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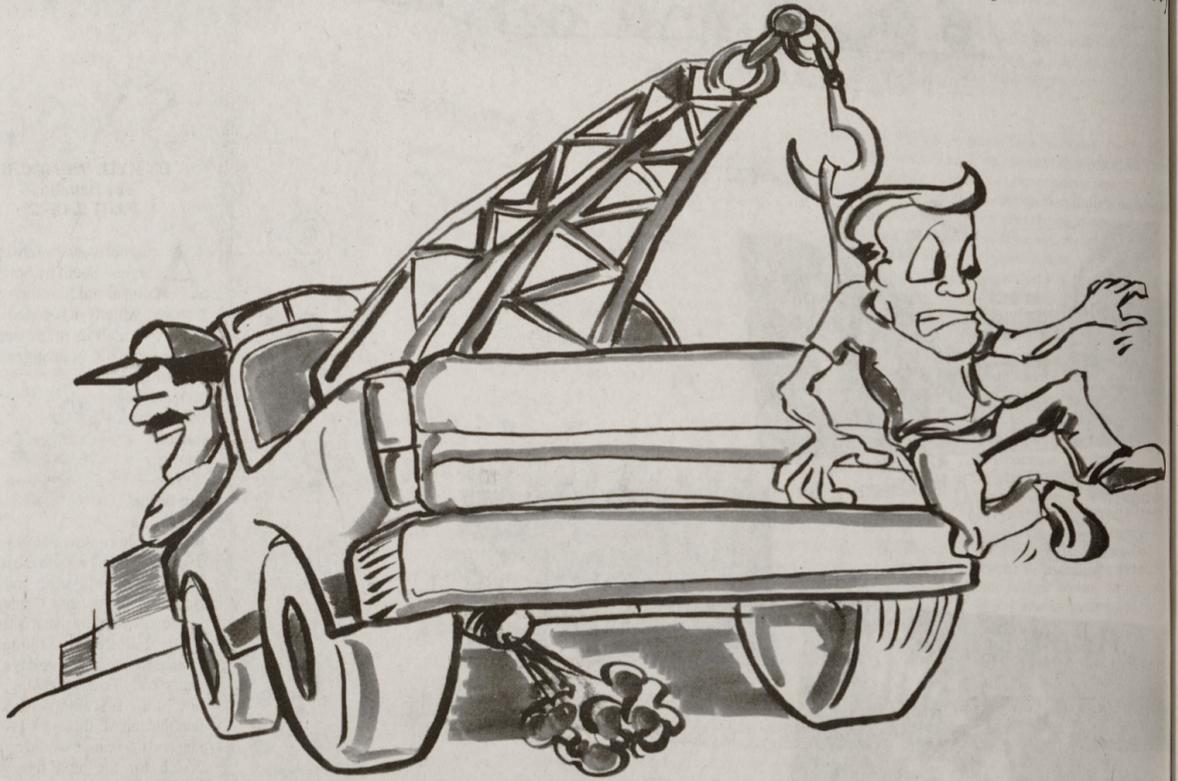
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AGGIELIFE

THE BATTALION

Monday, March 20, 2000

Caught in the undertow
Tow-truck drivers prove to be unlikely figures of authority



JEFF SMITH/THE BATTALION

PARENTS' WEEKEND 2000 ALL-UNIVERSITY AWARDS

Nomination forms are now available for:

ADVISOR OF THE YEAR & STUDENT ORGANIZATION OF THE YEAR

If you think an ADVISOR or RECOGNIZED STUDENT ORGANIZATION should receive this award please nominate them! Nomination forms can be picked up in the Department of Student Activities, 127 Koldus Due March 23, 2000 by 5:00pm

8th Annual Singing Cadet Charity Golf Tournament
Register Now!! Saturday, April 1 *Register Now!!*

Benefiting Twin City Mission's Sheltering Arms Children's Shelter

Bryan Municipal Golf Course
Four-man scramble, open to all students, faculty and friends of Texas A&M University

\$45 per person entry fee includes:
green fees, cart, donuts, soft drinks, catered lunch by Fajita Rita's, T-shirt and prizes

For more information call: **845-5974**
Register by **Tuesday, March 21st**

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725B University Drive

	SUN Mar 19	MON Mar 20	TUES Mar 21	WED Mar 22	THUR Mar 23
6-8 PM		Gene 301 Test A	Gene 301 Test B	Gene 301 Test C	
8-10 PM	Math 152 Test B	Math 152 Test C	Math 152 Test D	Math 152 Test E	
10PM MID	CHEM 237 Lab		Gene 301 Population		
6-8 PM		CHEM 101 Ch. 7&8	CHEM 101 Ch. 7&8		
8-10 PM		CHEM 228 Ch. 20	CHEM 228 Ch. 21A	CHEM 102 Ch. 18A	CHEM 102 Ch. 18B
10PM MID	Math 151 Review I	Math 151 Review II	Math 151 Review III	Math 151 Review IV	Math 151 Review V
	Chem 107	10-Mid Test Review #1 Brown	9-Mid Test Review #2 Brown		
8-10 PM	Phys 202			CH. 23	CH. 24
10PM MID	Phys 208			CH. 28	CH. 29

The world is filled with authorities, large and small. Bob Solo, owner and proprietor of Solo's Garage and Wrecker Service, is constantly reminded of this as he spends each night patrolling for parking offenders in the city he is sworn to protect.



JUAN LOYA

I spent an evening with Bob and his tow truck to see what it is that makes the man whose job affects so many, tick.

