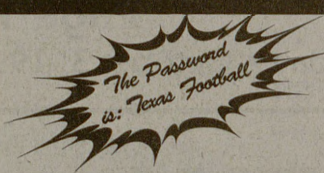


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## MAIL CALL

### Silver Taps inspires greater knowledge

Since the recent tragedy at Bonfire, everybody at Texas A&M has probably felt like something was stirred inside of them. During these past two weeks, I have often heard about the way the Aggie family comes together in times of need.

I witnessed this at Silver Taps the other night. As I stood there, I began to wonder, "Would we have mourned the student's death the same way if this person was black, Jewish or homosexual?" There is no doubt in my mind that we would have because the student would have been an Aggie and a part of our family. So why do we spend time harassing and degrading each other about our differences? How many times have you heard the phrase, "Highway 6 runs both ways?" This phrase is telling those whose thoughts and ideas differ from the norm at Texas A&M that they can leave if they want to.

We need to value our differences and realize that Texas A&M is so great and unique because of what each and every one of us brings to the University. We know how precious life can be, and we have just seen how quickly life can end. Why do we waste our precious time here on earth when the only thing that really matters in the end is that they were part of our human family, and in this case, our Aggie family?

Chris Gaines  
Class of '98

### Trucks cause many needless deaths

On Oct. 1, I attended the second Silver Taps in less than a year for a friend who died in an accident that occurred while riding in the bed of a pick-up truck. What will it take for people to realize it is dangerous?

Wake up and be responsible. Don't ever ride in the back of a truck — to cut or anywhere else. Don't be misled into thinking that just because the driver of the truck is responsible that you're safe because you're not — accidents can be caused by other people on the road just as well. Hopefully, the University will start busing us out to cut, but until it does, we have to do what we can to keep everyone safe. If it comes down to riding in the bed of a truck or not going, don't go. No matter how many trees you might cut down that day, their worth doesn't even compare to the worth of your life.

Elicia Bennett  
Class of '99

Shannon Shafer  
Class of '99

Accompanied by 30 signatures

### Guns continue to be out of control

Regarding Joe Benningfield's Oct. 2 Mail Call, "Guns provide the means for defense":

Guns + People = Death. In math, we call this an equation. In life, we call this a reality. Why can't

Benningfield and the rest of the gun-toting NRA spokesmen...  
ize this? Let's pretend that the Second Amendment does provide all citizens with the right to bear arms. How can my "fiscal" government stop me from defending my family and possessions with a howitzer? After all, a howitzer is an "arm."  
I don't think Thomas Jefferson had assault weapons in mind when he spoke of arming the people. In a sparsely populated country, I would hope that all able bodied men would come to the aid of their country. But does the "fiscal" government stop me from defending my family and possessions with a howitzer? After all, a howitzer is an "arm."  
The line needs to be drawn somewhere. It is obvious that the argument over interpretation of the Second Amendment will continue. But regardless of that, I think we realize the need for regulation, whether it be handgun guns or howitzers. If that is our modern Democratic breeds violence, then guns are a catalyst to the worsening situation. The solution is not adding more guns to the problem, but rather slowly dismantling America's gun-crazed arsenal.

Chris Shafer  
Class of '99

The Battalion encourages letters to the editor. Letters must be 300 words or less and include the author's name, address and phone number.

The opinion editor reserves the right to edit letters for length, style, and content. Letters may be submitted in person at Reed McDonald with a valid student ID. Letters may also be mailed to:

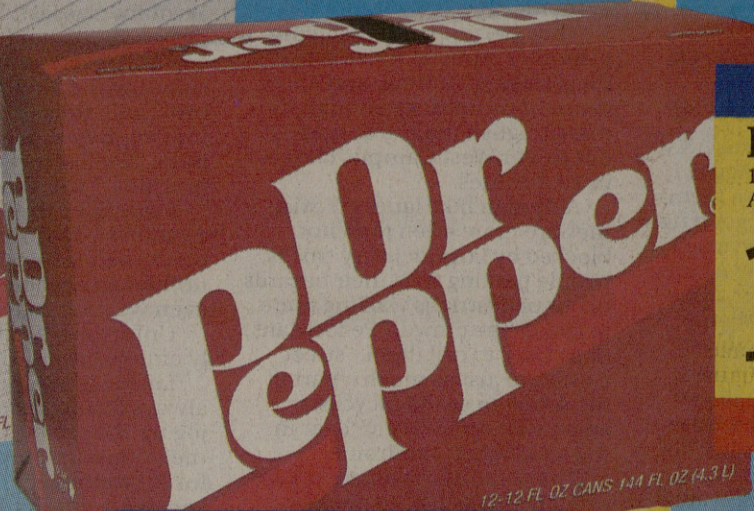
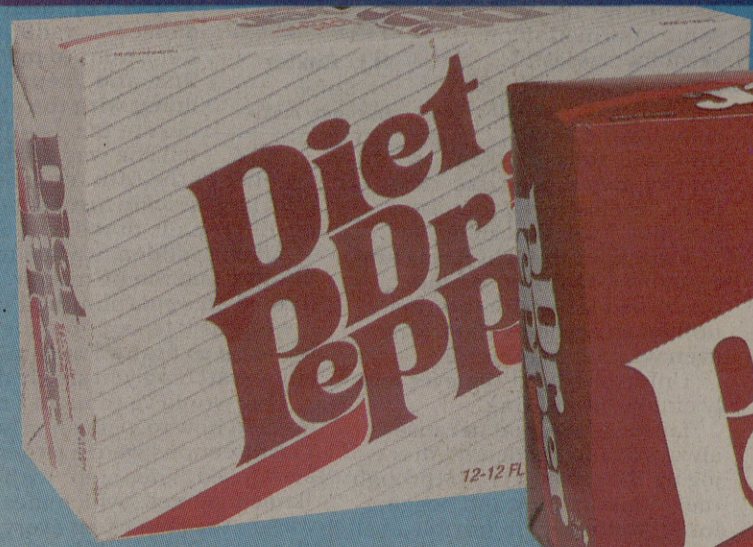
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Page 103 • Is  
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BY COURTNEY  
THE BATTALION

Despite recruiting efforts, fall enrollment remains low this year. University president Benningfield attributed the University's difficulty attracting students to the University's production of a large part of its budget to minorities. Ben Douglas, executive provost, said AggieBucks promotes minority recruitment. He said they continue. But regardless of that, I think we realize the need for regulation, whether it be handgun guns or howitzers. If that is our modern Democratic breeds violence, then guns are a catalyst to the worsening situation. The solution is not adding more guns to the problem, but rather slowly dismantling America's gun-crazed arsenal.

Chris Shafer  
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Study Bro  
**MSC**

BY CHRISTIE H  
THE BATTALION

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