

SWAMP, redpots dispute MSC display

by Robert McGlohon
Battalion Staff

The executive committee of the MSC Council decided Wednesday night to take no action on a request by senior redpots to remove a hardhat, labeled with the word 'redpot,' from a display in a kiosk in the Memorial Student Center.

The redpots — students in charge of coordinating bonfire — made the request Monday night because they do not want to be associated with the display, redpot Shane Walden said Monday.

The kiosk display, located at the end of the main concourse near the post office, was created by the Students Working Against Many Problems and portrays a pig's head wearing a hardhat. The kiosk also is filled with copies of the "The Battalion" — a parody of The Battalion — and an explanation of what S.W.A.M.P. is.

Monday, the council voted to remove the word 'redpot' from the display, and had it removed without consulting S.W.A.M.P. S.W.A.M.P. then replaced 'redpot' and added a disclaimer

saying, "This display is sponsored solely by S.W.A.M.P. There are no redpots or domesticated pigs associated with S.W.A.M.P. or The Battalion ..."

During Wednesday's special meeting of the executive council — after talking with both members of S.W.A.M.P. and redpots — the council decided not to remove the word 'redpot' from the display again.

The council asked S.W.A.M.P. to voluntarily change the display, which S.W.A.M.P. refused to do, and then asked them to meet with the redpots and the Texas A&M student legal advisor, which they agreed to do.

Dave Witzel, a sociology senior and a vice-president of S.W.A.M.P., said he has no ill feelings toward the redpots or their action in trying to remove the display.

"The redpots were smart in getting what they wanted removed," Witzel said. "It's just too bad the (MSC) council is so spineless."

"It's fine not to like it (the display) and even being vocal about

it. But I don't think that justifies destroying it."

The redpots making the complaint were not available for comment.

MSC Council President Todd Norwood, a senior chemical engineering student, said the council may have been hasty in their decision Monday to alter S.W.A.M.P.'s display.

"They have the legal right to display that information," Norwood said.

"We may have been incorrect (Monday). If that is so, we stand corrected."

The council will wait for the outcome of the meeting between S.W.A.M.P., the redpots and the Texas A&M legal advisor before making a decision on the issue, Norwood said.

Jim Reynolds, director of the MSC, said the council is trying to act as a mediator in the case — rather than an arbitrator.

"What we're basically trying to accomplish is settle a dispute between two student organizations; which I believe is the way it should be settled," Reynolds said.

Texas is growing its own Christmas trees

by Kim Schmidt
Battalion Staff

Christmas in Texas often is far removed from the traditional Christmas associated with northern states.

The first snowfall on Christmas morning and chestnuts roasting on an open fire are replaced here with 70-degree temperatures and perhaps a Christmas barbecue.

And now, to replace another bit of northern Christmas tradition — the northern-grown Christmas tree — Texas is growing its own.

A Texas-grown tree was donated this year to Texas A&M University and now stands in the main foyer of the System Administration Building.

The 12.5-foot tall Improved Virginia Pine was donated by K&K Evergreen Christmas Tree Farms of Orange County, one of 37 tree farms in the county which raise some 300,000 trees.

The tree was delivered to the University on Dec. 3.

The Christmas tree growing industry in Texas is fairly new but rapidly growing, said Bill Bladen of the Texas Agricultural Extension Service.

Originating about 10 years ago in East Texas, the tree business is so popular now that growers expect to sell over \$1.2 million in trees this year, Bladen said.

Popularity of the business also has prompted the formation of the Texas Christmas Tree Growers Association which has more than 300 members.

All the popularity is great for business but growers need to be careful, Bladen said. Overproduction problems could occur in the next few years, he said, as new growers begin to take advantage of the booming market.

Texas-grown Christmas trees are gaining in popularity in the



Staff photo by Ronnie Emerson

Texas A&M's first Texas-grown Christmas tree stands in the main foyer of the System Administration Building.

state because of their freshness and fragrance compared to trees shipped into Texas from northern states, Don Kachtick, also of TAES, said.

Brenda Brown, staff assistant to the deputy chancellor of agriculture, has worked with Patri-

cia Gerling in the chancellor's office to get a tree donated and decorated for the last three years.

This is the first year a Texas-grown tree has been donated and Brown said there is a noticeable difference with this one.

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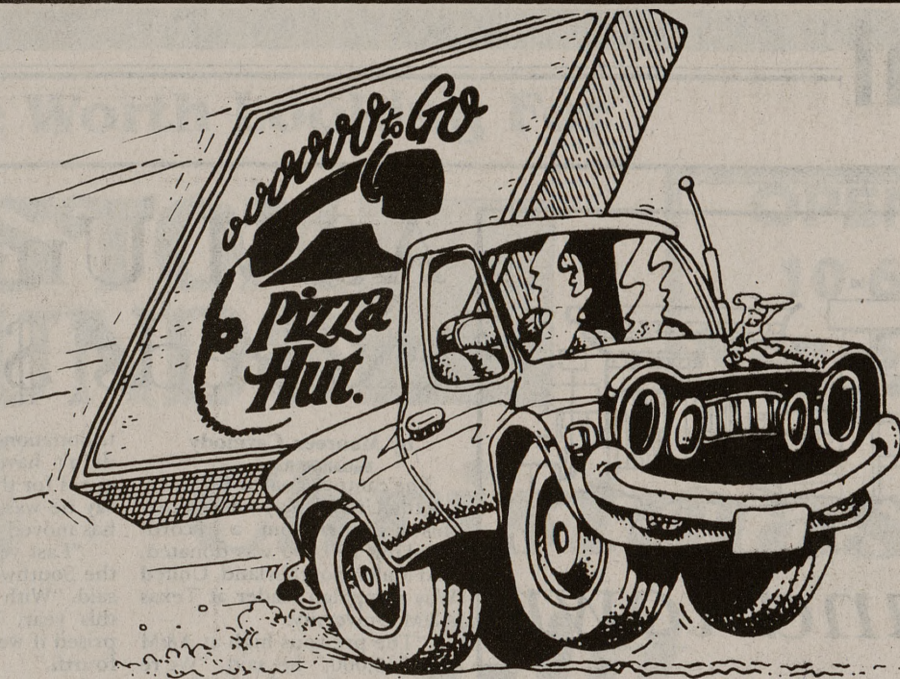
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