9:01 p.m.

I asked Bob how he felt about the upcoming presidential election — our Texas governor versus the incumbent vice president.

"I don't much follow politics," Bob said. "Look at me. I'm one of the most important men in town, and I wasn't elected."

Bob went on to tell me about how he nightly tows over 40 vehicles, which makes at least forty people immobile the next day.

"That's real power", he said as we picked up a maroon Toyota parked illegally in a handicapped space. "Do you vote?" I asked him.

"Nah," he said. "I read somewhere that 'every vote makes a difference,' and the more I thought about it the more I figured I didn't need that extra responsibility in my life."

9:29 p.m.

As we stopped at a gas station for snacks, I asked Bob about his hobbies, his favorite movies and such. "I don't really watch movies," he said. As I questioned him further, it seemed he hardly grasped current events at all.

"Sometimes I buy these books on tape and listen to them as the night goes by," Bob said. "I listened to three volumes of Nancy Drew mysteries last month. Nothing gets by Miss Drew, let me tell you."

"She's a sharp one." Bob gets all of his news from other tow truck drivers, and as it turns out, several of them have been giving him false information for their own amusement. According to Bob Solo, the U.S. is currently at war with several alien races and planets. To show his support for the troops, Bob wears a green ribbon on the bill of his "Out for Trout" cap.

10:12 p.m.

Bob had the habit of calling me

"José" from time to time. I finally corrected him, and he apologized.

"I used to think that I was really good at remembering names, but it turned out I just didn't know a whole lot of people," Bob said.

"Is towing a lonely business?" I asked.

"I wouldn't say that," Bob said. "You meet some interesting folk. I towed a VW bug from an eighty-year old woman one time."

"What's so interesting about that?" I asked.

"She came out of the store just as I was hoisting her car away, screaming, 'Egads and little catfish!'"

"What does that mean?"

"I have no idea," Bob said.

10:44 p.m.

We towed three more cars and a white GMC pickup. Later we talked to a few police officers, shared some information and some coffee. Bob seemed to feel he was on the same authority level as the police, sometimes even a superior one.

He always talked about his next round as if it were a superhero's patrol, while the police officers' like rounds were a garbage man's beat. To Bob, the tow truck driver was the lone sane voice in a sea of parking lot chaos.

11:21 p.m.

The night went on, and as we towed a yellow Pontiac, Bob said something that took me off guard. He said the car we were dragging behind us was the same color of his favorite Pokémon.

"Pikachu?" I guessed.

"No, Psyduck," Bob said. "He's little round duck with psychic powers. He's my favorite." I decided to inquire more into this strange revelation, and as it turned out, though Bob hardly watched TV and had not even been to the movies since *Smokey and the Bandit*, he was an avid collector of Pokémon cards. He even attends tournaments on the weekends.

Why is Psyduck was his favorite? "Because he can get into the other minds, that's why. Psyduck's always the one in control. He's the authority."

11:59 p.m.

It had come time for me to make my departure from Bob's nightly patrol. He had the majority of the evening still ahead of him, an evening of exerting his power over the unlawfully parked vehicles of the city.

That power? The power to tow.

Juan Loya is a senior journalism major.

A sitcom with arias!

Have you ever wondered what would happen if your favorite FRIEND suddenly broke out into song? No? Well believe us, it would be funny!

The Barber of Seville

New York City Opera National Company

To be performed in Italian and supplemented with English supertitles.

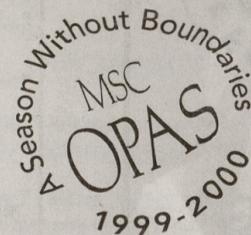
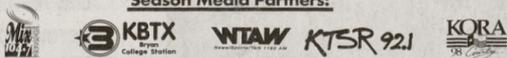
March 21 and 22 at 7:30 PM

Rudder Auditorium

Want to learn more?

Join us prior to the performance for a Patricia S. Peters Lagniappe Lecture in the MSC Forsyth Center Galleries at 6:30 PM. Sponsored by the OPAS Guild.

Season Media Partners:



For tickets, order on-line at opas.tamu.edu. Or call 845-1234!



SXSW

Continued from Page 4

documentary feature that was added at the last minute after it received a huge "buzz" at the Sundance Film Festival. *Dark Days* was easily the best film at SXSW and one of the most moving films of this decade. With no previous experience in film, director Marc Singer lived with the homeless in New York's subway tunnels for two years, documenting the lives of the people he lived with. At the end of the film, Singer received a standing ovation from the packed Paramount Theater. Hundreds crowded around the stage to hear the soft-spoken Singer talk about his experience, a story that left many in tears.

A former fashion designer, Singer started visiting the tunnels as a volunteer to help those in need. He decided to borrow a camera and shoot a documentary about the homeless in an effort to raise money to help them. For two years his crew was homeless he documented, and all the time he used was donated by Kodak. During the two years, Am Trak evicted homeless from the tunnels. After extensive research, Singer found a government program to help some of the homeless relocate. *Dark Days* is an incredible story of hope and redemption, but the story of Singer, who found himself homeless at the end of filming, is an amazing testament of humanity and grace.

So the first half of my spring break was pure film-bliss, with even more good films to come. So stayed tuned for tomorrow folks, when I recount more good films and the catastrophe that was the music festival.

Fish

RYAN, A I'VE B OUT W NEW



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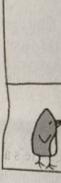
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Application March 22