

PERMITS

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aid he knew nothing about the permit. "I'm a senior and junior zoologist," Graves said. "I don't want to spend money on a permit that is absurd."

often do we need to register bikes?" Graves said. "We ride mountain bikes on campus. Mountain bikes can withstand a few bumps. Why not spend the money on something worthwhile, like the football program?"

parking lots are so far from campus, it's almost impossible to get to. It's becoming a necessity for DeHoyos, a junior, to have a permit.

major. "I've seen students throw their bikes out the back of their cars," DeHoyos said. "I've already paid for a permit, and now I have to ride from campus, they'll have to give me a permit. I don't think I should have to pay twice."

finance major John D. "This way, bike riders are protected. If bikes are stolen, then PTTS will be able to track the bike down faster than if it's left on campus."

system is currently being reviewed by SGA and PTTS. "I don't know what the terms of the review should be, such as fines and penalties."

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projects required to be completed by Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other safety precautions. The completion of these steps is expected to take between 18 and 24 months.

currently awaiting approval from the House-Senate Joint Committee on Appropriations in Washington. "I think we will receive our budget in mid-August and begin construction sometime in October. The projects will resemble the design of the Bush Library."

English major Kevin "I've had a covered bus stop waiting outside my car in bad weather. I've had times when the decision of waiting for 15 minutes for the bus is like a thunderstorm or a deep sleep," Bailey said. "I think covered bus stops would, in my case, improve attendance."

HERS
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said the College of Arts and Sciences works hard to recruit students to become elementary school teachers.

are trying to encourage students to become elementary school teachers, but it doesn't seem to be making any impact.

ary schools struggle to attract female teachers in state and Texas. On average, only 10 percent of the nation's public elementary school teachers are men.

mid the shortage of male teachers is a problem that will only worsen because of the lack of respect for the profession.

think there is no respect for an elementary teacher. "Also, I think parents encourage boys to become engineers because they do with girls."

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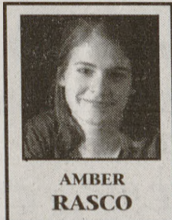
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Ticket to ride

Bicycle parking permits would ease congestion, benefiting all students

Aggeland is infested with parked bicycles. Bikes are parked everywhere, frustrating and annoying both bikers and non-bikers. Blocking doorways, hugging trees and tripping students, parked bikes create a nuisance on campus. Cyclists endure a daily inconvenience as they struggle to find an open parking spot in ridiculously overcrowded bike racks. The Texas A&M campus is polluted by hideous piles of tangled steel. To meet the needs of bikers and non-bikers, the problem needs to be addressed and dealt with.



AMBER RASCO

In 1989, the University Police Department (UPD) and the Parking, Traffic and Transportation Services (PTTS) separated after a long, efficient union. As a team, the two departments required bikes to have permits, registering them to their Aggie owners. Upon the breakup of the departments, PTTS continued to enforce the bike permit regulations until four years ago when the supply of permits ran out. Because bike parking was not a problem then, the department decided to discontinue the permits. Since then, the bike situation on campus has become out of control. Bikers are leaving their beloved transportation outside building doors, locking them up to trees, rails, benches and anything else that does not move.

Many students complain about the overcrowded racks, but cyclists have few options. The shortage of bike racks forces bikers to park their bikes in alternative places. While the biker population may annoy the walking and driving student body at times, it is entitled to equal consideration and attention. A&M is continually striving to better meet the needs of drivers and bus riders alike. The recent rearrangement of parking and the coming of air-conditioned buses indicates a concern for the needs of those students, but it does nothing for those who ride and leave their bikes at school. The on-campus bike-parking situation deserves attention and renovation. Accordingly, PTTS has responded, working to better the environment for bikers but, as usual, nothing is free. So, just like those behind the wheel, cyclists will have to hand over some cash.

The department has proposed returning to the bike permit policy that requires all Aggie cyclists to buy permits, registering their bikes with A&M. PTTS already encourages students to put serial numbers and driver's

license numbers on their bikes; however, the purchasing of bike permits would give each bike an additional identification number connecting the bike with its owner. PTTS plans to present the proposal to the Student Government Association in the fall.

While some may speculate that the proposal is another PTTS scheme to rip off Aggies, Doug Williams, associate director of PTTS, explained the revenue would be dedicated to bikers and improving "bike life." The proposal is not an injustice to bikers, but a way to gather revenue from this type of transportation, just as PTTS does with bus pass fees and automobile parking tickets. It seems bikers have taken advantage of the fact that they do not have to pay to park, leaving the financial burden to all students. The new policy would not only clear the walkways for pedestrians, but also provide better facilities for bikers.

