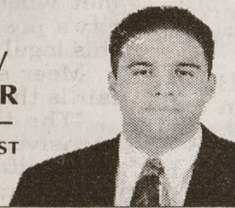


## End of semester takes toll on all students, stops procrastination

The end of the semester is quickly creeping upon us. With only two weeks of classes remaining, the light at the end of the tunnel is within view.

**DREW DIENER**  
COLUMNIST



However, if any of you find yourselves in similar shoes as myself, the sick reality that you must cram about six weeks of work into the remaining two is starting to settle in.

In my case, papers, tests, quizzes and projects are strategically scattered between myself and the end of the tunnel like a series of potentially fatal land mines.

Then again, what land mines are not fatal? And come to think of it, what papers, tests, quizzes and projects are not fatal either?

It's kind of sick that I should associate potentially fatal land mines with papers, tests, quizzes and the like. The cold, hard reality is that I speak an eerie truth — one that we all find ourselves facing, no matter how academically endowed we are.

This semester is my sixth at good ol' A&M. As the end of the previous five approached, I always found myself in this identical situation. Despite taking a variety of precautions and despite employing a variety of work ethics and attitudes to help avoid this problem, I always ended up sweating the last two weeks of the semester out.

I've always found it strange how students react, in terms of physical appearance, to the final two weeks of the semester and the subsequent week of finals. We grow beards. We wear the same clothes days on end. We stink. We don't brush our teeth.

Why is that? Hmm, maybe I should retract the last couple of statements because it is quite possible that they only pertain to my physical state.

Anyway ... In my old age, I have come to accept certain things as unavoidably truthful. First is that Aggie Bucks represent real money, and if you do not treat them as such, you will see your supply dwindle from \$500 on the first day of the semester to \$0.51 with two weeks of classes to spare.

Second is that G. Rollie White Coliseum will never fill to capacity for a sporting event, even if the N.I.T. Champion Lady Aggies are playing. What a shame.

And finally, the end of the semester will always sneak up behind me like a professional wrestler and apply the claw of reality to my brain, thereby forcing me into submission.

The submissive state is grueling. All the fun and games of college life are dramatically banned from my existence. The library replaces the bar as my hang-out. Consumption of knowledge replaces consumption of beer.

I enter a world of reading and concentration, leaving behind a world of drinking and procrastination.

The metamorphosis is amazing. I begin to achieve things I never thought possible.

While my tolerance for alcohol decreases, my tolerance for studying increases.

To this day, I do not know why I cannot maintain a happy balance of scholar and bar-hopper throughout the semester. Why I must wait until the end of the semester to flex my academic muscles is an enigma that I have given up trying to understand.

It's April 19, and the roller-coaster ride is nearing its finish. The finish can be turbulent if you refuse to submit to the forces of academic survival, yet it can be somewhat smoother if you do indeed submit.

Remember when you're sitting up late at night, coffee in hand, snacking on goodies that came that day in a care package from home, slaving over the Principles of Perpetual Failure, I'll be there with you.

By the way, I take two lumps of sugar and generous helping of cream.

