

# THE BATTALION

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

## Survey results: Students support Bonfire

By Rolando Garcia  
THE BATTALION

Bonfire 2002 planners are disappointed at the dismal response to the survey undertaken last week to gauge student support for the drastically revamped Aggie Bonfire. Only 2,000 students responded to the survey, including less than a third of the undergraduate student population.

"I would have expected considerably more because of the high visibility of this issue," said Bonfire 2002 Steering Committee Coordinator Dr. Bryan Cole.

Based on the low turnout, Cole said he would not feel confident reporting to A&M President Dr. Ray M. Bowen that the student body wants to have Bonfire. Bowen is expected to make a final decision Feb. 8 if Bonfire will burn next fall.



COLE

Among those who completed the survey, more than 90 percent said they supported having Bonfire under the strict new safety parameters, but stu-

dents were less enthusiastic about having to pay for it.

Student Body President Schuyler Houser, a senior industrial engineering major, said that compared to turnout in student elections the number of students who completed the survey is an overwhelming show of support for Bonfire. Every student received a link to the online voting site through Neo email accounts.

Students were asked to choose from three potential stack designs selected by the committee, and almost 97 percent chose the wedding-cake design. All the logs in the

design would touch the ground, but would be cut to different heights to give a multi-level appearance.

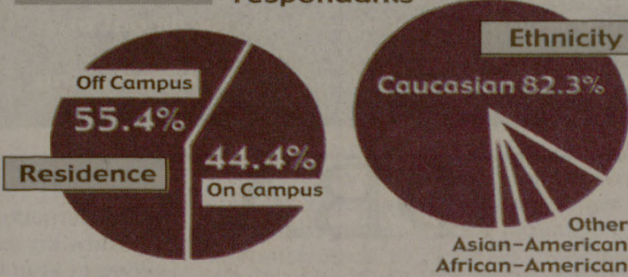
Because of the overwhelming student preference, that is the design the steering committee will recommend to Bowen in its final report, Cole said. All designs meet Bowen's parameters, which include the use of professionally cut lumber, a one-tier stack and work on Bonfire will be limited to two weeks. Cole said each design could accommodate up to 2,500 workers, but each student would

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### Student Bonfire Survey Results

44,701 Student body population

12,005 Number of survey respondents



CHAD MALLAM • THE BATTALION

### Jars of clay



JOHN LIVAS • THE BATTALION

Rachel Nelson, a sophomore general studies major, teaches beginner Thomas Wetteraur, also a sophomore general stud-

ies major, the pottery technique of trimming. Pottery wheels and other creative tools are available at the MSC University Plus.

## Tuition hike proposed for salary increase

By Christina Hoffman  
THE BATTALION

Texas A&M administrators are proposing a \$2 per credit hour University Authorized Tuition (UAT) increase to raise faculty and staff salaries starting in the fall of 2002.

If approved, the increase will raise A&M's tuition from \$42 to \$44 per credit hour.

"This will be an incremental increase, totaling \$2.2 million dollars for 2002," said Bill Krumm, the vice president for finance.

The Texas Legislature recently approved a bill that would raise the maximum cost state universities can charge per credit hour from \$42 to \$44.

This would be in addition to the proposed Enhancement Fee which could charge incoming students up to \$30 per semester hour, with the average full-time student seeing an increase of \$400 per semester, beginning in Fall 2002.

Krumm said the two proposed fees are not related.

According to research by the Office of Institutional Studies and Planning and Academe Magazine, A&M ranks 25th among universities across the country in faculty and staff salaries.

Krumm said A&M needs to keep faculty and staff salaries competitive with peer universities, to maintain the quality of education available to students.

He added that the University of Texas-Austin pays full-time professors an average of \$9,000 more per year than A&M.

Krumm stressed that as student tuition increases, so does the amount of financial aid offered to both undergraduate and graduate students.

"The UAT increase can be offset with financial aid," Krumm said.

The Board of Regents will meet and vote on the proposed UAT increase in March 2002.

A&M President Dr. Ray Bowen said students will be given the opportunity to express opinions and concerns about the proposed increase at open forums within the next two months.

Krumm added that tuition hikes occur regularly to keep pace with inflation.

"Tuition can't remain flat, but [the legislature] should decide where the index should be," Krumm said.

The UAT was last raised in 2001 when it increased from \$40 to \$42 per credit hour.

## Aggie football team graduation rate low

By Justin Smith  
THE BATTALION

In a 2001 report released by the National Collegiate Athletic Association, the graduation rate of football players from Texas A&M is 36 percent, ranking the University eighth in the Big 12.

The overall graduation rate for the A&M student body is 64 percent.

Of the remaining 11 schools in the conference, Kansas State University

held the highest graduation rate with 77 percent and Oklahoma State University ranked twelfth with 17 percent.

"The numbers in the report don't exactly tell the whole story. There are factors that they don't include which they should," said Tim Weiser, the director of athletics at Kansas State University.

Texas A&M Athletic Director Wally Groff said the number of players who go on to play professionally are slated as withdrawn without graduating.

"We have five to seven players go to the pros every year, either in the draft or as a free agent," Groff said. "Another thing they don't include is the number of players who come back once they go to the pros and get their degree."

Groff said another large factor affecting the rankings are students transferring to other universities.

"If a student transfers from the school, they are still counted as having not graduated," he said.

Groff said some players do not pass their classes and ultimately fail out or have other problems, but he said that the same thing happens to students who are not participating in athletics.

A new athletic study center at the south end zone of Kyle Field is being planned. Computer labs and study facilities will be available for athletes, as well as individual tutoring. Groff said

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## Scott chosen Texas Scientist of the Year

By Marianne Hudson  
THE BATTALION

The Texas Academy of Science named Texas A&M Distinguished Professor Dr. A. Ian Scott the Texas Scientist of the Year for 2002 for his success in genetically engineering vitamin B-12.

Scott's research involved determining how nature produces vitamin B-12 and replicating the process through genetic engineering.

"Finding out how nature makes vitamin B-12 was like a detective story," Scott said. "First we had to identify the 22 genes that make up the vitamin. Then we had to find out

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## Texas passes No-Call Law

By Justin Smith  
THE BATTALION

A new law aims to end quiet evenings disrupted by pushy telemarketers peddling their wares.

As of Jan. 1, Texas residents can register for a no-call list. Once a citizen is on the list, it is illegal for a solicitor to call them. If the solicitor does so, they will be prosecuted.

"If a telemarketer calls you and you are on the no-call list, they can be fined \$1000 per call," said Theresa Gage, spokesperson for the Texas Public Utilities Commission,

which maintains the list.

Gage said telemarketing victims can take the company that called them to small claims court. The attorney general has the option to pursue further action against the company.

State Rep. Burt Solomons, R-Denton, the author of the no-call bill, said, "Telemarketers don't want to call people who don't want to hear from them."

Solomons said it is a waste of time and money for telemarketers to harass people uninterested in buying the products or services they are selling.

However, residents who put

their phone numbers on the list will not be shielded from all solicitors. Exceptions include non-profit organizations, opinion polls and calls asking for support for political candidates. Also, any company with whom a resident has had business in the last year is allowed to call them.

This service, unlike similar services in other states, is not free. For \$2.25 per telephone number, Texas residents can be on the no-call list for three years.

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Once upon a time ...

Students and faculty are publishing their work

### WEATHER TODAY



### THURSDAY



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