

Visitors help spice up subdued summer campus life

Welcome to summer school!!! For the first-time summer school students, you may be developing a mild complex after your first week of classes. When you arrived in the twin cities, you probably reveled over the great reduction in traffic congestion and restaurant lines. More fascinating was the fact there were places to park on the campus (gasp!).

What a joy you must have been experiencing when, all of a sudden, unfamiliar faces started to appear.

"Hey! Wait a second! Those girls aren't freshmen. They're too young," you may have pondered. "And who are all of the boys wearing Wrangler jeans and high-top basketball shoes?" They looked young too. "But who are they?" you surely thought, as you stared incredulously at the large number of parents following the kids.

As you scratched your head on the way to your car, you may also have been taken aback by the large number of fire department vehicles from around the state.

Trey Jacobson
Columnist

Does this describe your encounter with A&M this summer? Then you are not alone. If you haven't figured it out yet, the campus annually plays host to a large number of conferences, conventions, and camps during the summer months.

Not only do the thousands of entering freshmen and their parents visit Aggieland, but additional hundreds of state 4-H students stay in residence halls for their week-long convention. And although we haven't seen it thus far, you may be prevented from crossing streets by trains of high school drill teams who hold camps at A&M throughout the summer.

Additionally, the University hosts the Youth Opportunities Unlimited (Y.O.U.) camp for disadvantaged teenagers. If you happen to be living on the campus this summer, you will have the pleasure of interacting with many of the aforementioned Aggies-to-be.

And while many of you will be able to

assist these visitors around the campus, others of you will get interesting comments like, "Buy us some beer," "Lets go party tonight," or my favorite, "Where's that area where the girl's lay out in their bikinis?"

For those eating in Sbis dining hall, you will be able to demonstrate all of your community dining skills for the visitors, such as dodging quick-stopping drill team girls and sweeping around a crowd of fifty incoming freshmen all waiting for the same ice machine.

You will also soon discover that the most beneficial knowledge that students will acquire this session is the estimated time of the day that the conferences and camps will converge on Sbis.

Don't let that word "campus" fool you, because one group of visitors pervades the entire community. Shortly, you will see ten times as many cars with emergency lights on top of them. And the country radio stations will repeatedly acquiesce to the requests for George Strait's "The Fireman." Yes, that's right, the heroes of *Backdraft* are coming to A&M. And they keep coming, and

coming and coming...

The University hosts firemen from all over the Southwest and Mexico for fire safety courses. Hundreds, if not thousands, of firefighters engulf the city, filling hotels, campus residence halls and nightclubs. And, as you might expect, where hundreds of men go, hundreds of women are bound to follow. That's right, as the birds and bees would have it, hundreds of single women invade the city in search of eligible (or at least willing) firemen.

Indeed, when the firemen are in town, it's a scary world outside the campus boundaries: we see scores of men looking for women and just as many women looking for men, with the bookstores selling T-shirts and other items to commemorate the event. Nowhere but Aggieland.

But the fact that so many visitors share the campus and city should not cause any problems if we all follow some very important guidelines. First, run if you must, but beat the visitors to Sbis for all meals. If you don't understand why this is important now, you'll find out soon as more visitors make their appearance.

Second, (this one is for women) beware of firefighters who offer to show you their hoses and pumper trucks. Third, (this one is for men) avoid encounters with minors, especially drill teams. This may run counter to many of your beliefs about women, but please understand that drill teams travel with mothers and advisors that double as bloodhounds during "hunting season." If you run off with a minor you are likely to get nabbed, and possibly reprimanded by the University.

Finally, we should assist the guests to our campus whenever possible. We can, for instance, open doors for lines of drill teams, point incoming freshmen and their parents to the correct buildings and answer questions, if possible. Not only will this provide the campus visitors with a true reflection of the quality of students at A&M, but may, in fact, lead to a harmony among the groups that will be our temporary neighbors.

Again, welcome to summer school...and drill team camp...and fire safety school...and fish orientation...and...

Trey Jacobson is a graduate student in public administration.

MAIL CALL

The Battalion is interested in hearing from its readers and welcomes all letters to the editor. Please include name, classification, address and phone number on all letters. The editor reserves the right to edit letters for style and length. Because of limited space, shorter letters have a better chance of appearing. There is, however, no guarantee letters will appear. Letters may be brought to 216 Reed McDonald or sent to Campus Mail Stop 1111.

Flag banning brings controversy

EDITOR:

What's all the hub-bub about banning the Confederate flag? What difference should it make that a high school's mascot is a former representative of the Confederacy. Does it truly dredge up OUR forefathers and their horrible Civil War atrocities or is it merely a symbolic form of speech used by youngsters to rally their high school troops towards the attainment of a common goal referred to as victory.

Yes! The Civil War was a very tragic and horrible part of our history; but it DID happen! And surely we've all heard the trite cliché that if we don't remember the past we are certainly doomed to repeat it. The war, slavery, the murder of innocent civilians, the raping of civilians and prisoners and the pillaging and destruction of the earth was real. But it still goes on today. It hasn't stopped. Think about it. It kind of hurts doesn't it. The unspeakable crimes we are trying so desperately to escape from are still very prevalent in our society today. Is this perpetuation of evil due to high schools flying Confederate (or any types) of flags? I seriously doubt it.

