

THE BATTALION

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College Station, Texas

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The Weather

Yesterday	Today
High 66	High 75
Low 52	Low 27
Rain 0.07	Chance of rain 17%

Fire: multi-story hassle

This is the second in a two-part series on Texas A&M's compliance with city building codes and the potential hazards of fires in campus buildings.

By DENISE RICHTER
Battalion Reporter

The Nov. 21 fire in Las Vegas' MGM Grand Hotel and Casino that left 85 people dead has brought about a heightened interest in fire precautions for high-rise buildings.

Although Texas A&M University has three high-rise buildings, Harrington Tower, the O&M Building and Rudder Tower, the University is a state agency and is not required by law to conform to city fire and building codes.

Each of Texas A&M's high-rise buildings has fire plans, evacuation procedures and stairways equipped with fire walls and fire doors able to withstand fire for 1½ hours.

However, the ability of local firefighters to effect a rescue from the higher floors is open to some question.

Third-floor and beyond

Because of a lack of the necessary evacuation equipment, such as ladders, the College Station Fire Department is unable to rescue people above the third floor of any building, College Station Fire Marshal Harry L. Davis Sr., said.

Davis said the department would be able to handle a large fire "if it was strictly structure involved, with no life loss." If necessary, the Bryan Fire Department could provide additional assistance.

"If they could get to the stairwells, we would assist them out, but that's pretty much the extent of it," Davis said.

All but one of Texas A&M's 35 dormitories have four above-ground floors; Leggett Hall has three above-ground floors. In addition, most other campus buildings have at least four floors.

High-rise precautions

Jake Cangelose, fire marshal for the O&M Building, said the building has at least two fire protectors on each floor, a reporting system located on the first and 12th floors and a seven-step emergency plan devised by a building committee made up of the dean and department heads within the building. This emergency plan is posted by each

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elevator along with a map giving the location of fire extinguishers on that particular floor.

Rudder Tower's second, eighth, ninth, tenth and 11th floors are designated as office floors. People working on these floors

Stairways in the tower are equipped with battery-powered lights on each landing; they did not function during the recent power failure.

are informed of the evacuation plan and each office floor has a designated proctor who is responsible for seeing that the floor is evacuated in the event of fire.

The conference floors (the third through the seventh floors) have no posted evacuation plan. However, Sodolak said Services Supervisor Jerry Nucker is working on the plan and it should soon be ready.

The evacuation plan posted on the office floors warns building occupants to take the stairs instead of the elevators. Stairways in the tower are equipped with battery-powered lights on each landing; but because they did not function during the re-

cent power failure, Sodolak said new battery packs are on order and should arrive soon.

Elevators are especially dangerous because a fire could melt the control panel and call the car to the floor where the fire has been reported, Sodolak said. Because of this, tower foremen and all facilities supervisors carry keys that enable them to manually call the elevators to the first floor and lock them.

The dorms and Hawkeye

Texas A&M dormitories are connected to the Hawkeye fire reporting system. When an alarm goes off, a light flashes on a central reporting panel in the head resident's room. A two- to three-minute delay before the general alarm sounds enables the head resident or resident adviser to check the floor where the fire has been reported and determine whether it is a fire or a false alarm.

Each head resident and resident adviser is equipped with a chemical fire extinguisher; if the fire is one they feel they can handle, they are advised to put it out themselves. However, in the case of a large fire, the College Station Fire Department is notified and responds.

The Corps-style and modular dormitories are equipped with smoke detectors and pull stations on each floor, while the Commons dorms have built-in fire protection systems.

Fire- and smoke-detection equipment in balcony-style dormitories presents a problem, however.

Stiteler said the balcony-style dormitories are equipped with duct detectors. Under this system, smoke from a room has to travel down the building's return air system before it triggers the detector. The smoke is usually so diluted by the time it reaches the detector, it will not set off the detector.

Stiteler added that the University Office of Safety and Health is studying a plan that calls for smoke detector heads to be installed in each room.

Also, the office has to set priorities and provide additional protection to buildings as funds become available, Stiteler said. The fire department is informed of those areas that have less protection than others, he said.