Requiring bikers to buy permits is a wise idea and a long-needed improvement. The UPD supports and encourages the idea because it would significantly contribute to law enforcement and crime prevention. Being able to associate a bike to an individual A&M student would help police identify clear leads for stolen bikes.

Although the idea of permits (and their price) may not appeal to those riding bikes, the policy would undoubtedly benefit cyclists and non-cyclists in the long run. Bikers are much a part of the University as those with cars and bus passes, and they should have ample opportunity to commute.

Just as drivers are continually "blessed" with those sweet, little yellow envelopes, bike riders will also rightfully reap the consequences of disobeying PTTS. In response to permit fees, bikers may try to beat the system by not buying the permits, simply believing that if they are not registered, ticketing is impossible. Those taking this gamble must realize they run the risk of having their property confiscated. PTTS never fails to enforce its rules; it has the ability and authority to break locks, leaving bikers stranded.

While PTTS has a tendency to irritate everybody, the

department actually has the students' best interests at heart. Imagine on-campus life without car parking permits. Although finding a parking space is nearly impossible now, think about the potential chaos of a free-for-all, no-permit-required parking frenzy. It may seem harsh, but just as drivers are in need of PTTS regulation, so are bikers. PTTS is just stuck with the dirty work. Students always look upon its workers as if they have no compassion, when most of the time they are just doing a necessary job.

If the bike-permit proposal passes, the parking situation will be more agreeable and comfortable for all. As Williams said, the idea of bike permits is not meant to discourage the use of bikes, but to correct the oversights of the biking population. Bike permits will create a more organized, less hectic campus atmosphere, benefiting all A&M students on the go.

Amber Rasco is a junior journalism major.



KELSEY ROBERTS/THE BATTALION

— Eric Dickens

Boy Scouts have right to exclude homosexuals

James Dale was a Boy Scout, an Eagle Scout, a Scout leader and a recipient of an award that only 3 percent of Scouts receive. He had been a Boy Scout for 13 years when, in 1991, he was asked to leave the organization. However, because he was also an outspoken gay rights activist, the Monmouth Council (N.J.) of the Boy Scouts requested that he leave.

Many people probably feel sympathetic to Dale for what seems to be a prejudicial judgment of his character, even though he proved his character worthy to the Boy Scouts for over 13 years.

But that should not color people's judgment either. The Supreme Court's decision in *Boy Scouts of America v. James Dale* was a sound one. Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist wrote the opinion for the 5-4 majority, declaring the Boy Scouts can legally exclude Dale. The case originated in New Jersey, where Dale had been a Scout leader. New Jersey's Law Against Discrimination (LAD) applies to all public facilities — such as schools and government centers — and all public accommodations — such as highways and restaurants. So if the Boy Scouts fit the description of one of the two, then they cannot discriminate based on sexuality, and hence could not exclude James Dale.

The Supreme Court of New Jersey wrongly classified the Boy Scouts as a public accommodation, and compromised its integrity as a result.

Here is just one implication of the New Jersey Supreme Court's reasoning. Consider a liquor store. If it is a public accommodation, then the LAD's age discrimination clause would demand that it must serve 19-year-olds and 22-year-olds alike. No right-minded court would ever label a liquor store a public accommodation for this reason — doing so eliminates the state's ability to set a drinking age.

But liquor stores are often run by the states themselves. Hence, if no court would call a state-run liquor store a public accommodation, then surely the Boy Scouts — a privately chartered organization — cannot be one either.

Seeing that the Boy Scouts are not a public accommodation is crucial to understanding the Court's ruling. Depending on personal tastes, one might consider the position that homosexuality is immoral, an unthinking prejudice. Everyone is entitled to make that judgement. So is the Boy Scouts of America. In fact, one of the treasures of the First Amendment is that people have a right of association for the purposes of expression.

If aggregation is to have this power, there must be a right to exclude. Forcing the Boy Scouts to accommodate homosexual

lifestyles also forces it to accommodate a tacit contradiction of its moral message, since part of that message is an objection to homosexuality. In the case of James Dale, who was publicly identified as president of the Rutgers University Lesbian/Gay Alliance, this contradiction is not so quiet.