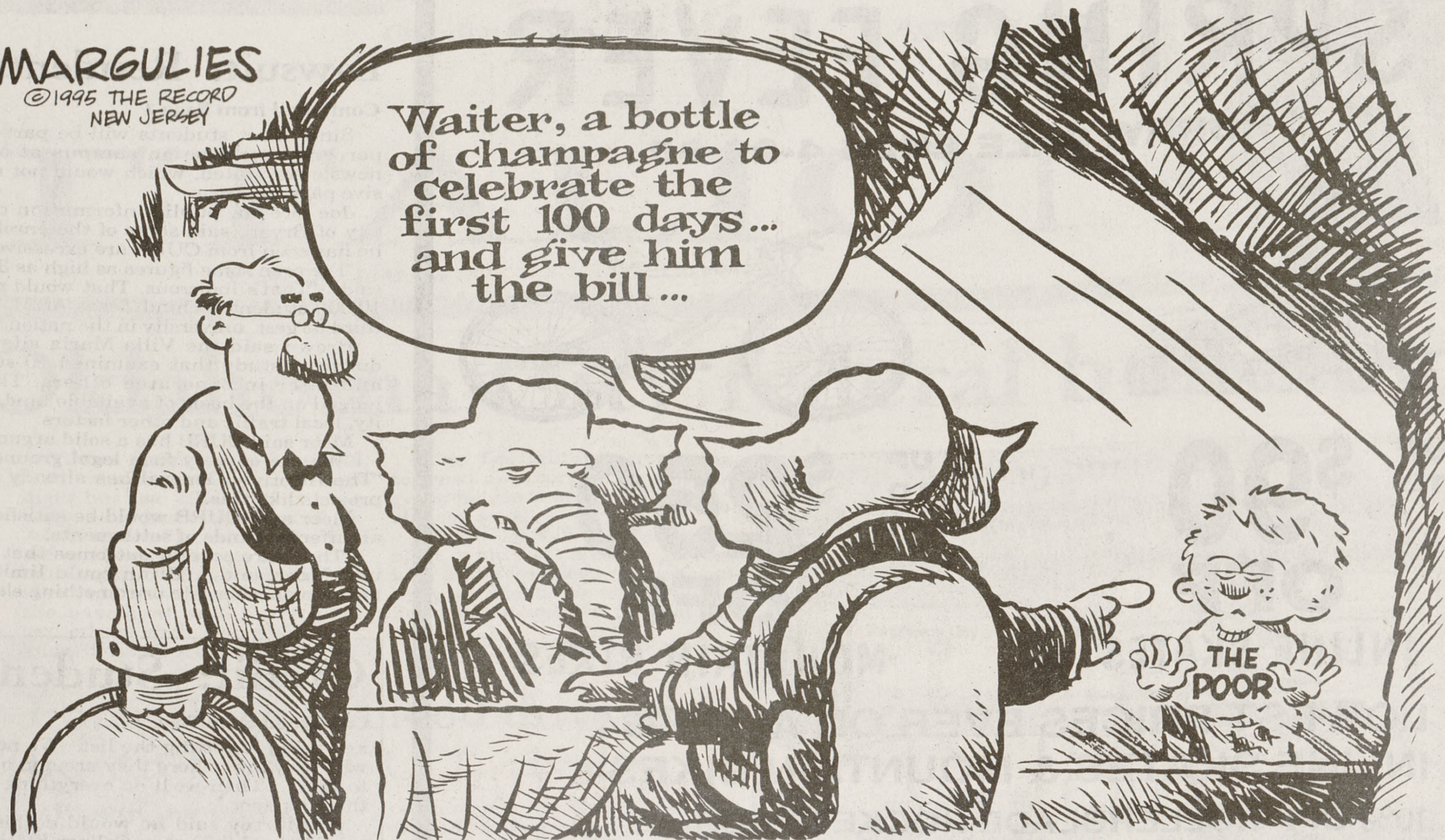
When you wake up to take that first exam on two hours of sleep and you can't find the scantron you bought last night, I'll be there with you. May I suggest taking someone's scantron at the test site when they're not looking.

When you're computer crashes at 4 a.m., five hours before your 25-page paper on Advanced Procrastination is due, I'll be there with you. Calm down and leave all the cussing up to me because I know the right cuss words for the every situation.

And when you're at your favorite watering hole on the night of May 10, drowning the completed semester in the beverage of your choice, I'll be there with you. And I might even be buying ...

*Drew Diener is a junior English major*

**MARGULIES**  
©1995 THE RECORD  
NEW JERSEY



## THE BATTALION

Established in 1893

Editorials appearing in The Battalion reflect the views of the editorial board. They do not necessarily reflect the opinions of other Battalion staff members, the Texas A&M student body, regents, administration, faculty or staff. Columns, guest columns, cartoons and letters express the opinions of the authors. Contact the opinion editor for information on submitting guest columns.

