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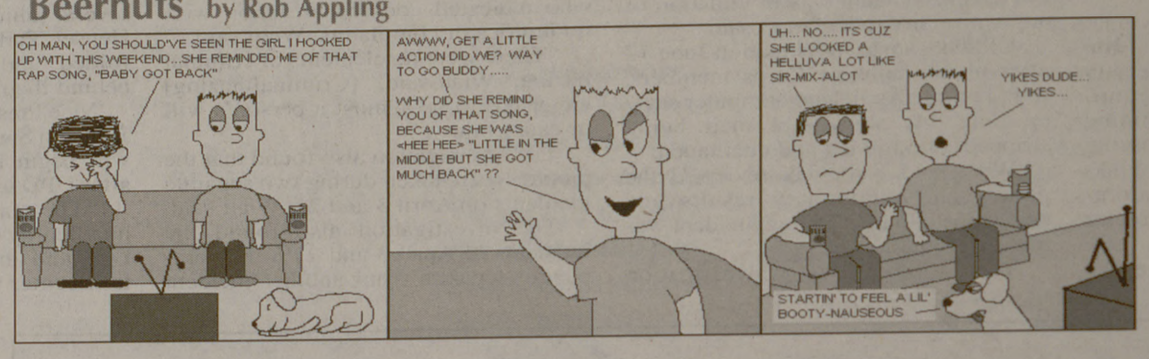

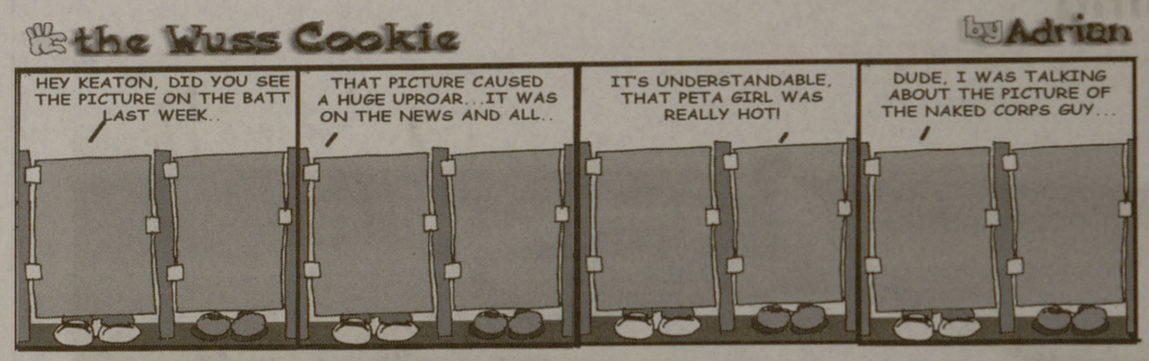

Students want national readership program back

By Courtney McDonald
THE BATTALION

Two years have transpired since the Newspaper Readership Program was initiated and suspended on the A&M campus. Now the papers that participated, and students frustrated by newspaper solicitors and those who desire cheaper access to more newspapers, want to reinstate the readership program.

The purpose of this nationally successful collegiate program is to enhance the learning environment on university campuses by providing students with an opportunity to be more informed about current events.

This is accomplished by having racks with multiple newspapers available all over college campuses for a minimal fee each semester.

Over 200 schools have participated in The *USA Today* Collegiate Readership Program, and the results are overflowing with positive feedback.

"It's time to go after A&M again," said Lorenzo Vigliante, circulation director for *The Bryan-College Station Eagle*.

The readership program established on campus in the fall of 2000 and spring of 2001 was headed up by *The Eagle*, and the other participants included *USA Today*, *The Dallas Morning News*, *Houston Chronicle* and *The New York Times*.

"(Texas A&M) was one of the first universities to try out the program," said *USA Today* Houston/New Orleans Regional Marketing Manager, Jim Greenleaf. "There has been a lot learned since it was tested at A&M."

Greenleaf believes that some of the contributing factors to the demise of the program was the inaccessibility of the newspaper racks and the fire hazards that they posed when they were more accessible.

