similar, fraternal message.

"2. Any get-well wisher who couldn't care less about either school may substitute the name, address, phone number and photograph of his/her prettiest niece.

"3. Contestants who send A&M or UT mementos, souvenirs, paraphernalia, etc., will be counted twice.

"4. Anyone who mentions directly, indirectly or subliminally the UT-A&M football scores of the past six years will be automatically disqualified."

And the Prize?

"The Prize: A representative of the winning group will be invited to go to lunch with Basombrio, Alice Crawford, me and South Texas' prettiest niece, (as judged by Juan) when he is released from Wilford Hall."

Let me give you one more quote from Stinson's column:

"I'm confident that UT will win, but I will leave it to the mailman to prove me right or wrong."

As of January 21, we're winning, Ags. The score so far is A&M: 298, t.u.: 95.

Basombrio has received quite a collection, according to Stinson. The 12th Man (football squad) sent him a

towel signed by all of the members. He has received bumper stickers, posters, balloons, t-shirts, flowers, plants, a painting, pictures of nieces and yes, even the dreaded stuffed Bevo. And the letters have been coming too.

While a lot of the hoopla (or should I say "whoopla") has been centered around the competition between A&M and t.u., the fact is that an Aggie needs our help. It's time for all of us in Aggieland to show Juan Basombrio that we're behind him 100 percent.

So OK, Roddy, you're on.

Aggies, forgive me for sounding like a yell leader for a moment, but here goes. Let's all take a few minutes out of our day to send a letter or a bumper sticker or a picture of this year's bonfire to Juan. (His address is listed above.) Let's show him (and Roddy Stinson) that the 12th Man is alive and well in Aggieland, and that we're never too busy to help out a fellow Ag. And let's show everyone our burning desire to beat the EVER LIVIN' (whoop), EVER LOVIN' (whoop), COMPOUND (whoop), COMPLEX (whoop), FIGHTIN' TEXAS AGGIE BONFIRE (whoop), etc. ... HELL OUTTA t.u., like we have the past SIX years. (This may disqualify me, but I just had to say it.)

And from Basombrio himself: "Life is sort of like a walk through a park. Sometimes a tree gets in the way. But you can always chop down trees."

Juan, we're behind you with over 40,000 axes.

Damon Arhos is a senior journalism major.

Editor explains Page 2 idiosyncrasies

This is your friendly Opinion Page editor. How can I help you?

I want to submit a letter to the editor. What do I do?

First you write a letter. A letter to the editor can be up to 300 words in length, or about a page and a half, typewritten and single spaced. If you want to write something longer than that, you may submit a Reader's Opinion column, which I'll explain in a minute.

You can either mail your letter to The Batt, or you can bring it by. Make sure to include your class year — the numbers, not the words (instead of junior, say '91. Whoop!) — your student I.D. and phone number.

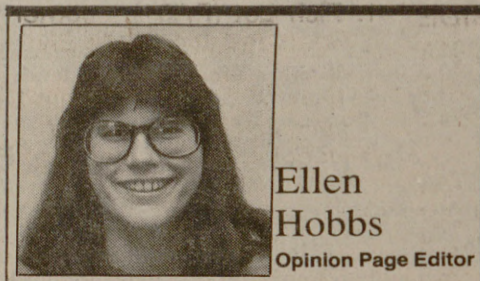
If you bring your letter to The Batt, make sure to bring your A&M I.D. or, if that's not possible, your driver's license. If you mail your letter, expect a call from us to verify that you are who you say you are.

Our policy says that all letters must be signed by one or more individuals. No group can take responsibility for one letter. If a long list of signatures is given, we will print the first signature and indicate how many other signatures were on the letter.

No anonymous letters will be printed. There must be a named printed with each letter.

We edit for grammar, spelling, length and style. We will not, however, change the essence of your letter.