**Mark Smith**  
Editor in chief

**Jay Robbins**  
Senior Managing editor

**Heather Winch**  
Managing editor for Business

**Sterling Hayman**  
Opinion editor

**Erin Hill**  
Asst. opinion editor

## EDITORIAL

### AWKWARD ACQUISITION

The attempt to merge TAMIU into the University of Texas System smacks of politics.

State Sen. Judith Zaffirini's attempt to give Texas A&M International University to the University of Texas System has become a greater threat than it was originally.

Although the Texas House of Representatives defeated the initial attempt, she has made it into a rider. Zaffirini tacked the measure onto the Texas Senate bill that will allow the merger of the Baylor School of Dentistry and East Texas State University with the Texas A&M System. Unfortunately, only a few options are available to defeat this measure.

If the Texas House passes this bill, then it will be given to a committee made up of Representatives and Senators. This committee will work out the details of the measure. Zaffirini's rider could be defeated in this committee.

If the rider survives the committee, the only chance to save TAMIU is if Gov. George W. Bush vetoes the measure.

There are several reasons that Zaffirini's measure should be defeated. The Texas A&M System has invested millions of dollars in improving and reno-

vating TAMIU. Since its inclusion in the A&M System, TAMIU has seen its enrollment increase by 68 percent and its budget increase by 252 percent.

If this measure is successful, all the money invested by the A&M System will be for nothing.

In 1989, when TAMIU — then Laredo State University — was given the chance to join a system, the University of Texas System showed no interest in acquiring it. After the renovations, improvements and investments made by the A&M System, TAMIU seems to be a much more attractive addition.

To put it another way, the University of Texas System is suddenly deciding to take TAMIU now that all of the work has been done.

Finally, given the fact that the measure's major supporters are graduates of the University of Texas, it is difficult to view this measure as anything other than a political game.

As a Houston Post editorial put it, this move "smacks of politics and flies in the face of common sense, governmental economy and good public policy."

## Old memories help to fill in gaps of the present

People like the idea of time-travel. From "Back to the Future" to "Quantum Leap," the idea of transcending time has captivated us. There is a certain glorification of the past that is innate in memory.

It is easy to think of the past as pristine and uncorrupted because it is fundamentally in the past — it is a memory, not reality any more. Which automatically makes it a lot better than the present, which seems so full of problems and worries.

This explains why older people sometimes scoff at younger generations. It is not a new phenomenon. Back in ancient times, Cicero coined the phrase, "O tempora, O mores," which translates as "Oh the times, oh the customs." To give a modern example, it is like an old Ag saying, "O! army is goin' to hell in a handbasket."

But there is something disheartening about the thought that a place where we have lived, worked, learned, partied and matured is going on without us. For one, it makes us feel old, and maybe it makes us feel a little insignificant. It reaffirms the fact that we are only one in a line of many, pictures in a year book and not the faces that fill the classroom seats anymore.

I feel that way about my high school now. Every time I go home for a holiday, I travel back in time to a world that revolves around high school experiences. The essence of high school lingers more than childhood because that is where I left off.

My room still bears the props. My closet contains boxes of old notes, homecoming pictures and those stupid mums, champagne glasses from the prom and countless other souvenirs from the past journey.

Home is also the place of high school friends. Those loyal souls with whom we can sit for hours and tell endless stories that all begin with, "Do you remember when ..."

It is funny how different this home-world seems from the college world.

There are certain transient people, but for the most part each world has its own cast of characters.

But the fact remains that even while we are at college, the home characters are still a part of who we are or vice versa. Which means the average college student has a vast body of knowledge about what I call the "faceless friend of a friend."

These are the people who we know intimate details about, but have never actually met because they are the characters that live in our friends' other worlds.

And in order to answer the ever present question, "So, what did you do over the holidays?" these people demand description.

Yes, it is rather confusing. It is one of the reasons why the end of a holiday or the beginning of summer are both sad and exciting, because both worlds are important to us. Each world has its own characteristic appeal.

Growing up is difficult because most people don't abruptly abandon one world for another; it is usually a gradual pulling away. The typical scenario usually goes something like this ...