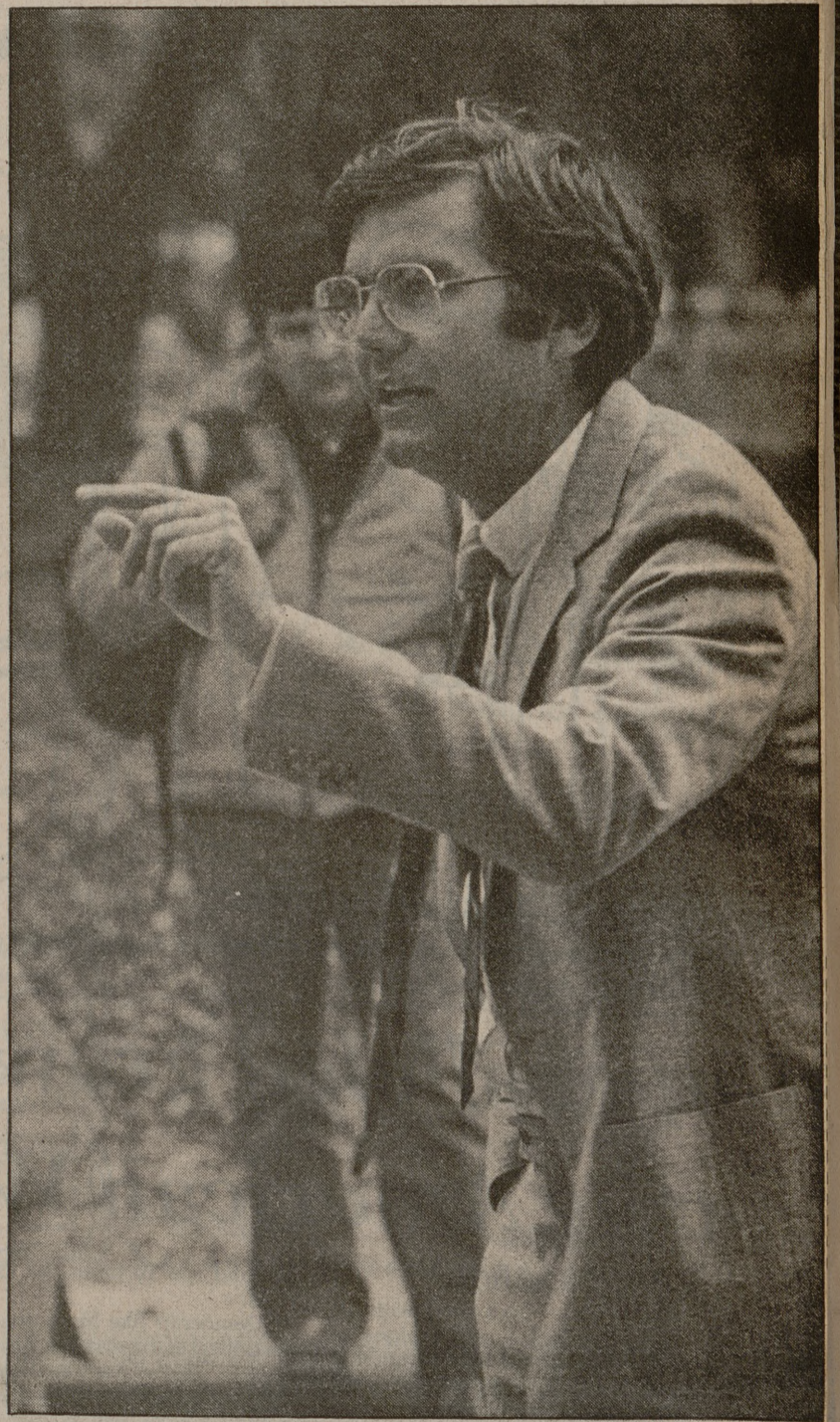
Recent fire history

Seven major fires have occurred at Texas A&M within the past four years. Their dates and amounts in damages:

- \$203,500 damage in the MSC basement storage area on July 8, 1977;
- \$21,000 damage in the Chemistry Building Annex on March 26, 1978;
- \$19,000 damage in the Range Science field lab on Nov. 12, 1978;
- \$15,000 damage in the Biological Science Building on Feb. 14, 1979;
- the old Board of Directors home (on the site where Hobby and Neely halls are now located) was destroyed on Feb. 27, 1979 and loss was estimated at approximately \$500,000;
- \$118,000 damage in the Soil and Crop Science and Entomology Building on July 12, 1979;
- and \$74,000 damage in the Biological Science Building on Nov. 29, 1980.