It is no different than an intelligent, outspoken, environmentalist lawyer who might represent an oil firm. Just as homosexual Scout leaders are as competent as heterosexual Scout leaders, so an environmentalist could be a competent representative of a company that causes significant damage to the environment. Such a lawyer's associations, however, diminish the effectiveness of his speech.

The same is true of the Boy Scouts. The more gay rights activists it must accommodate, the more watered down its message would become. Its right of expressive association would be meaningless. The Supreme Court, by favoring the Boy Scouts, allowed it to remain meaningful.

Several homosexual groups agree with this reasoning. They filed friend-of-the-court briefs arguing that if the Boy Scouts cannot ex-

clude them, then they cannot exclude heterosexuals in purely homosexual associations. Prevention of discrimination in this case conflicts with First Amendment expressive association rights.

The New Jersey Court favored the former on shaky grounds. The Supreme Court could not favor the former and yet maintain its jurisprudential integrity. "Discrete and insular minorities" — such as racial minorities — are protected equally under the Fourteenth Amendment. Not only did Congress not intend the Fourteenth Amendment to be a protection of homosexuals, but judicial precedent does not either.

In *Bowers v. Hardwick* (1985), the Court ruled that states can pass laws against sodomy, which means they can regulate homosexual conduct in ways they cannot regulate heterosexual acts.

This demonstrates that homosexuals cannot have a blanket protection against discrimination along the lines of what New Jersey had in mind.

The Boy Scouts have circulated several position papers on the immorality of homosexuality. They may have taken the wrong position; they may not have. But the Court has the law and its integrity. Americans can rejoice that neither was compromised.

Jeffrey Eisenberg is a columnist for The Cavalier Daily at the U. of Virginia.

'Survivor' shows full of unnecessary danger

Think back to "traditional" game shows like "Jeopardy." The contestants, for the most part, stand calmly behind a podium and win money by demonstrating their knowledge of various subjects. The modern-day counterparts of these shows are strikingly different from their predecessors and increasingly more violent and sensationalistic. Two examples are CBS's TV-drama-meets-game-show program "Survivor" and Comedy Central's new prize show "Don't Forget Your Toothbrush." Sensationalism is well and good in its place, but many game shows are taking it too far.

People stuck on a desert island and other dangerous escapades are undeniably exciting to watch. But some of the activities the contestants perform are potentially dangerous and would be better left to trained stunt people. Game shows are meant to be fun and challenging entertainment, not activities where contestants risk life and limb for a chance at big bucks.

Early enough, modern game shows seem to be moving ever closer to competitions such as those featured in Stephen King's *The Running Man*. In *The Running Man*, less fortunate people in a futuristic world can enter themselves in a variety of game show competitions. For example, an elderly man with heart problems would be placed on a treadmill until he either died or completed a certain amount of aerobic activity. If the contestant won, he would be financially set for life. But in the process, crucial body parts and even lives are prone to being lost. Although American game shows have not progressed to this level, one still has to wonder exactly how far the obsession with sensationalism will go.

In addition, the premise of many of these game shows is idiotic. For example, the very idea of a group of people "trapped" on a desert island with television crews is utterly ridiculous. Instead of devoting their time to helping those truly are trapped in desperate situations survive, the contestants devote their time to petty arguments and dangerous activities.

It is arguable what is more disturbing: that this is a real competition or that people actually watch it. Either way, Alex Trebek would not be pleased.

— Jessica Crutcher

UT employees justified in strike over benefits

In response to Sunnye Owens' June 29 column.

I was appalled to read this extremely insensitive article in *The Battalion*. How can Owens act like the UT employees do not have the right to strike because they might hurt the students?

Any strike affects someone, but thank goodness in this country we are allowed to stand up for ourselves when

it comes to important issues like health insurance. I am afraid that some college students who still live off their parents' insurance do not realize how expensive health insurance really is.

Recently, my husband and I had a beautiful baby boy. The bill for the anesthetic alone was \$800. Without the insurance that I receive through my part-time staff position, we would have been in debt before we even got the rest of the \$5,000 bill.

For someone like me, whose paycheck is little more than \$300 a month, an extra \$80 is quite a bit of money to

take away from it, and lowering it to an extra \$30 with the pay raise is still a week's worth of groceries.

I think it is interesting that some people do not realize that to those who make less than \$30,000 a year, it would be much easier just to go on Medicaid, which requires no premium whatsoever, instead of actually going out and getting a job to provide healthcare for a family. It is very easy to judge when you have never been in that situation.

Anna Hawkins
Class of '01

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