

## Mail Call

### Why aren't Aggies recycling?

EDITOR:

I have always thought that if Aggies were given the means to recycle on campus, that they would gladly do so. We are a conscientious bunch. But last Thursday, I saw something that proved to me all Aggies are not so considerate of their Earth.

In the student lounge in the library there are at least six large containers for recyclable aluminum cans. They are even placed right next to trash cans. It just can't get much easier! But as I was throwing away my cookie wrapper, I saw several aluminum cans in a trash can right next to a recycling container. I couldn't believe it! What is the problem? Do we have to hire people to explain what an aluminum can is? Well, I will. If you get it out of the big red machines with "COKE" written on them, then it's an aluminum can. Does that clear it up? Good! Now I expect that I won't have to go digging around in any more trash cans to retrieve them.

Sherry Wahrmond, '91

### Aggie Bucks not convenient

EDITOR:

Buy your "Aggie Bucks here for convenience." "Eating on campus is fun," and "You get more for your money when you dine on campus" are all messages that come from Texas A&M Food Services. They stress "Aggie Bucks" are one of the most convenient ways to go when eating on campus and they might be. I have to admit the service is very convenient to students who do not want to carry cash for meals. However, when the all-powerful computer system decides to go on the blink all of the money that you have deposited in

these convenient "Aggie Bucks" is locked away in computer limbo.

I am speaking from personal experience. Within the last week the computer has decided to take a so-called vacation twice while I was in line at the Common Denominator located in The Commons and once while in line at the Common Market, also located in The Commons. Furthermore, while in line at Commons Dining Hall, I have observed several people having trouble with the wonderful computer not reading their I.D. cards. This problem might just be centered in The Commons; but, regardless of where it is centered, the problem should be corrected.

I realize that computers have their off days, but this computer is spending too much time on vacation. The Commons dining center serves many time-budgeted students every day, and sometimes having to wait in line for 10-15 minutes can cause a student to miss a meal or be late to class. If this is what Texas A&M Food Services calls convenient, I would hate to see what they call inconvenient. If you are not taking cash along with you to pay for meals, my advice is to take some along because the computer is probably thinking about heading out of town with two blonde PC's under each terminal.

Patrick Fisseler '92

### Have an opinion? Express it!

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. There is no guarantee that letters submitted will be printed. Each letter must be signed and must include the classification, address and telephone number of the writer. All letters may be brought to 216 Reed McDonald, or sent to Campus Mail Stop 1111.

## Gerrymandering in Texas: the real campaign issue

Larry Cox  
Columnist



Well, the fall gubernatorial campaign is in full swing, and hardly a day goes by without an outcry for discussion of the "real issues". Barely a word has been spoken all year, however, about the main issue in the Texas governor's race: gerrymandering.

The early media focus on who Claytine was pokin' and what Annie was tokin' way back in the old days managed to keep voter attention focused, at least for a while, on the candidate's personal lives without stumbling onto a real issue over which they could disagree.

The early mudslinging, while mildly interesting, began to really grind on voters and spawn widespread apathy which was greatly exacerbated by the latest round of negative campaigning.

Recent mudslinging by both candidates has really gone over the heads of average voters across the state. Most people don't know or care to know anything about banking, junk bonds, or state agency management. All of the meaningless accusations have sent voters scrambling for the channel changer rather than the polling place all too often in the past, and appear ready to do so again.

The focus on these insignificant aspects of both candidates might lead voters to believe that there are no issues in the race. When it comes down to the nitty gritty, especially in an election year, it can be very difficult to detect substantive differences in the views of two candidates.

No candidate would be stupid enough to speak out against education, for crime and drugs, or against good highways. On the issue of gerrymandering, however, the candidates are certainly at opposite ends of the spectrum.

In Texas, gerrymandering (the redrawing of congressional districts in an unfair way to give one political party an electoral advantage) is overseen by the governor following each census. The 1990 U.S. Census showed, as expected, a large increase in Texas' population which will result in an increase of at least three congressional seats beginning in 1992.

Here and across the Sun Belt, states which will gain seats at the expense of declining Blizzard Belt delegations are seeing heated scraps between the two parties over the right to cut the congressional pie into partisan pieces next year.

The Republican National Committee was so concerned with redistricting that they persuaded Sen. Pete Wilson of California, the state which is set to gain the most House seats, to put his senatorial career on hold in order to run for governor.