Freshman year is defined by faithful letters, weekly phone calls and big holiday reunions with high school friends. Then sophomore year changes to occasional phone calls and a loss of touch with high school acquaintances. By junior year, your best friends from high school have pretty much signed up for the long haul, so it doesn't seem like such a big deal if three months pass in-between visits or phone calls.

Maybe there is no real way to travel back to ancient Egypt or Colonial America, but we can travel back in time in our own lives.

It feels so refreshing to spend an afternoon reminiscing with an old friend. Not because those past days were so much better than our present lives, but because that time frame is where the friendship lives.

When we abandoned our high school worlds and came to A&M, many important friends went to other colleges or remained at home.

We try to nurture these friendships by filling in the missing time with detailed accounts of our separate lives. But the basis of the friendship doesn't live in these hurried "catch you ups," but in the past time of regular contact.

It is nice to visit that world together again.

**JENNY MAGEE**  
COLUMNIST



*Jenny Magee is a junior English and journalism major*



## MAIL CALL

### Campus-wide cable system took hard work, initiative

This letter is in response to the editorial in the Monday April 17 Battalion about the residence hall cable system. The Residence Hall Association and the administration have been working on a campus-wide cable system for more than three years now, with much of the time expended on surveys and polls to ensure that all views of the on-campus residents were expressed and considered.

This past semester, the RHA and administration sent out surveys to every on-campus student to try to get feedback on the desirability of such a system.

Although Monday's editorial reported that "14.4 percent of the on-campus students did not wish to pay for the cable fee," it failed to mention the fact that 81.3 percent of the 1,079 respondents were in favor of the cable proposal and the \$27 fee.

While it is true that we are concerned about those who do not want this service, the response was so overwhelmingly in favor of it that we decided not to postpone the decision any longer and vote in a way that we felt would most represent our constituents.

It is very unfortunate that some students will be paying for a service that they will not be able to use.

However, after looking into the fee option alternative, it was discovered that it would not be feasible for residents to choose yearly whether or not they wanted to take advantage of the system.

Considering that most students who have cable now pay an average of \$25 per month plus a \$60 hook-up fee, the \$27 per semester fee that RHA is supporting is a little better than "relatively inexpensive."

The reason we are able to offer the residents such an inexpensive service is due to the fact that this would not be an option.

This system opens opportunities in the future for such services, which will benefit all on-campus students.

We realize that not everyone sees the positive aspects of this system. However, the vast majority of residents are in favor of this system, and we feel that, given time, the rest will come to see how this service will benefit them.

*Trevor Dunham*  
Class of '97  
RHA Vice-President for Operations

*Suzanne Lyons*  
Class of '96  
RHA President-Elect

**• Editor's note —**  
The Battalion editorial board does not discourage establishing a campus-wide cable system. However, students should not be mandated to subscribe to the service.

### Juvenile delinquents are damaging school property

Has anyone else noticed the acts of vandalism by the juvenile delinquents running around on their skateboards? The benches and sidewalks around the Engineering Physics Building and the MSC are being defaced by young punks who should still be in their high school or junior high school classes, instead of riding around on campus where they are unwanted and an annoyance to everyone else. The tuition and fees I pay, which already are too high in my opinion, are being used to keep A&M clean, which those brats are messing up. Can't the police arrest or fine these little hoodlums for loitering, trespassing or vandalism? So help me, one of these days I'm tempted to swing my 80 kg. bag full of engineering books at one of those dirtwashed, snootheads and give them a concussion. The parking cops should write tickets to these young offenders. Once their neglectful parents see the bill, they'll keep these hoodlums off the campus.

*Tin Nguyen*  
Accompanied by 90 signatures

The Battalion encourages letters to the editor and will print as many as space allows. Letters must be 300 words or less and include the author's name, class and phone number. We reserve the right to edit letters for length, style, clarity and accuracy. Letters may be submitted in person at 013 Reed McDonald. A valid student I.D. is required. Letters may also be mailed to:  
The Battalion - Mail Call Fax: (409) 845-2647  
013 Reed McDonald E-mail:  
Texas A&M University Batt@tamvm1.tamu.edu  
College Station, TX 77843-1111