The racks were placed in residence halls initially, but then were moved into laundry rooms to accommodate the fire laws, he said.

If the program were to be reincorporated on campus, newspapers would be placed in high traffic areas like the Memorial Student Center and the Blocker Building, in addition to the residence halls.

Another factor contributing to the fallout of the program was the added fee to student tuition.

"Students didn't want to pay the extra fee," Vigliante said.

The fee was minimal in comparison to *The Eagle*'s semester subscription fee of nearly $15. For a couple of dollars, students had access to four nationally recognized newspapers in addition to the local newspapers, including *The Eagle* and *The Battalion* under the readership program.

"It would be worthwhile to pay a small fee if it meant that students had access to five different newspapers," said Lester Jones, a junior civil engineering major.

Having more newspapers either forces students to be more concerned or enables them to be more informed and concerned about world affairs if material is conveniently at their fingertips everyday of the school week, Jones said.

Vigliante suggests having a third-party sponsor if the students do not want to pay the extra little fee.

"A sponsor of A&M's choice, like Coke, could pay for the program in exchange for having their logo on the racks," Vigliante said.

Having the readership program would also effect the appearance of newspaper subscription solicitors on campus.

"I don't like (newspaper salesmen) because they come to my door and attack me on campus," said Katy Bock, a senior english major. "Solicitors (for newspaper subscriptions) are so bad that I don't even answer the door for them anymore."

"Eventually, after the program grew, the solicitors would phase out," Vigliante said.

The Eagle and *USA Today* are prepared to give A&M another opportunity to participate in the readership program.

"We'd love to have another shot at (A&M) and talk with *The Eagle* to work it out. We want students to have a variety of news to access," Greenleaf said.

"(The Eagle) is waiting for the new president to get settled in before submitting a proposal," Vigliante said.

Success and establishment of the program will depend on faculty and student support, Vigliante said.

Lawsuits

Continued from page 1

General's Office, which is representing the administrators, filed a brief in May saying that administrators are immune from the federal and state claims against them because they have qualified for official immunity as government officials.

The brief said administrators were not aware of the "specific dangers" surrounding the annual Bonfire tradition and did not put students in harm's way.

The commission, which investigated the collapse, said faulty design grew riskier over the years and blamed administrators for allowing inadequate supervision and controls.

Attorneys hired by the family of Christopher Breen, one of the 12 killed in the collapse, have requested that administrators not be granted immunity or dismissal from the lawsuits.

Corps

Continued from page 1

Defense Pentagon Family Assistance Center after the Sept. 11 terrorist attack on the Pentagon.

During his career he received the Bronze Star, Legion of Merit and the Defense Distinguished Service Medal.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Student arrested for aggravated assault

According to College Station Police, John Anthony Santillano, 23-years-old and a senior marketing major, was arrested and jailed for aggravated assault after striking someone with a baseball bat in the head around 4 p.m. Sunday.

Sgt. Andy Reski from the College Station Police said there were approximately 10 people in a house at 208 Rosemary, College Station. Some words were exchanged between Santillano and the victim.

Reski said Santillano was offended by something the victim said, walked to his bedroom at the back of the house and picked up a baseball bat.

He then walked up behind the victim and started hitting him with the bat. The other people in the house quickly restrained Santillano, called the police and the victim escaped, Reski said.

When police arrived on the scene the victim was found bleeding from the head and conscious. He suffered three cuts on top of his head each a couple of inches long which required several stitches, Reski said.

The police placed Santillano under arrest at the scene. Both Santillano and the victim were transported to the College Station Medical Center by the College Station Fire Department. Santillano was later released and taken to jail, Reski said.

Landers dead at 83

CHICAGO (AP) — Ann Landers, the columnist whose snappy, plainspoken and timely advice helped millions of readers deal with everything from birth to death, died Saturday. She was 83.

The death of Landers, whose real name was Esther Lederer, was announced by the *Chicago Tribune*, publisher of her column.

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