

THE BATTALION
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EDITORIALS

TRIM THE FAT

Regents audit reveals unjustifiable expenses

Internal system audits made public last week reveal some ridiculous expenditures by the Texas A&M University System Board of Regents.

Although the audit has drawn promises from the regents for more efficiency, the fact remains that many of these expenses were purely frivolous. Some spending even provided air transportation for the regents' spouses and guests.

Perhaps one reason that these items are so outrageous is that this audit of the regents' spending is the first of its kind in over a decade.

In the last three years, while schools throughout the system suffered financial cutbacks, the regents spent nearly \$10,000 on flowers and plants for the Board meetings.

The regents' budget accommodated video cassette recorders for their quarters and personal toiletries like toothpaste and razors.

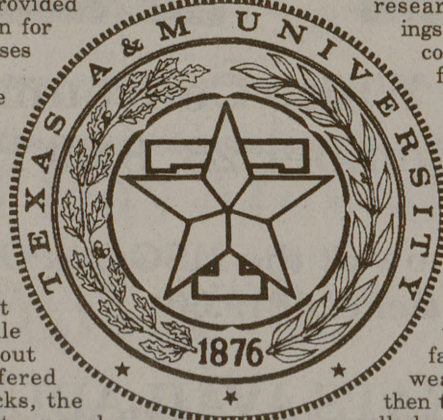
Regardless of Board chairwoman Mary Nan West saying "I'm not proud of it, and we're going to cut

back," the regents cannot justify having spent thousands of dollars each year on table decorations that will soon wilt in a trash can or personal items they could buy for themselves, just like everybody else.

Evans Library is dropping periodicals subscriptions and free-falling down through the nationwide research library rankings. Every year whole courses are not offered because the University lacks the funding for them. Countless students need all the financial aid they can possibly get.

If members of the board expect their positions to carry the fancy trappings of a wealthy corporation, then they have not been well-chosen. The symbolic "sacrifices" they could have made several years and thousands of dollars ago might at least have put the right priorities in place for cutting back budgets in poor economic times.

The Board of Regents should be made up of people whose minds are on helping the System, not enjoying themselves.



Friendship depends on truth
Inequality pervades, sometimes destroys, relationships

ELIZABETH PRESTON
Columnist



Finally, my other friends told me that I had to speak to Laurel because my cruelty was worse than anything she had done to me. I asked her over to my room under the impression that she had no idea what I was going to say. I honestly believed that she had not even noticed how rude I was, because she had never said anything about it.

The hour that followed was possibly the worst hour of my life. She screamed at me about how insulting I was, and said that she hated me. I immediately

I didn't know how to express that it seemed Laurel liked me too much. Instead I became less friendly. I was not mature enough to speak frankly.

reacted just as childishly, and it quickly degenerated into a screaming match with both of us hurling insults at each other. I don't know who won, but I haven't spoken to her since that day.

I regret the end of this relationship for two reasons: I lost a friend and I realized that the entire affair had been my fault. If I had spoken to her at the beginning, it would have been painful, but honest. As it ended up, nothing was resolved except for the fact that we could no longer be friends.

We have probably all been trapped at the line between being polite and being truthful. My mother, the psychologist, tends to see things in black and white: if you don't like the person and you feel uncomfortable, then you need to tell them and move on. This advice is good, but it falls into the "easier said than done" category. Most people who find themselves in situations like this end up carrying the weight and annoyance of the relationship with them because they do not want to hurt the other person's feelings.

Balance is the one of the most delicate aspects of friendships. If people are not on similar levels, the friendship is always leaning towards one person. It takes a very mature person to carry a friendship without getting bitter. Even with very good friends balance is constantly changing and the friendship being tested. Growing, learning, laughing, and counting on each other is all part of the definition of friendship. The problem begins when one person wants more out of the relationship than the other.

These relationships crop up everywhere, from an annoying guy next to you on the airplane who won't shut up to a really close friend that you have lost all common ground with. If it were something that happened once every lifetime or less, then there would be no problem. Unfortunately it is very necessary to find a mature and appropriate way of dealing with these uncomfortable inequalities, simply because they occur so often, and are so painful.

Elizabeth Preston is a junior English major

ALL-UNIVERSITY NIGHT

Fightin' Texas Aggies should avoid violence

The intended warm welcomes and good beginnings of All-University night were marred in past years when dorm rivalries turned violent. Those attending this year's event should remember that the University comes together after the first day of classes to celebrate being Aggies and kick the year off right.

