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The Battalion

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TCA negotiations to keep rock video channel fall through

By Peggy O'Hare
The Battalion

TCA Cable attempted to negotiate a special arrangement with MTV Networks to offer the video rock channel as an option at no extra cost, but MTV rejected the offer, TCA general manager Randy Rogers said Thursday.

MTV spokeswoman Carole Robinson, however, said TCA's offer was inappropriate.

"MTV is a basic cable service available to all customers anywhere, such as Lifetime and CNN," Robinson said. "What TCA is proposing is just not done anywhere in the entire world. "It is an aberration," she continued.

"No basic cable channel would agree to such a proposition."

If no agreement is reached between TCA and MTV by midnight Sunday, the local cable company will stop broadcasting the video rock station.

Robinson said TCA was trying to make decisions for its customers.

She said the 200 million homes around the world that receive MTV have the choice to turn off the television if they do not like what they see.

She also pointed out that devices such as lockboxes have been used elsewhere to bar access to certain channels.

"It is ironic that in Leningrad people have the choice to watch MTV 24 hours a day," she said. "But in College Sta-

tion they don't have that choice."

TCA Cable has received more than 700 phone calls within the last few days from the Bryan-College Station residents protesting the dropping of MTV from the company's lineup.

The cable company also faces a protest from the group Aggies Against Censorship Saturday morning.

Gwynne Ash, spokeswoman for Aggies Against Censorship (AAC), said the protest would be open to anyone who was interested in participating.

The protest will begin at 9:30 a.m. Saturday outside TCA Cable's Bryan-College Station office.

"Our disagreement isn't with the parents who find MTV objectionable," Ash said.

"(It's) with the decision-making process which saw only two solutions — changing the format or offering MTV as an optional channel."

Ash said other solutions could be looked at that would satisfy both concerned parents and those "who do not want their viewing habits dictated for them," such as a lockbox.

Rogers, however, said offering such a box is not practical because 50 to 60 percent of TCA's customers in the Brazos Valley do not have a cable box. Rogers added that offering such a box is not possible at this time.

Robinson said people have to keep the cable company's comments in perspective.

"Our programming standards are the same as those of the broadcast networks," she said. "Everyone knows that TCA Cable's accusations are ludicrous."

Rogers, however, disagreed with Robinson's comments.

"MTV created an objectionable channel that in our opinion and the customers' opinions is no longer suitable for broad-based distribution," said Rogers. "We don't mean to imply censorship in any way at all."

"But MTV was not open to the idea of becoming an optional channel instead of a basic offering in the lineup," he added. "Their decision left us with no choice."

Current parking system adequate

Space 'pays for itself'

By Karen Praslicka
The Battalion

Parking at Texas A&M will never be as convenient as everyone wants it to be, but University students and faculty should be pleased with the present parking system, the director of A&M's Parking, Transit and Traffic Services said.

Tom Williams, director for the past three years, said there have been no increases in the cost of student parking permits since he became director and there are no plans for any future price increases.

