

Aggielife

PTTS: Can't live with 'em Can't live without 'em



BRAD GRAEBER/THE BATTALION

BY MICKEY SALOMA
The Battalion

Nothing strikes fear into the hearts of Texas A&M students like the Department of Parking, Traffic and Transportation Services.

By the same token, PTTS also instills much adventure and humor into the lives of Aggies.

PTTS has a reputation that has spawned T-shirts and Fish Camp yells expressing students' disdain toward this University service.

Whether students love it or hate it, the PTTS is here, will be here and will provide entertainment at Texas A&M as long as it functions.

PTTS statistics illustrate the volume, as well as peculiarities, of the department.

Tom Williams, director of PTTS, said it issues 100,00 tickets a year, which he says is typical for any large university.

However, he said that the amount of citations issued depends on how many officers are on duty at any particular time.

Sometimes more officers can equal more tows and tickets.

According to PTTS records, the most number of cars towed in one day is about 150.

Williams said cars are towed because people unknowingly park them in spots reserved for members of the 12th Man Foundation.

Williams said the most parking tickets received by one student is 80, but added that there are 300 students with 20 or more tickets.

"Surprisingly enough, the people with the

most traffic tickets have garage permits. I guess it's because they are out and about more than those who hate to move their cars out of parking lots," Williams said.

However, PTTS does not block students with unpaid tickets from graduating or registering.

"They are given what is called a T-Block, which prohibits them from having transcripts sent," Williams said.

Most Aggies have had a memorable run-in with PTTS, and they have not all been negative. Chris Fox, a senior electrical engineering major, said he had a bad experience with the PTTS that ended on a happy note.

"I parked in the Koldus garage and parked with the front of my car facing out, and ridiculously enough, I got a ticket for that," Fox said.

"They tried to get me to fill out some paper work, but after some intense coercion, I took one of the guys for a tour of the garage to show him that there was no sign which said that parking backwards was illegal. Fortunately for him, he saw it my way, and the ticket was thrown out."

Typically, students frustrated with parking point their fingers at those brave enough to don the blue uniform of the PTTS officer.

Sara O'Brien, a senior agricultural journalism major, said being a PTTS officer is a noble profession, which she would never want to do.

"I couldn't imagine wearing that PTTS patch on my shoulder. That patch invokes thoughts of anger and hostility to all those who see it," O'Brien said.

Amanda Barnes, a senior psychology major, agrees. She said she had a run-in with a PTTS officer that left her a tad disgruntled and almost

"It was like 20 degrees outside, and I was out on the street when a PTTS officer detained me. He proceeded to give me a 10 minute lecture on walking and how I could get fined," Barnes said.

Everyday there is an Aggie who adds to the PTTS officers' lives by attempting to get out of a ticket. Some know no boundaries and their excuses, but most have no clue how to get out of the ticket.

"Girls have it easy, all they have to do is say they will get off without a slap on the wrist," Fox said.

Williams said it is each student's right to however they want about PTTS.

"Sometimes students just display their maturity when they bash us," he said. "It's a job to be done; we were selected to do it, we do it."

Despite students' opinions of PTTS, it is a major service for the University.

Williams said PTTS has one of the biggest responsibilities on campus — dealing with the system as well as campus parking.

"We are unique on campus because we provide parking and transportation services for students," he said.

"We doubt we will ever be the most popular on campus, yet we should gain the respect of students because A&M would be chaos without the order we maintain."

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