

## Margraves crashes in indictment

Cynics rejoice! Just when you thought the administration didn't deserve your mistrust, your scorn is justified.

In case you hadn't heard, Ross Margraves Jr., former chairman of the Texas A&M Board of Regents, was indicted Tuesday by a Brazos County grand jury for misapplying government property. Margraves allegedly broke the law when he took an A&M aircraft to Baton Rouge, La., in 1993. It appears we have our own little John Sununu.

Margraves, however, should be prepared to handle the image problems that accompany his indictment. During his reign, the regents were inundated with scandals befitting a world-class university. Margraves resigned in April 1994, but only after acting as the media whipping boy for such glorious scandals as:

**The Alchemy Experiment** — Somebody with more money than sense donated a big wad of cash to support an A&M chemist's attempt to turn mercury into gold.

**The Tenneco Power Plant** — Somehow, a \$120 million power plant was started without the approval of the Regents.

And, of course, who could forget the

**JEFF NOLEN**  
COLUMNIST



Barnes and Ignoble Bookstore Brouhaha — The executive vice president's wife got a free trip to the Big Apple to see some shows, all paid for by the folks who were bidding to win the right to operate the campus bookstore and sell ethics texts.

Well, I ask you, who among us wouldn't retire after all of that? But it turns out that there were some really simple reasons for all the big misunderstandings.

The donor who put up the money for the Hg to Au conversion thought he had given the check to Texas Alchemy & Mysticism University (a common mistake).

Margraves thought that the \$120 million tab for the power plant wouldn't be too tough to cover once he got all his mercury turned into gold.

That trip to New York was merely an attempt to ensure that the copies of *Les Miserables* the bookstore was selling had the same ending as the famed Broadway show (they do!).

I'm sure Margraves, with his history of excusing the inexcusable, will have a perfect excuse for his alleged infraction of the law. He was probably intending on stop-

ping by LSU to take care of some business but never got around to it.

In any case, it's important to remember that Margraves is innocent until proven guilty of the alleged crimes (Please excuse the constant use of the word alleged, but we journalists use it to keep from getting sued).

I personally hope that Margraves is found not guilty. A diploma from a school with a former administrator in prison tends to be less impressive at job interviews.

Even if Margraves is convicted of the charges, I don't believe he will spend any of the two to 10 years in prison that normally punish those convicted of the third-degree felony with which he is charged. Rich white men don't see the inside of a prison cell too often. If convicted, Margraves will probably just receive probation and a fine.

That shouldn't be too hard for him to pay. I'm sure he's got some mercury laying around somewhere.

But don't get too downhearted. Margraves will land on his feet, as he always has, and we can rest assured that the scandal-ridden days of the regents and former regents are dead and gone.

Right?

*Jeff Nolen is a senior psychology major*

### THE BATTALION

Established in 1893

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## EDITORIAL

### TAKE A STAND The University should make positions clear on key issues.

When dealing with an issue like affirmative action, Texas A&M University needs world-class leadership. Unfortunately, ever since the 5th Circuit Court of Appeals made a ruling in *Hopwood vs. the State of Texas*, we have been denied that leadership. It is time for Texas A&M to take a stand.

In March, the 5th Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that race can no longer be used when deciding admissions into public universities, including Texas A&M. And although, race has never been a deciding criterion for admissions, it has had a major impact on the diversity of Texas A&M. Yet, the University has refused to take a bold stand on the issue.

In a Battalion guest column on Tuesday, Dr. Ray Bowen, Texas A&M president, mentioned that the *Hopwood* decision would definitely have a negative impact on A&M's diversity goals. Bowen also

said that Texas A&M was striving to achieve the a student population representative of the state of Texas.

Bowen's reaction was both too late and too watered down. Ironically, the University usually has a tendency make major decisions at times when students are gone or when the semester is winding down.

Bowen's statement about the *Hopwood* decision mentioned many negative affects that the ruling will have on A&M's diversity and made many references to the goals A&M currently has in place. However, his statement never defined whether the University agreed or disagreed with *Hopwood*.

With sensitive issues like affirmative action, the students have a right to know where their University stands. The A&M administration should stop skirting around the sensitive issues and take bold stances on issues that affect us all.



## Memories of friends mark time at Batt

I was hung over when I wrote this. Forgive me if it goes astray.

When trying to figure out what in the world to write about for my last column, the usual "farewell" schmaltz was an obvious choice. But in an effort to not be self-indulgent, I'll try to have something of substance here.

I have to write about what I know, and that is *The Battalion*. To the select group of A&M students with the talent of writing, designing and photography, *The Battalion* is not just a student job. For those of us who are graduating, *The Battalion* has been our lives.

First and foremost is the work. *The Batt* staffers spend most of the time we should be studying (and all of the time we should be sleeping) on our work. As the saying goes, "the ink gets in your blood." But not everyone shares this affection for the *Batt*. Everyone from the A&M administration,

**ROB CLARK**  
COLUMNIST



the Corps of Cadets, the Athletic Department and College Republicans has had a beef with the *Batt*.

Here's a hint: Don't screw up and it won't get published.

And shocking as it may seem to those who label us as the liberal newsletter of the Democratic party (nearly all newspapers are labeled as such), *The Battalion* is an award-winning paper. In March, the staff received 19 awards from the Southwestern Journalism Congress and Texas Intercollegiate Press Association. And in April, *The Battalion* received the Enhancing Diversity Award from the Department of Multicultural Services.