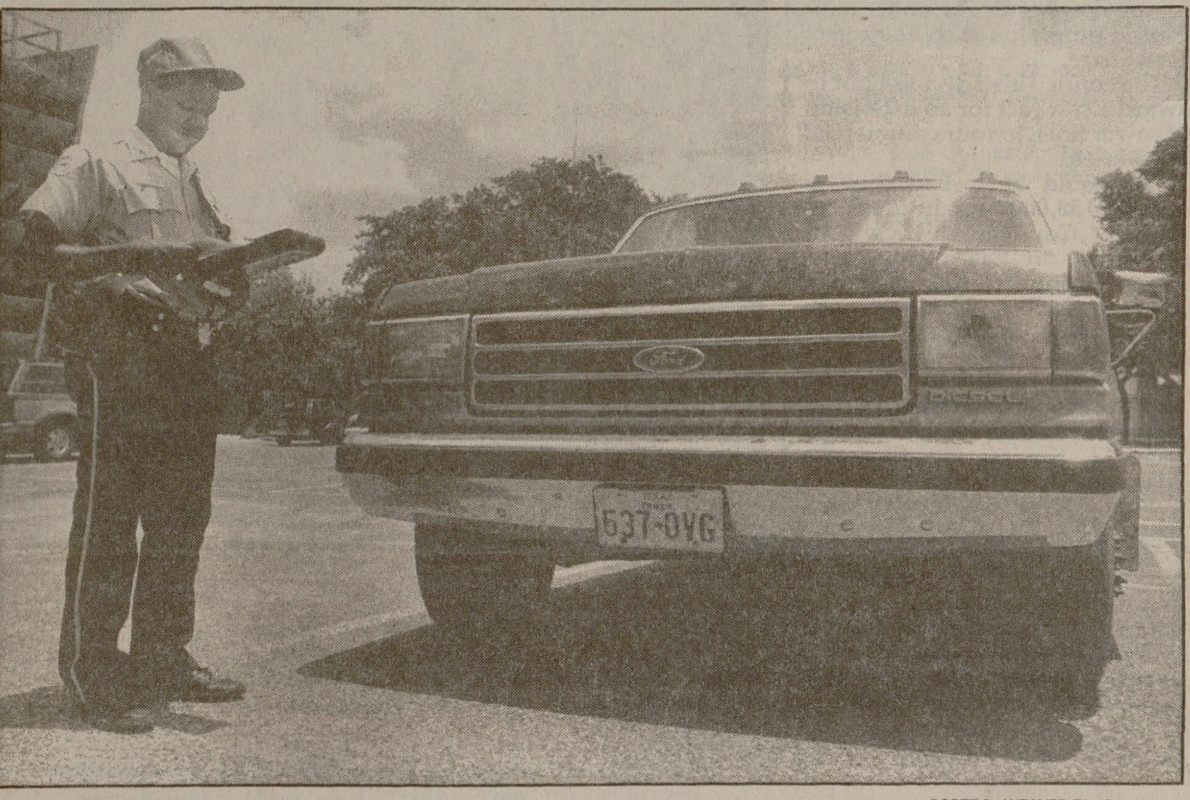
Because PTTS does not receive any state funds for upkeep of the parking system, revenue is generated from the cost of parking permits, visitor parking and parking violations.

"The cost of the parking system determines permit cost," Williams said. "Parking pays its way, in a sense."

The total PTTS budget is about \$3.4 million, with about \$2 million from permit cost and about \$900,000 from parking violations.

Williams said he hopes the number of violations will decrease as more parking spaces are created with the construction of the University Center parking garage.

Parking spaces are provided for faculty and staff on a one-to-one basis, so faculty are almost guaranteed a parking



SCOTT D. WEAVER/The Battalion

Officer Felder, of A&M Parking, Transit and Traffic Services, writes out a ticket for a parking violation.

space, Williams said.

The shuttle bus system, paid for and partly operated by students, provides transportation for off-campus students. On-campus shuttle buses also allow students to get to class easier if they park far away, Williams said.

"We are short (student parking spaces), and there's no way to solve that problem," he said. "No more lots can be built right now because there's no space."

On-campus students are guaranteed a parking space. Williams said that last year, especially during the spring semester, there was an abundance of empty student parking spaces.

"You could drive around just about any time of day and find a space somewhere," he said.

Williams said that when he became director in 1988, his goals were to find campus parking spaces and provide for off-campus students who needed to drive their cars to campus rather than ride the shuttle bus.

Williams said he now believes A&M has a much better parking and transportation system.

Williams said it is hard to say exactly how many student spaces are available because some parking spaces are "double-used." Some spaces are strictly for faculty and staff,

some strictly for students, and at 4 p.m. most spaces are available to anyone with a valid permit.

"You have to look at total availability," he said. "We try to accommodate everybody."

Williams said the fact that there are many empty staff spaces during the summer session is probably disturbing to many students who park at Kyle Field or Olsen Field and walk or ride the shuttle bus to class.

"There's not any way we can solve that problem," he said. "Once the spaces are sold they're committed to faculty

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Marshall announces retirement

Supreme Court Justice leaves after 24 years

WASHINGTON (AP) — Thurgood Marshall, the influential civil rights lawyer who became a leading liberal voice on the Supreme Court as its only black member, announced his retirement Thursday.

Marshall, 82, cited his "advancing age and medical condition" in a letter to President Bush saying he would leave the court "when my successor is qualified."

Bush, who will have a chance to bolster the court's conservative majority with his choice to replace Marshall, promised to "move very swiftly" in naming a successor. But he turned away speculation on possible nominees.

As a justice for the past 24 years, Marshall championed individual rights and the abolition of the death penalty. He has been a staunch defender of the court's 1973 decision that legalized abortion.

His departure will give Bush his second appointment to the high court. The first, David H. Souter, joined the court last October.

Speculation immediately cen-



Thurgood Marshall has announced his retirement from the Supreme Court.

tered on whether the president would nominate a black to replace Marshall.

Among those prominently mentioned are Clarence Thomas, a federal appeals court judge here who formerly chaired the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, and Amalia Kearse, a federal appeals court judge in New York City.