No one was injured in any of these fires.

A seminar to discuss building codes will be held at Texas A&M Feb. 17. The seminar, sponsored by the College of Architecture and Environmental Design, will deal with life-safety regulations in Texas and focus primarily on fire.



Staff photo by Brian Tate

Un-sponsored evangelist

George "Jed" Smock, a self-proclaimed evangelist, preached by the Memorial Student Center again Monday afternoon. Some of his audience argued with Smock, who has been on campus since Thursday, because of his condemnation of people in the crowd as sinners.

Service fee hearings begin tonight

By FRANK L. CHRISTLIEB
Battalion Reporter

The yearly student service fee allocation process begins tonight, as Finance Committee members begin reviewing 1981-82 requests.

The Student Government Finance Committee will hold hearings on four days to review each 1981-82 student service fee request.

The money is divided among nine student service users who make budget requests each year, which vary according to financial needs of each area.

Tracy Cox, student vice president of finance, said that each year nine areas which provide services for Texas A&M University students request different amounts of money from student service fees.

The nine areas are the Department of Intramural Athletics, A.P. Beutell Health

Center, MSC Council, Personal Counseling Service, the shuttlebus service, Department of Student Activities, Student Government, Students' Legal Adviser and Student Publications.

So far, five users have submitted their requests to Cox. The hearings for these five will be held tonight and Thursday night.

The areas which have made requests so far, as well as the amounts they are asking for are:

- Student Activities, \$166,750, up 25 percent from last year's allocation;
- Student Publications, \$34,000, up 6 percent from last year's allocation;
- the shuttlebus service, \$169,000, up 22 percent from last year's allocation;
- the intramural-extramural department, \$527,042, up 28 percent from last year's allocation;
- Student Government, \$40,592, up 26 percent from last year's allocation.

The other four areas, Cox said, will submit their requests later this week, and the hearings for these will take place Feb. 17 and 19. All four of the hearings will be at 7:00 p.m. in the Former Students Conference Room in the Memorial Student Center.

The hearings are open to the public. At the hearings, the Finance Committee will go over each area's budget, and will consider the needs of each area. Cox said each area will have its own reasons for making the request which it makes. These may be needs for hiring new student workers, for making salary increases or for buying new equipment.

He said the areas whose needs appear to be the most valid are the ones who will probably receive most of the amount they request.

Cox stressed that the requests made by each area are just that — requests. Most of

the time they do not receive the amount they ask for.

The actual procedure of dividing the student service fee money begins when students are required to pay the \$33.50 fee each semester. The money received in the 1980-81 school year will be allocated after the committee's recommendation.

The amount drawn in from the fees paid this year was \$2,173,392, so this is the amount the committee has to work with in making the allotments.

After the committee is through with the requests, they will be brought to the Student Senate for approval. They will then have to gain approval of Dr. John Koldus, vice president for student services.

If Koldus approves the requests, as he generally does, they will be sent to the president and the Board of Regents.

Cox said the process for approval of the requests will last about three or four weeks.

Spring enrollment topples previous high

A record number of students is enrolled at Texas A&M University this spring.

After 12 class days the official enrollment was announced to be 31,427, up 2,125 from the previous spring record of 29,302 set last spring.

This marks a 7.25 percent increase, which is also up from the 7 percent increase of last spring.

The figures were released by the Registrar's Office and will be reported to the Coordinating Board, Texas College and University System as the official spring enrollment.

A breakdown of the figures into classes will not be ready until about the end of the week, a spokesman for the Registrar's Office said.

Three new regents discuss Texas A&M's priorities

By JANE G. BRUST
Battalion Staff

While the three new members of the Texas A&M University System Board of Regents say they have much to learn about the Board's business, they agree that compliance with Title VI is a top priority.

The three new regents — H.R. "Bum" Bright and William A. McKenzie, both of Dallas, and Joe C. Richardson Jr. of Amarillo — began their first six-year terms with the Board meeting Friday. They were appointed in January by Gov. Bill Clements.

They succeed Alfred I. Davies of Dallas, Joe H. Reynolds of Houston and Ross C. Watkins of Uvalde. The three new regents all are graduates of Uvalde A&M.

Bright, 60, and McKenzie, 57, agreed that the Board's number one priority is compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act which calls for desegregation of state institutions of higher learning.