Not bad for a bunch of communists.

But work and awards aside, for the staff, the newsroom is more of a home than our homes are. It is our comfort zone, our place of solace. It isn't good news until you share it with your

friends in the newsroom.

It is our place to complain, scream, cry and giggle. It is where we learn more about journalism than any class could ever teach. And with the enormous amounts of time spent there, we see the gamut of emotions and learn about life.

Bringing together 80-or-so people every semester to produce a quality newspaper creates extremely unique situations. Anyone who hasn't heard Nick Georgandis sing "Wake Me Up Before You Go-Go" or seen Jason Brown dance ... well you just haven't lived yet.

To spend 15 minutes around *Batt*folk, chances are you'd witness some of the sights and sounds of the weirdest organization around: To hear David Taylor rave about Republicans and blame everything on Democrats, to watch Sterling Hayman try to smoke 20 cigarettes at once, to see Stew Milne dance ala Steve Martin in *The Jerk* or Dave Winder dance to *The Theme from Shaft*, to listen to Amy Collier as she morphs into a Disney character, to see Tara Wilkinson play

with her pet lizard, to hear about Amy Uptmor's struggles with bowling, to watch Chris Stidvent go into the witness protection program for his columns, to hear Michael Landauer give sarcastic "howdys" and "gig'ems," to watch Rachel Barry tap dance or hear a certain columnist spew ridiculous trivia about the artist formerly known as Prince.

These, among many, are the images I'll recall when I look back. It's impossible for me to think about A&M without thinking about *The Battalion*.

And although the graduating seniors have built the *Batt* up to a remarkable level, the foundation for success is there, and it will continue.

For those non-*Batt* staffers who have absolutely no idea what I'm talking about, just read the *Batt*. You'll love it, you'll hate it, but it is an integral part of A&M.

Life goes on, and for Texas A&M University, it can be found in the pages of *The Battalion*.

*Rob Clark is a senior journalism major*

## Parents understand the value of education

Four years, \$20,000 in student loans and countless ulcers later, my journey is almost over. I'm leaving A&M next Saturday with mostly good memories of the friends

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ASST. AGGIELIFE EDITOR



not wanting to. As they've reminded me, my education is now taking up most of their money and time.

Furthering my education after high school was something I never questioned. I've always known I wanted to go to college. I even hope to get my doctorate some day. My parents didn't force me to go to college; they just raised me with the knowledge that it was what I needed to do to get ahead in my generation's world. So when my acceptance letter came in the mail, they made it perfectly clear that they would do whatever it would take to make sure nothing would stand in the way of my college degree.

When Dad was almost laid off from his job my sophomore year, he called me and told me he'd do anything to keep me in school. Mom went back to work, and I worked as many as three jobs for a while to make ends meet.

Luckily, he didn't lose his job, but even with the threat of unemployment, my parents' priority was my education. I've never met two people who have gone so far out of their way to make sure I gain the tools of knowledge I'll need to compete in this world. To tell you the truth, it doesn't make sense that my degree means so much to them, considering how well they've done without college degrees.

Maybe they're so determined to help me get my degree because they know that it's getting harder and harder every day to excel in any field without a degree. Maybe they've encouraged and helped me for so long because they want to fulfill dreams they had through me.

Maybe they were just hoping that if they shipped me off to college, I'd come back married and they'd never have to support me again. Say what you will, but my conclusion is this: They're supporting me because they're good parents, and they care.

And it doesn't take a college education for me to know that makes me one very lucky girl.

*Amy Uptmor is a senior journalism major*



## MAIL CALL

### Aggie spirit spans across generations

"Ol' Army is going to hell" is a common term used by Old Aggies as they discuss how things have changed at Texas A&M University since they have graduated and moved on to experience life beyond the borders of campus. Some feel that these changes will be the demise of our University; others realize that as the world

evolves, the mindset and motivation of current students do, too.

For example, back when my father was "fish" May, Class of '61, no one ever dreamed that one day women would possess such a strong presence on campus. I strongly feel that regardless of what generation Aggie you are, one thing will remain the same: the unbreakable bond that Aggies share for one another and the undying Aggie Spirit.

You see, almost a year ago, I lost my Aggie Ring. I was brokenhearted and had a difficult time convincing myself to replace the ring that I had worked so hard to earn. Purchasing a replacement seemed too easy and meaningless for a symbol as moving as the Aggie Ring.

Well, three weeks ago I was asked to go to the Chicken to support a fellow Ag as she christened her Aggie Ring. Much to my surprise, it was all a hoax. As I entered the Chicken, I was surrounded by friends who I hold as dear to me as my own family. And there waiting for me in a frosty pitcher of beer was a shiny new Aggie Ring. Without my knowledge, they had pooled together the funds to buy me a new ring.

To this day, it is not clear to

me who all was truly involved in the effort, but I want all my friends in Aggieland to know that each time I look at my ring, I will think of my "Aggie family." This I feel is the true meaning of the Aggie Spirit: selflessness, camaraderie, loyalty and friendship.

I intend for this letter to serve a dual purpose — first to let "The Group" know how much each of you means to me, and second for those of you who feel that Ol' Army has gone to hell, have faith. Although the current students at Texas A&M may be of a younger generation than you, the bridge that spans across every generation of Aggies is the Spirit of Aggieland, and it shall never perish.

*Ron May Jr. Class of '94*