For the incoming freshmen, this day marks the beginning of their college careers at A&M, and older Aggies should care about what sort of image of A&M these freshmen are perceiving.

If freshman attending All-University Night are given the impression that dorm spirit means violence and obscenity, these ideas will be perpetuated throughout the year. First impressions oftentimes are lasting.

For this reason it is important that the spirit portrayed at All-University Night be positive and inoffensive.

In response to past violence and lewd behavior, the administration created a student leader forum to promote responsible behavior among students at events like All-University Night. The formation of this group is a set in the right direction. By admitting the problems of the

past, we are prepared for the potential for problems this year. And by allowing student leaders to be in charge of sending the word for the crowd to act in a responsible manner, that message has a better chance of being heard.

In the past, the problems arose when normal antics and cheers got out of hand. Part of being or becoming a college student involves the transformation from wild, irresponsible high school student into a mature, responsible college student. This does not mean that college should not be fun, or that dorm rivalries are wrong. Maturity means recognizing the difference between school spirit and harmful behavior.

In light of all the criticism that A&M has suffered in the eyes of the outside world with athletic and scientific scandals and illegal procedures of the administration, A&M needs to be careful of the image it gives off.

And what better way to begin to repair the scars of a year of front-page stories and national news segments than to induct the fledgling class of 1998 into A&M at a peaceful and fun All-University Night.

NCAA COMPLIANCE

Every A&M fan must observe regulations

Contributors, students, alumni and other fans of Texas A&M University athletics, especially the football program, owe it to both the players and school to ensure that their actions do not violate NCAA regulations.

A pamphlet compiling a condensed version of those rules has been mailed out to thousands of A&M supporters, and should make that task easier.

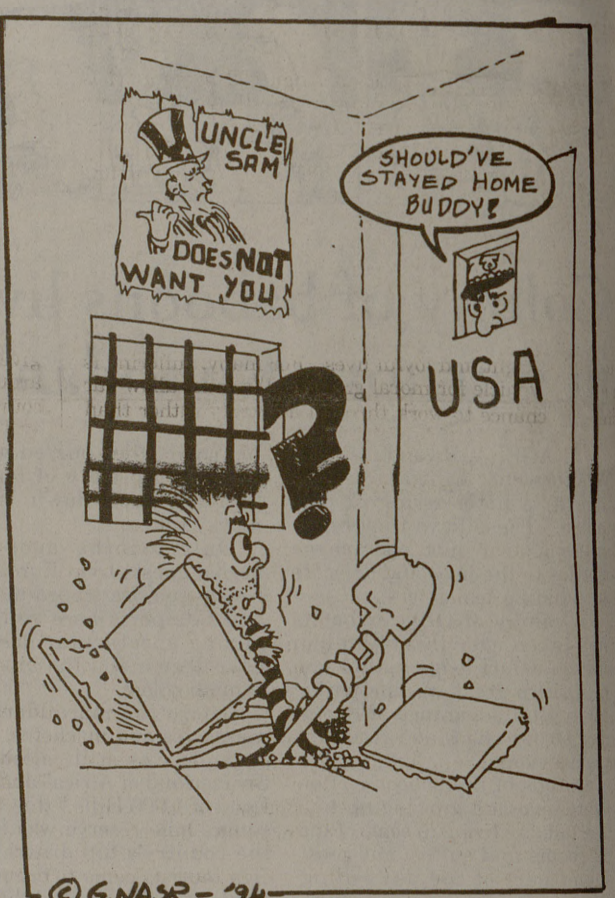
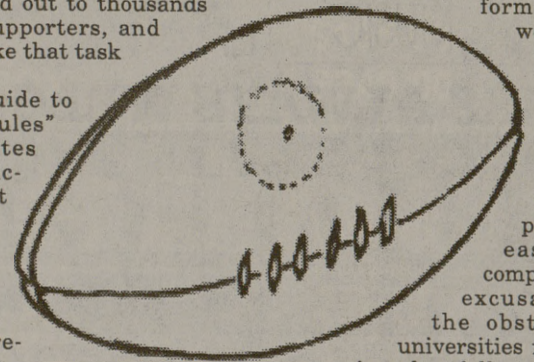
The "Guide to NCAA Rules" concentrates on restrictions that affect contact between Texas A&M athletic representatives which could be any one affiliated with the University - and student athletes or prospective athletes.