Think about some other majestic mascots of other institutions: The Trojans of U.S.C. - Trojan gods would (often for mere folly) "burst apart the Iron-bound Gates of War". Any objections? How about those warm, kind, peace-loving and humane Vikings? You do know they often raped and killed members of their own clan as well as members of their own family, don't you? I guess we'll just have to do away with the Tigers (they kill and eat humans), the Bears (same reason), the Indians (another American tragedy), the Cowboys (they killed the Indians) and any other team mascot with even a minor character flaw.

History, growth and maturation are a vital part of any heritage no matter how good, bad or indifferent they may be. Taking away a symbol of an atrocity will not erase the event. Let's all be supporters of progress, growth and most importantly -humanity. We cannot rewrite history but we can help forge a more positive future for generations to follow. Let 'em keep the flag.

Gary P. Carroll '91

Tennis player speaks on court conditions

EDITOR:

The state of the utter disrepair and decrepitude of the University tennis courts that are open to the general student body is an absolute disgrace to Texas A&M University. While every student pays considerable fees for sports facilities every semester, and we continue to see proposals for increasing the sports facilities fees, it appears that students are not getting their money's worth.

The courts that are available to the general tennis-loving student body either do not have nets, or do not have lights and the court surfaces appear to have been subjected to Desert Storm battle-ground actions.

As tennis enthusiasts and students of Texas A&M, we are outraged - is TAMU interested only in projecting its image, or is there anyone in the administration who really cares about the quality of services and facilities provided to the students?

Sid Syam

Battalion mixes pages, sports summer changes

Change. As the new leaders of The Battalion, we feel a responsibility to explain recent changes and the reasoning behind them. Most of the decisions were made by the summer and fall editorial boards. We hope most of the changes will be an advantage for both the reader and the newspaper. We tried to make changes we felt were worthwhile and not just change things for the sake of being different.

Before I get into specifics, I would like to explain a few things about the financial mechanics of The Battalion, because some of the changes we made are attributed to "financial reasons."

On paper, The Battalion has lost a small amount of money for the past few years, and so recently we have become more fiscally conservative than usual. We are funded primarily through advertising, subscriptions and \$40,000 in student services fees, the last of which makes up only a small portion of our more than \$700,000 annual budget.

The size of a daily Battalion is, for the most part, determined by the number of ads we receive. However, the paper can be no smaller than six pages and no greater than 20 because of press size restrictions. The more pages we have without advertising, such as Lifestyles and Opinion, the more it costs the paper.

To keep the paper in the black this summer, we are tightening up the pages and running some of our sections less often (such as opinion and sports). In the fall we have more advertising and will usually have larger newspapers than in the summer, which means we have more freedom to run sections on whatever days we choose.

Opinion: The opinion page is moving to the back inside page of the newspaper, and during the summer it will only run on Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday.

Why? After looking at other newspapers both college and commercial, we no-

Timm Doolen
Editor

Todd Stone
Managing Editor

ticed that rarely was an opinion page or section placed in such a prominent position as page two. Often, opinion pages were placed near the back or at best in the middle of the newspaper.

In addition, several of the editors from both summer and fall agreed The Battalion draws its most severe criticism from the words thrown around on the opinion page. Sometimes these words are thrown rather carelessly, which upsets others.

We decided that to help remove a little of the edge off the opinion page we would move it to the back of the paper, where it did not occupy as prominent a position. We thought the physical location of the section might influence the attitude people took towards the page.

In other words, we don't want readers to associate The Battalion's unbiased journalistic philosophy with the attitudes expressed on the opinion page. This is a common misconception that's just simply wrong - the opinion page is an entity separate from the rest of the reporting in the paper.

We also are pursuing means of improving the editorial content of the opinion page by having columnists write tighter arguments, report accounts in their columns more factually and have their opinions more steeped on factual grounds than hypothetical ones. But we felt the move would also help improve the image of The Battalion as well as to keep in line with the standards of the industry concerning the placement of the page.

The reason we will only run the opinion page three times a week is more of a financial decision than a philosophical one. In order to have a complete Lifestyles section on Thursdays, we had to cut back the editorial space from other sections. The most logical choice was the opinion page.

Sports: Sports will only run twice a week - Wednesdays and Fridays - for both financial reasons and the fact there are few A&M sports during the summer. In past semesters the sports section has run daily, but we felt that we would not be depriving A&M sports fans by running twice per week, while at the same time easing the load on our reduced staff and keeping the section fresh the days it does run.

Lifestyles: Before the weekly Life Style magazine last spring, the Lifestyles section ran twice per week, and last summer it ran once per week. This summer the section will run twice per week - Tuesdays and Thursdays - in an attempt to keep the students and others who read The Battalion up to date on what's happening around Bryan and College Station.

Complexity: If this all sounds rather confusing, that's because a daily newspaper is a complex operation. With about 45 student workers in the summer and 70 to 80 in the fall, all trying to put a paper together - well, we have our work cut out for us.

Admittedly, we will probably make some mistakes during these changes, and although perfection is our goal, we realize we will not always achieve it.

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The Battalion

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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.

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