

The Battalion Editorial Board

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The following opinions are a consensus of The Battalion opinion staff and senior editors.

For Mom

Planet deserves year-round Earth Days

The majority of us think about Mother Earth only once a year, on Earth Day, April 22.

That special day has passed, and we need to consider the fact that each day should be Earth Day. We need to be aware of the environment and its problems throughout the year.

Earth Day has contributed by making people aware. It has helped to publicize legislation, such as the Clean Air Act of 1990. As a result of previous Earth Days, many Aggies have made a commitment to the environment by recycling all their aluminum, plastic and glass containers.

But, there is still a growing problem that needs to be resolved.

Too many citizens have not yet made a political commitment, nor changed their lifestyle or consumer habits to reduce waste and help the environment.

Environmental issues are not simply a matter of having clean air and water. They touch every aspect of daily life.

Perhaps, the solution is the United Nations Earth Summit that will be held this summer. However, President Bush has yet to agree to participate in the summit. It is time the people pressure the White House into taking action.

The summit is an important and historical event. Many key environmental problems will be addressed at the meeting.

The reduction of the rain forest will have a vital impact in the medical field. Over 40 percent of known medicines are derived from rain forests throughout the world.

The issue of fossil fuels has many people in Texas concerned. Many predict that fossil fuels will run out within 50 to 100 years. The impact on this region's economy cannot be imagined. This does not include the damage to the environment each time a major spill occurs. Research into different and better sources of energy need to be examined.

Environmental issues reach into every minute detail of our lives. To ignore the problems occurring in the world means leaving the cleanup to our children. It is a very pessimistic thought, but very true. Citizens need to influence their local, regional and national representatives to tackle the tough issues. We cannot be concerned with only protecting our own jobs and interests anymore.

Our children's fate is more important.

Helping out

Drug center brings A&M, cities together

Good business decisions are those which benefit many different groups of people within a community. Keeping this in mind, the Texas Department of Criminal Justice's recent announcement of the construction of an alcohol and drug treatment center in Bryan can be viewed as an example of a good decision. The project will be mutually beneficial to both the community of Bryan-College Station and Texas A&M.

It provides a good example of how a community and a college located in it can help each other. The treatment center will be primarily a substance abuse station for prisoners geared toward preventing people previously convicted of an alcohol or drug violation from making the same mistakes again in the future.

The choice of Bryan as the location was influenced by the fact that Texas A&M is located nearby, however many of the program's gains will be found in the community of Bryan itself.

The center will be socially beneficial to the state because it will help keep criminals off the streets, putting them in a place where they can receive needed help. It will also serve as an economic boost to the area by creating new jobs for the community.

The treatment center will be an asset to Texas A&M because it will be a source of research and internships for both undergraduates and graduate students in the College of Medicine.

Dr. Richard DeVaul, dean of the College of Medicine, is extending this advantage to the classroom with his and other administrators' plans for educational programs at the center. With classes at the center, the University hopes to provide independent research classes and opportunities to students who wish to be licensed as chemical dependency counselors.

The University's Center for Drug Prevention and Education will reap benefits from the state's decision. Those involved in this program will be given the opportunity to see first-hand how an alcohol or drug treatment program really works. Dr. Dennis Reardon, director of the Center for Drug Prevention and Education said that the new treatment center will give people a good opportunity to observe an alcohol or drug program of this type in action.

The center will include services such as stress management, group therapy and crisis intervention programs. These programs will create internship positions not only for students in the College of Medicine but for graduate students in many different colleges of the University.

Implementing a program with as many potential benefits as this one is a good decision, and it shows what can happen when A&M and the cities of Bryan and College Station help each other out.



Piqued interest

Coming of Perot means a much more eventful campaign season

I was beginning to believe this year's presidential election was going to be about as fun as having orthopedic surgery, only more painful. I'm pleased to note I may be wrong since H. Ross Perot has entered the race.

The race for the presidency started well, but the two major political parties settled down to their usual tricks.

The Republican side presented little of interest. Pat Buchanan got a protest vote or two, thanks to the (former?) state of the economy and a little Japan bashing. Dan Quayle lost his position as joke of the party, but David Duke did not replace him; the dubious honor goes to anyone who took Duke's campaign remotely seriously. And Bush trots on to the party's renomination and, in all likelihood, the presidency. Whoop.

The Democrats were almost fun to watch for a little while. Paul "Fudd" Tsongas talked funny, but he had a pro-business view for the government. Tom Harkin tried to move us back to the late 1880s with his populist platform. Bill "Slick Willie" Clinton looks good and has the incredible ability to change his platform whenever politically expedient (or whenever Hillary tells him to). Jerry "Governor Moonbeam" Brown holds the only Democratic issue apparently worth debate so far, the 13 percent flat tax.

But Tsongas ran out of money, Brown can't or won't shake his image as a flake, and Clinton wins the Democratic nomination by default. Yawn.

But then, to light our darkest hours of the 1992 season, comes H. Ross

Perot, third party, grass-roots candidate extraordinaire. And there was much rejoicing.

I don't recall an independent candidate who has created the kind of support and criticisms Perot has managed, especially since he hasn't quite entered the race yet. But then, I don't recall an independent candidate (or for that matter, any candidate) who has Perot's background and credentials.

Perot has been hailed as the country's savior and slammed as an unqualified spoiler by the press lately. Both definitions may be correct, and I'm enjoying the fussing and fighting in the media.

