Suckin' it up

Student seeks revenge after one too many parking tickets

BY MICHAEL SCHAUB
Staff writer

PTTSUX.

It is hard to ignore the personalized license plates on Lance White's Jeep Sahara. The junior mechanical engineering major gets a lot of smiles, glares and laughs from passers-by.

"I love seeing people in the rear view mirror read the plates and laugh," White said. "That's my favorite thing."

White requested the plates, which refer to Texas A&M's Parking, Transit and Traffic Services (PTTS), after receiving several tickets from them.

"The last two tickets weren't even on my windshield," White said. "They just showed up on my fee statement when I was studying for finals."

But not everyone is amused by White's license plates. The Texas Department of Transportation recently sent White a second letter, demanding he surrender his plates.

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>
> **LANCE WHITE**
> OWNER OF "PTTSUX" LICENSE PLATES

"I'd be pretty upset if somebody said I sucked," White said. "But I wouldn't go complaining to the Department of Transportation about it. I'd just try to suck a little less."

William D. Pool, branch manager for the special plates division of the Department of Transportation, said the department made a mistake in issuing White's plates to him.

"It's not a good reflection on the department," Pool said. "'SUX' shouldn't have been there. We deem it offensive."

White, who also has bumper stickers reading "PTTSUX" and "PTTS SUCKS" on his Jeep, said he does not take Pool's letter of recall seriously.

"I'm going to tell them that I thought it was a joke," White said. "I didn't take it seriously, since the letter was so full of typos. I expected more from the manager of special plates."

Tom Williams, director of PTTS, said he did not request the Department of Transportation recall the plates.

Williams declined further comment about White and his license plates.

White said he is using his bumper stickers to get revenge.

"I thought I was being a nice guy by not giving stickers to everyone I know," White said. "I was perfectly happy being one little Aggie with an attitude."

But after White received his letter from TDT, he started selling the stickers to dormitories, fraternities, sororities and A&M employees.

"It's like when you're a kid and your big brother picks on you," White said. "You can just quit or you can try to piss him off. The whole thing is sort of juvenile, but you've got to do something. No one else has found this offensive. But one license plate is a lot more offensive than having a thousand cars in your lots with bumper stickers, and that's what's going to happen."

White handed out stickers to students waiting in line to buy parking passes and bus passes last week.

"I know [PTTS Clerks are not] that bad," White said. "People go in there and go postal and freak out, but the clerks aren't the ones who write the tickets. People in the office try to be as nice as they can."

White has less sympathy for some of the PTTS officers.

RYAN ROGERS/THE BATTALION

Junior mechanical engineering major **Lance White** recently received a request from the Texas Department of Transportation to surrender the license plates on his Jeep Sahara. White said he does not take the request seriously.

"I've never seen anyone getting a warning slip," White said. "Once, I got a ticket for not having a hang tag, but I had a window decal. I know better than to park without a permit. I'd last about five minutes."

White said one PTTS officer told him that he would receive fewer tickets if he removed his bumper stickers.

"To me, that means, 'If you kiss my butt and make me feel like a real cop, you might get out of a ticket,'" White said.

One PTTS officer even ran after White's Jeep in order to issue him a citation.

"That's the only time I've seen them run," White said, "unless it's raining."

PTTS is the only campus department that regularly incurs the wrath of students, White said.

"I've never heard anyone complain about (UPD) or anything," White said. "I ran into an old Ag in Houston, and he told me that the only bad memories he had of A&M came from PTTS."

Given the unpopularity of PTTS among some A&M students, White said, his license plates are not that shocking.

"It's no surprise that everyone hates them," he said. "No surprise that everyone thinks they suck."

White said he plans to surrender his plates to the Department of Transportation, but he said he will continue to sell the bumper stickers.

"Student Locator works wonders," White said. "Over a hundred people have flagged me down."

And although he will keep the bumper stickers on his Jeep, he concedes that not everything PTTS does is entirely bad.

"Most of the time, people deserve their tickets," White said. "PTTS does some good things. They try and do some things to take the emphasis off how much they suck."

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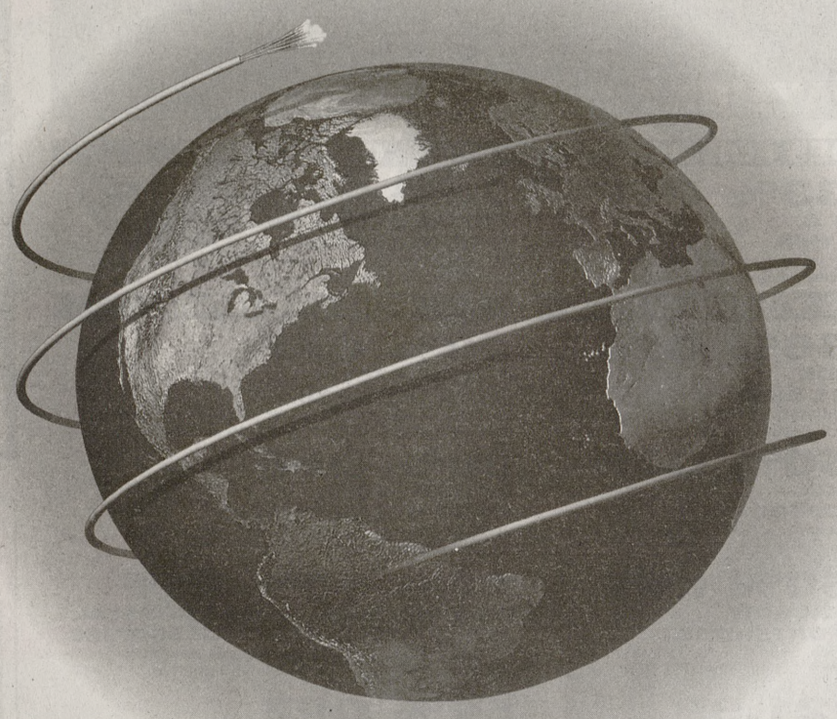

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