"I think our Board of Regents will give consideration to policies adopted in the past, and this will be a critical thing," Bright said.

"We're going to do what the law says," McKenzie said.

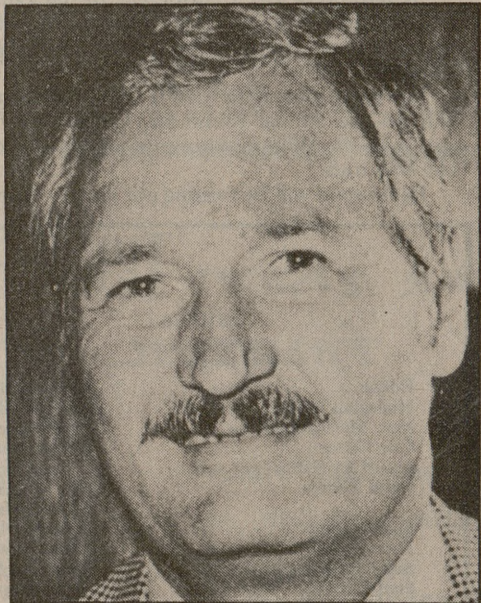
Richardson, 53, said Attorney General Mark White called him two weeks ago and complimented the System's plan for recruitment of minority students. That policy, adopted in December, calls for five-year goals to be set in the recruiting of minorities at Texas A&M, and for more white students to Prairie View A&M University.

"He said we led the entire nation with our plan," Richardson said.

"The strides we are making here are what they are looking for," Bright and Richardson said they think the System is in compliance with Title VI at present.

"We're as near as can be possible at this point," Richardson said. "Until it's 100 percent all right with the Supreme Court, we won't really know."

Richardson pointed out that another challenge fac-



Joe Richardson



H.R. "Bum" Bright



William McKenzie

ing the System concerns the Permanent University Fund.

The PUF is the constitutionally mandated and protected endowment of 2.1 million acres in West Texas that contains oil and gas. Money from the PUF is invested, and the return on that investment is known as the Available University Fund.

Two-thirds of the AUF goes to the University of Texas System, and one-third goes to the Texas A&M System. Now other state-supported schools want a share of those funds.

"One of our biggest challenges is holding on to our

share of the PUF," Richardson said.

For the next two years Bright will serve as chairman of the Board, succeeding Clyde Wells of Granbury who completed his sixth consecutive two-year term as chairman.

Bright admitted Clements favored his election to the position even before his appointment to the Board. He said he was not at all surprised by the Governor's appointment — they have been friends since 1934. Bright said Clements had previously dis-

cussed the appointment with him.

The new chairman would not specify any changes in Board action now that he has assumed the position.

"As presiding officer I will move in the direction the regents expect to go," he said.

Bright said he expects to spend more time working as chairman than he would spend if he were not chairman, but he said, "not so much time that I can't handle."

Bright is a senior partner of Bright & Company, an oil and gas producing firm.

Richardson, an independent oil operator, said he was surprised with his appointment to the Board.

"I was in Hawaii at the time, and I nearly jumped through the ceiling," he said. "I had hoped I'd get it. — I've never been so honored."

Unlike Bright, Richardson has known Clements only a few years.

"He's more interested in A&M than any other governor in my lifetime," he said.

McKenzie, a senior partner in the law firm of McKenzie and Baer, said he too was "surprised and delighted" with his appointment. He has known Clements 20 years.

Not one of the new Board members said he has had adequate time to review the reorganization of the System that was implemented a year ago. The current plan transferred authority over the research stations and extension services from the University president to the chancellor. The president is now responsible for the University alone.

Bright said he has only a "general awareness" of the controversial reorganization.

"I know what the chart looks like," he said. "As to the merits of it, I've not had enough time to see how effective it is. The effectiveness depends on the people in the slots."

"Whatever the Board's position is will be my position. It is the present status, it is the Board's position on it is my position."

With their first Board meeting behind them, the three regents said they were favorably impressed with their new positions.

"We're in an awe-inspiring situation with the magnitude of the physical plant and the budget," the McKenzie said. "I'm impressed with the manner and the method in which the meetings are conducted."

Richardson agreed. "The board is very professional in conducting its business," he said. "We had our agenda a week and a half ago — it's the most professional board I've ever been on."