H. Ross Perot, a charismatic Texan, is a very rich and very successful businessman. Unlike certain Democratic candidates (Hillary's husband comes to mind), he can claim to be a true political outsider. The closest connections he has to official politics is the blue ribbon commission on the Texas school system he headed for Mark White in the mid '80s. He does not like George Bush (at all) and did not support the Gulf War. But enough of his good qualities.

Perot has stated he is prepared to run the federal government like a business, or more appropriately, a successful business. This means cutting red tape and waste throughout the government's monstrous bureaucracy.

He says he wants to cut the federal deficit to zero as soon as possible. He says the deficit is hurting America's standard of living and weakening the country. This makes Perot the only candidate to attack the deficit this election year. Bush promised four years ago to reduce the \$400 billion per year budget deficit; he has not. Clinton has barely acknowledged the problem, a problem that I consider the most important this election year.

These are nice objectives, but I question the notion that he is

influential enough to get the job done. The government is not a business, but a self-perpetuating organism that has no interest in efficiency or in the good of the country.

Perot also has some more, uh, unique ideas about how to run the government and his presidency. He suggested he would create an 800-line that would allow constituents to call in and voice their opinions, and that he as president would vote according to the voters' wishes. This idea certainly casts doubt on his credibility as presidential material; it's weird, subject to the short-term whims of the populace, and impossible to enforce as a kind of one-man, one-vote democracy.

But Perot is the most powerful independent candidate to come along in a long time. He has the potential to be at least a proverbial thorn in the sides of both major candidates. He can conceivably move the presidential race into the House of Representatives if he can split the Democrat and Republican votes. He also has the potential to win, if he plays his cash and charisma right.

I don't know if he deserves my vote. I won't know until he begins more active campaigning, or at least officially throws his hat into the ring. I like his no-nonsense approach to budget reform and his straightforward attitude. I'm not amused at some of his ideas for a more "democratic" presidency.

I do know he has scared the establishment out of its complacency, and the major parties will have to attack him on certain issues on which neither has a strong position. In any event, this summer could be quite fun for watching politics.

DeShazo is a junior electrical engineering major



Jon DeShazo

Mail Call

We must return to Christ's message

Did anybody see the "Concert For Life" program Monday night? Did anybody notice Axl's Rose's T-shirt? It was a depiction of Jesus Christ with a caption that read: Kill Your Idol! How ironic. Also, everybody knows who the rock group Queen is and the late Freddie Mercury who openly expressed his homosexuality in rock videos. He would dress in drag and sing songs about the gay lifestyle. Well, Freddie died of AIDS not too long ago, and this whole concert was a tribute to him and a fund-raiser for the research of an AIDS cure. George Michael gave statistics to the cheering crowd that by the year 2000, nearly 40 million people will have tested HIV positive. He suggested that we should "be careful", that AIDS not only affects gays and drug users, but it affects everybody. Now, that is.

At one point in the not so distant past, AIDS was a homosexual disease, but now it is everybody's problem. These years of complacency must end now, and we must all face this growing problem with reality instead of with ideals. Those people who can relate to Monday night's concert, and you know who you are, must get off the

deceptive bandwagon of freethinkers and get back to the morals that God and Jesus Christ founded for us to follow.

I realize that Christianity has been tarnished by the likes of a few televangelists and maybe by someone you know first hand, but a true understanding of the Bible and its meaning will be beneficial to you. It will save your life. I am not writing this to judge Mercury's lifestyle, nor Rose's, nor your lifestyle, because I am human and I have sinned and it would be hypocritical if I, a mere human, tried to judge you, another human. I am merely making a plea to those who have been deceived and ridiculed and hurt. God is loving and is willing to forgive if we confess and turn away from our past sins. On the other hand, Satan is on this earth to deceive and to destroy. He wants to destroy what God has created, you and me.

Antoine Arcos
Class of '94

Foundation lacks gay affiliation

It has come to our attention that some of your readers have been confused by an advertisement for Americans for Medical Progress, Inc. (AMP)

that featured a photograph of the NAMES project AIDS memorial quilt. The NAMES Project Foundation wishes to clarify that it is in no way affiliated with AMP and does not endorse AMP's position regarding animal experimentation. In response to our complaints, AMP has ceased all publication and dissemination of this advertisement.

Lis M. Catapano
Managing Director
The NAMES Project Foundation

Surgeon general has done well

I am writing in response to Jason Loughman's editorial entitled "Mother Government." I can't believe that you were able to find such a deep thinker to write your editorials. It is very seldom that you can find one person that is not only sexist but also clueless. Yo Jason, why do you think everyone knows (except you of course) that smoking can kill you? Perhaps, it's because of the work done by the Surgeon General? And if you don't like the fact that she is female then that's your problem and don't waste ink telling me

about it. As far as not having any tolerance for fun, ever tried having fun without a bottle in your hand? Believe it or not it's possible. Try it, you just might like it. I hope you try before alcohol is running your life or kills you. And then you'll have NTF!

James Lee
Graduate Student

Have an opinion? Express it!

The Battalion is interested in hearing from its readers.

All letters are welcome. Letters must be signed and must include classification, address and a daytime phone number for verification purposes. They should be 250 words or less. Anonymous letters will not be published.

The Battalion reserves the right to edit all letters for length, style and accuracy. There is no guarantee the letters will appear. Letters may be brought to 013 Reed McDonald, sent to Campus Mail Stop 1111 or can be faxed to 845-2647.