Many of the University's past and current problems with rules viola-

tions stem directly from that area. The Aggie football team is currently on a one-year suspension from bowl games and television appearances and five-year probation term. These penalties were issued by the NCAA after investigations revealed last spring that some student athletes received payment from a former student for work never completed.

The effort to spread information about the NCAA rules will make compliance even easier and non-compliance more inexcusable. With all the obstacles modern universities face, from funding shortfalls to student retention, A&M needs to be able to trust and rely on its most loyal supporters not to create more problems.

Commitment to NCAA compliance from all Aggies will help realize that goal and prevent future problems.



How to graduate from Aggie U.

A short guide through the hoops you jump through for your diploma

With much shouting and throwing about of small furniture, I have managed to convince both my parents and the Department of Modern Languages that I am actually going to graduate in December.

It's like those slasher movies, when just as the music calms down and you're pretty sure Jason's dead, he pops up waving a degree audit and rasping, "Your Poli. Sci. credit didn't transfer..."

Just to reassure myself that I can walk across the stage without anyone appearing and wrestling my diploma away from me, I did some calling around to find out what I have to do and when. In hopes that my fellow December degree candidates can use the info, here are my findings:

Pay diploma fee: \$20. Option #66 when you register by phone, or they'll bill you when you apply for graduation.

Check with your department: Make sure they agree that you've filled all the requirements. Last day to drop a class with no record is Friday, Sept. 2, you can add until Sept. 6.

Apply for graduation: Aug. 18 to Sept. 9, in Heaton Hall 105 (845-1145). DON'T FORGET THIS or you won't get graduation tickets, you won't get on all the free stuff mailing lists, and - way bumper - you won't actually graduate. Technically, you have until Dec. 15, but after Sept. 23 or you won't be able to get your diploma at commencement.

Order graduation announcements: Aug. 15-30, Student Finance Center (845-1114). Start figuring what to do with the 94 leftover namecards you'll have - Balfour only ships boxes of 100. Christmas present tags? Change-of-address cards, packing-box labels ...

Buy your cap and gown: at any bookstore. You can share a gown with a friend graduating in another ceremony, but they won't schedule the ceremonies until mid-September. Just don't wait until the day before. It'd suck if they were sold out of your size and you had to, like, wear a Hefty bag.

SUSAN OWEN
Guest Columnist



Snag a free steak dinner: The Association of Former Students (845-7514) has for many years fed graduating seniors dinner to "induct" them as former students. Pick up tickets (bring student I.D.) in the MSC main hallway on Nov. 1, 2 and 3. There are two dinners: Tuesday, Nov. 8, and Wednesday, Nov. 9. Both are at 6:20 p.m. in the College Station Hilton. Usual attire is jacket and slacks for men, skirt or dress for women.

Pick up your announcements: Student Finance Center, a month or so before graduation. If you pick them up in person you'll avoid the \$6 mailing fee and probably get them faster.

Pick up your tickets: Rudder Box Office (845-1234), a couple of weeks before the ceremony. You should get a letter about it.

Check for the death dot: Dec. 16, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Pavilion. Check the list to see if there's a red dot by your name. If there is, you can go through the ceremony, but you get an empty tube. This is only done for academic reasons - an F or "Incomplete" in a class. If you straighten that out by Jan. 20 they'll mail you your diploma. Unpaid fees won't interfere with your diploma, but the University won't send your official transcript anywhere until you pony up. Sadly, in these days of color laser copiers the actual diploma means squat.

Commencement: Dec. 16 and 17. Whoop! Bring something to read. It may not be respectful, but we're talking about a longer wait than trying to cash a check at the MSC on Friday afternoon. At least E. King will stand up during graduation. If you want to leave after you walk cross, large burly people at the door will take your diploma back. No joke! You can go pick it up at Heaton 105 the Wednesday after graduation, but if you want to leave with it, post a relative on the railing and hand it to them after you walk across the stage. Then you can read out to your regularly scheduled activities.

Now all I have to do is pass those classes. My folks are just trying to talk me out of celebrating until at least halfway through the semester. No problem. I love A&M, but I've had four great years and I'm ready to go. I'm starting to feel like one of those people who won't leave after the keg floats. It's about time for my last A&M ritual: peeling all that maroon stuff off my bumper and slapping on the Association of Former Students sticker.

Susan Owen is a senior journalism and Spanish major

Natu

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