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Management ousted 100 bats from Evans, patching up holes in the building while the bats were out at night for feeding. The bats that occupied the Business Management Building were relocated to the wilderness near the College Station area. The bats were relocated to the previously occupied buildings. The best of our knowledge, the problem has been solved. The library," said Gilreath, executive dean of Evans. "We have had no further reports of bats since the summer."

that remain on the campus and in the College Station area are protected status as the only mammal of its kind. "I came into contact with a bat, especially a downed bat. The incident should be reported to Pest Management at 3383 or the Health and Safety Department at 845-2132. For more information, contact with a bat, call 845-2132. For medical attention with a bat, call 845-2132." Meyer said.

## Position 12

from page 1

ponents — consumer advocates and some groups — argued that the position would restrict and allow negligence and accountability. The board narrowly rejected that amendment changes the litigation by allowing to put caps on certain awards, such as offering in medical malpractice cases.

ers in the spring had passed a state law that would limit economic damages for physicians, hospitals and other institutions. The amendment's passage would hedge off constituencies that could have been had rejected it. Instead, Proposition 12 give politicians and special interests, like the insurance industry, the power to overturn legal decisions made in the hands of judges and juries. The amendment, executive director said.

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# AGGIELIFE

THE BATTALION

Page 3A • Monday, September 15, 2003

## She thinks my tractor's sexy

Environmental concerns and extreme sports face off in the great truck debate

By Daniel Chapman  
 THE BATTALION



Judging by the vehicles in the Zachry parking lot, students at Texas A&M like everything bigger, louder and faster.

A short walk around any parking lot on campus will prove that a great many, if not the majority, of Aggie students adhere to that philosophy.

One will find trucks that necessitate a rope ladder or step in order to climb inside, and SUVs that take up close to two parking spaces, making parking around them difficult for other cars.

What is the obsession with vehicles made for extreme driving conditions that will never see more than a gravel driveway?

Do Aggies need the ego boost of a V8 engine or the assurance that cattle guards on the front of our trucks may derail trains?

Joel Albea, a senior environmental design major, said he knows 100 percent the importance of being one with a car.

"I drive a 1983 Jeep CJ7 which gets about 12 to 14 miles to the gallon. There is nothing like riding in a car that is so responsive. Jeeps are the bare minimum of a car, and they are

so fun to drive," Albea said.

"It's like driving a go-cart, and there is no better feeling than riding with the top off. I also love the fact that I can take it apart and put it back together myself. You can't do that with cars that are manufactured today."

It's good to like what you're driving, but student must consider the environmental ramifications that come with a hefty vehicle and a round trip to the Student Recreation Center in these vehicles.

Albea says the difference between gas mileages may mean the difference between a car to envy and a car to pity.

"I don't think that the difference between getting a gas mileage of 12 - 14 is much different than getting a gas mileage of 20," Albea said. "And if your car is getting 50 - 60 miles to the gallon, you are not driving a fun car. Those little cars don't drive good like my Jeep."

The truth of the matter is that if Albea drives his Jeep 15,000 miles this year, he will pump 11.4 tons of greenhouse gas emissions and a cost of \$1,368 in gasoline, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Web site.

The shift to larger vehicles such as SUVs and minivans that have lower gas mileage leads to a drop in fuel economy, says the EPA.

While some vehicle models may be improving mileage efficiency over time, as a nation, America is still buying less efficient models.

While many will agree that SUVs are fun to drive, some do use their trucks for things a car is not designed for.

Jessica McDaniel and her family live on a ranch. They use trucks to haul feed and hay around their land. This task would be time consuming and completely inefficient in a sedan, and it may even cause more pollution because of this inefficiency, she said.

"On the flipside I feel that the Excursion and vehicles like it, are the stupidest things ever invented," said McDaniel, a senior agricultural business major.

"It's like driving a go-cart ... I also like the fact that I can take it apart and put it back together. You can't do that with cars that are manufactured today"

— Joel Albea  
 senior environmental design major

"No one should need a vehicle that big."

McDaniel prefers to drive trucks and SUVs over sedans and smaller vehicles.

"I also don't think that I could drive a small car because of the safety that I have in my truck," she said. "I drove a car for two weeks, and I hated it. I don't like to be low to the ground. I'd much rather be up higher."

David Oliver, a senior industrial distribution and manufacturing engineering technology major, enjoys taking his Suburban off road to places he may not be able to get to by bike or small car.

"I serve as the public relations officer for Texas A&M Off Road. We participate in a national program called 'Tread Lightly' which simply states that wherever we visit, we leave it better than we found it," he said.

"We don't tear up the land or spill anything in the rivers when we take our trips off road, and encourage others that we encounter on the trail to do the same."

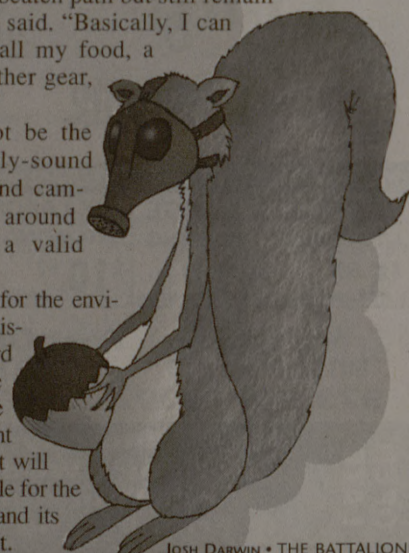
Oliver drives a Chevy turbo-diesel Suburban his family has owned since 1985, when they bought it new. Now that it is his, he's added a new suspension and larger tires.

Since he still drives it on the road everyday, it had to be built with a dual purpose.

"I take it camping, and those modifications give me the ability to go farther from the beaten path but still remain street legal and safe," he said. "Basically, I can drive to the trail, pack all my food, a tent, bicycles, and any other gear, and spend a day or two."

While they might not be the most environmentally-sound choices for getting around campus, many of the SUVs around College Station serve a valid purpose.

The future is uncertain for the environment. Although the laissez-faire attitude toward what students drive may be acceptable right now, there soon may be more stringent government regulations that will hold drivers more responsible for the type of vehicle they drive and its effects on the environment.



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