In Texas' congressional delegation,

the difference between Richards and Williams could conceivably mean a swing of as many as 7 or 8 congressional seats into the camp of the controlling party. With the Democrats controlling roughly two-thirds of Texas' twenty-seats at this point in time, Republicans want desperately to maintain control of the governor's chair in order to avoid losing more ground and attempt to achieve parity.

The governor's office in Texas is an extremely weak executive position. Austin insiders often joke that it's harder to buy a six-pack of beer than to override a governor's veto. Governors have generally wielded more real power when redistricting than at any other time, save possibly during special sessions.

The real legislative agenda in Texas set by the lieutenant governor, a race which has received relatively little media attention during this campaign season. Be assured that copious quantities of mud have been hurled by both Mr. Bullock and Mr. Mosbacher, with no end in sight. Both of these gentlemen should come under intense scrutiny because of the huge power void they attempt to fill which was left by retiring Lt. Gov. Bill Hobby.

If voters are truly concerned about the power base in Austin, or about crime control, education or legislative agendas or whatever, they would do well to pay more attention to the second race on the ballot.

As for the top of the ticket, one issue is vividly clear. If elected, Ann Richards will try to increase Democratic congressional strength and Clayton Williams will attempt to increase the number of Republicans. The voters must decide which candidate has the charisma and persuasive ability to push their redistricting plan through.

Ultimately the people must decide not only whether they want Ann Richards or Clayton Williams in the governor's chair, but who they want in the House of Representatives. Republicans, like Jack Fields and Joe Barton? Or Democrats, like Craig Washington and Jim Wright? By voting for either (or neither), you'll actually help decide many elections down the road. Think about it.

Larry Cox is a graduate student in range science.



## With new semester comes new traffic headaches

Well Aggies, another semester has arrived, and with it brings yet another traffic headache to students that have to drive on campus.

The most recent one that comes to mind is the "new" Lubbock Street. It seems that it has been changed from a one-way street to a two-way street. When was anyone told of this change? Obviously, not too many were.

Just the other night I was driving home from the library when, trying to turn right onto Lubbock Street from Spence Street, I was met very rudely by a car in the wrong lane and almost wrecked my car. Fortunately, we

Jeff Bickerstaff  
Reader's Opinion

both were paying attention, and a collision was avoided. It seems that this was a common occurrence that night. I saw three other near misses!

I guess I should mention that a couple of signs were installed telling us that it was now a two-way street — but a week later. For a street that has been one-way for several years and then to change it and to let us know a week later is ridiculous. Another problem on campus has to do

with the bike lanes. I am not the first one to complain and I certainly won't be the last. The bike lanes are truly a joke, they are in terrible shape.

One notable place is on New Main Drive where the pavement is breaking apart and leaving potholes. As for the other newly created bike lanes, there are problems as well. On only one of the lanes, namely Bizzell Street, is there a designated diamond lane to let drivers and bicyclists know that it is for bikes only (and the only reason for that is probably because it is a newly redesigned street). The remaining bike lanes on other

streets are not designated as such. And if that were not bad enough, there are no signs showing the designated bike lanes.

Now, I'm not saying that the students and faculty don't know what bike lanes are, but it is standard practice in many cities, and for that matter many other universities, to both paint and erect signs to designate where bike lanes are located. I do have to give credit to the University for installing them in the first place, but hey, let's finish the job.

Yet another problem that needs addressing is the pedestrian crosswalks. These were created to allow students to

cross the street safely. Well, it is too bad that this is not the case here at Texas A&M. For one thing, many crossings are not marked. This normally would be a big problem, but here it is a bigger problem because drivers do not stop for pedestrians as it is! The blame is not all the drivers fault however. About half of the crosswalks on campus are not marked or painted properly (if at all). These are just some of the traffic-related problems around campus. I could list many more, like faded signs which can't be seen at night, street names missing, and not to mention the parking problems (I would need a novel

to write about that one). The point here is simple: safety should come first! All the things I have mentioned, if corrected, would greatly improve safety, which should be the most important thing on everyone's mind.

Traffic accidents take thousands of lives each year, not to mention the number wounded, of which A&M has had its share. With a little effort, we can make a difference, and even save a life. If even one is saved, then it will have been worth it.

Jeff Bickerstaff is a geography major.

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### Adventures In Cartooning

by Don Atkinson Jr.