Please don't expect your letter to be printed the same day you turn it in. It may take us a few days to get your letter typed into our computer system and verify it and find room for it on the page.



Ellen Hobbs
Opinion Page Editor

What about writing guest columns? And what's this Reader's Opinion thing?

We're giving our guest columns a little cosmetic surgery. They'll no longer be called guest columns. We found out that some readers thought that only certain people could write guest columns, when in reality any reader can submit one. So now they're called Reader's Opinions.

Anything that is submitted that's too long for Mail Call can end up being a Reader's Opinion column.

Your Reader's Opinion will be edited just like a letter. The shorter and more concise your column, the smaller the chance that your column will be cut.

If you submit a Reader's Opinion, include the same information you would include with a letter to the editor, plus your classification (that's the word, like "junior.")

What's the difference between editorials and columns?

Editorials are the opinion of The Battalion as a whole. They are written and voted on by the members of The Battalion Editorial Board, which is made up of The Battalion editors that

are named in the staff box, at the bottom of this page.

Editorials are boxed and printed in the upper left-hand corner of Page 2, and have the words "The Battalion Editorial Board" printed at the bottom.

Columns are the opinion of the individual columnists, not the whole Battalion. The Battalion does not regulate the topics or viewpoints of our columnists.

What the hell happened to "Calvin and Hobbes"?

We had a poll last semester to see which syndicated comic strip Battalion readers would prefer to see on the Opinion Page. "Calvin and Hobbes" won by an overwhelming margin.

However, The Batt made no promises. "Calvin and Hobbes" appears in the Bryan-College Station Eagle, and the Eagle has exclusive rights to run the comic in this area. And, though we requested it, the Eagle will not give up that right.

Instead, because there was no clear second choice and because The Battalion prefers to run local artists who draw strips with an A&M slant, we moved "Adventures in Cartooning" to Page 2.

"Adventures" is a funny local comic with an editorial slant — a slant that "Calvin" often lacks — and, I think, the better choice for the Opinion Page.

Well, that's it — Page 2 in a nutshell. Keep forming opinions, and happy reading!

Ellen Hobbs is a junior journalism major.

Mail Call

'X' rating doesn't always mean pornography

EDITOR:

Like Ms. Wolling and Mr. Well, I was very surprised to read in last Monday's Battalion that Aggie Cinema would be presenting an X-rated movie, "The Last Woman," in Rudder Theater. My reaction, however, was not of horror and fear for the destruction of Aggie morals but of excitement that the conservative stranglehold that often holds this campus in its grasp had been loosened enough to allow such a film to be shown. No doubt President Bush wouldn't approve, but perhaps we'll get the library anyway.

I saw the film and it was not pornography by any stretch of the imagination. I didn't think it was Academy Award material but it had some interesting things to say. I'm glad Aggie Cinema had the courage to show a movie which would undoubtedly cause some controversy.

To Ms. Wolling and Mr. Well: Thank you for attempting to safeguard my sensibilities, but I don't need your help. Adults, i.e. the vast majority of Texas A&M students, are capable of making choices that fit with their own morals and do not need the morals of other imposed on them.

Laura E. Floyd '91

Equal? Please ...

EDITOR:

In recent weeks, people have been complaining about racism in The Battalion's Mail Call. I am a white man who has just entered this University, and it is a miracle that I am even here.

I graduated in the top 20 percent of my class of about 600 people. Due to some hard times my parents have had, I am struggling financially. My sister, a senior at A&M, graduated 18th in her class of 600 students. In her case and mine, many scholarships were given to people far below us in ranking just because they were members of minority groups.

I am not bitter about what happened in our family, and what happened in the high schools my sister and I attended, but if scholarships were awarded to the most deserving my life would be more worry free.

I am simply tired of individuals complaining about what someone owes them. Thank you, James E. Sexton, for writing the letter on reverse racism.

David M. Babin '93

Adventures In Cartooning

by Don Atkinson Jr.



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.

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