Editor discusses changing nature of the Supreme Court./Page 5

The president's next appointment is expected to increase the court's conservative majority, making it more likely that affirmative action will be restricted, law enforcement efforts enhanced and the 1973 Roe vs. Wade abortion decision overturned.

Asked about possible successors, Bush would say only, "Somebody who believes in the Constitution of the United States. Somebody who will be able to serve for a while."

He praised Marshall as "an inspiring example for all Americans."

The chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus, Rep. Edolphus Towns, D-N.Y., said, "Marshall not only has meant so much for black America, and the downtrodden in America, but he has meant a great deal to America itself."

Soldier recounts war experience

U.S. forces engage Iraq's Republican Guard in tank battle

Editor's note: Michael A. Kelley, a Class of '89 political science graduate, worked for The Battalion as a reporter in the fall of 1989. What follows is a chronicle of some of his experiences as an M1A1 tank platoon leader during the Persian Gulf War. This is part four of a four-part series.

Day 4, Feb. 27:

All during our morning movements we passed numerous defensive positions and obstacles which our engineers had cleared lanes through for our ease of passage.

By the time the sun rose that morning, we had two brigades of the 1st Armored Division on line and were actively pursuing the Medina Division of the Republican Guards.

With daylight came the "the largest tank battle since World War II," there just southwest of Basra.

Our battalion rolled past another defensive position and began firing rounds at enemy armored personnel carriers (BMP-1s), which were apparently left by retreating infantry units. Machine guns fired up trucks and ensured that the bunkers all over the ground were cleared of the enemy.

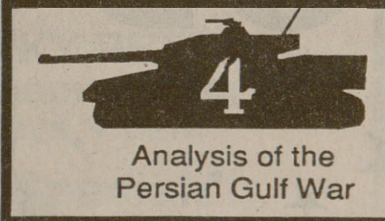
This continued for an hour, until we absolutely had to stop for fuel. Behind us was left columns of black smoke from burning vehicles, but there was no sign of enemy personnel.

We stopped for two hours, transferring our best rounds — the armor-piercing depleted uranium, super sabots — into our ready rack to be fired at long distances to penetrate even the Iraqis' best tank, the Soviet built T-72.

Following more maintenance and refueling, we were hurriedly told to get ready to move out, as

our scouts and the 2nd Brigade had found the Medina.

The battalion quickly moved about five kilometers to a ridge line that the 2nd Brigade was already firing off of.



Analysis of the Persian Gulf War

Huge pillars of smoke and flame came from the valley below as we pulled up to join in the kill. We had trapped the Medina in the valley below, and for four hours, we pummeled this, the remainder of Hussein's elite armored force, causing the Republican Guards to cease to exist.

It was almost a turkey shoot for the 1st Armored Division, as our M1A1 tanks and attached Bradley Infantry Fighting Vehicles turned tanks and BMPs into columns of smoke and fire.

We shot at ranges that were well outside the enemy's maximum effective range, and they acted as if they could not even see us.

In a futile attempt to stop the massacre, the Iraqis fired several artillery rounds at us, landing about 200 meters from my tank. Then a mortar round landed less than 50 feet from my position.

It was as if the months of artillery nightmares were coming true. But these indirect fires were quickly silenced by our MLRS batteries.

Joining us in the battle were Apache attack helicopters and Air Force A-10 Thunderbolts, adding certain death to those vehicles unseen from our positions. Our artillery also joined in

See U.S. forces/Page 6

Two die from injuries sustained in car wreck

By Mack Harrison
The Battalion

A Texas A&M student was killed and another person died from injuries suffered in a one-vehicle accident near Montgomery late Wednesday night.

Two other A&M students were injured in the wreck, a DPS spokesperson said.

Police Communications Officer J. Shreckengaust said the 1984 two-door Honda was westbound on state Highway 105 at 11:30 p.m. Wednesday when its driver lost control. The car ran off the road and travelled 156 feet into a utility pole.

The driver, Kelly Lynn Lane of Houston, told troopers she lost control when she swerved to avoid a dog.

Marcus J. Tyler, 20, an A&M junior engineering technology student from Dallas, was pronounced dead at the scene and taken to Metcalf Funeral Home in Conroe, Shreckengaust said.

Jill L. Johnson, 22 of Houston, was admitted to Hermann Hospital in Houston in critical condition. Johnson, who was not an A&M student, died at 4:15 Thursday afternoon, a hospital spokesperson said.

Neither Tyler nor Johnson were wearing seatbelts, Shreckengaust said.

Lane, a 22-year-old senior political science major, and passenger Cary Williams, a 24-year-old senior English major from College Station, were treated at the scene for cuts and abrasions.