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Texas A&M

The Battalion

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Senate backing fee hike

By ED ALANIS
Staff Writer

After heavy debate, the Student Senate voted in its last meeting of the year to support the referendum to increase the student center complex fee by \$10 per semester over a three year period.

After starting the meeting late due to the lack of a voting quorum, the senate voted 23-13 in favor of supporting option 1-b of the referendum.

This option would raise the fee to the maximum ceiling set by the Texas Legislature and establish a special reserve fund to be controlled by students.

The referendum will be put to a vote in the upcoming student elections. It will be the first time students at Texas A&M have been given the opportunity to vote directly on a fee increase.

Students will vote on one of three options:

- Increase the student center complex fee by \$6 per semester over a three year period.
- Increase the student center complex fee by \$10 per semester over a three year period, and establish a special reserve fund.
- Leave the student center complex fee at the current \$10 per semester.

The University Center currently offers services such as check cashing, bowling and games, food services, a bookstore, meeting rooms, print and copy facilities and a craft center. The University Center is also currently operating with a deficit of nearly \$160,000. It has been drawing money from a reserve fund, but that fund will be depleted by September.

If a fee increase is not passed, a decrease in services and an increase in the individual charges for them will be the only alternative left for the center, says Eric Conner, executive vice president for administration and student coordinator of the referendum.

Brian Hay, a graduate senator for the College of Agriculture led the opposition for the resolution.

"The students are going to vote no on this," Hay said, "and if Student Government supports it we are going to look silly."

Hay said he favored increasing the price of individual services, letting the students who use them pay for them on an individual basis.

Other members of the senate opposition questioned whether or not students would actually have control over the reserve fund, which will amount to \$1 million in just four years.

Texas A&M freshman befriends killer, speaks out on capital punishment

By CHRISTINE MALLON
Staff Writer

A Texas A&M student who has corresponded and visited with death row inmate "Candyman" Ronald Clark O'Bryan said if O'Bryan is executed as scheduled on March 31, it will be a waste of a human life and a loss to the human race.

Kim Manganaro, a freshman journalism major from Houston, told The Battalion that O'Bryan began writing to her last fall after he read an anti-capital punishment editorial she wrote to the Houston Post's Sound-Off column.

Manganaro said she had never heard of O'Bryan and at first thought his letter must have been a joke. After some research into his case, however, she decided to write to him.



Asleep at the wheel

Vernon Hartsfield, a Texas A&M heavy equipment operator naps Wednesday afternoon on his bulldozer near the civil engineering building.

Photo by KATHERINE HURT

No apparent damage to either ship

U.S. aircraft carrier, Soviet sub collide

United Press International

WASHINGTON — The U.S. aircraft carrier Kitty Hawk and a nuclear-powered Soviet attack submarine collided in darkness in the southern Sea of Japan Wednesday but neither ship suffered apparent damage, officials said.

Reports from the conventionally powered 80,000-ton carrier said none of the 5,000 personnel aboard were injured in the collision with the 5,200-ton submarine and there was no damage to its hull.

Officials said the massive U.S. ship "shuddered" as it came in contact with the sub, which sources identified as a Victor-1 Class attack

craft that carries a crew of 90 and 18 torpedoes.

There was "no apparent damage" to the submarine, a Pentagon statement said. A Pentagon official said the Kitty Hawk, whose home port is San Diego, Calif., stood by "to render any assistance it can to the sub."

The collision occurred at 8:07 a.m. EST — 10:07 p.m. local time — as the carrier steamed at 15 knots toward the Yellow Sea 150 miles east of South Korea, the Pentagon and military sources said.

President Reagan was informed of the incident and "has what details are available from the carrier,"

District attorney drops charges against Geter

United Press International

DALLAS — Armed robbery charges against Lenell Geter, who claimed his conviction was the result of a racist judicial system, were dropped Wednesday by the district attorney, who said he had another suspect in the case.

Dallas County District Attorney Henry Wade announced the charges against Geter, who was sentenced to life in prison in an earlier trial, had been dropped and a suspect from Harris County had been brought to Dallas for questioning.

Geter, 26, was convicted and sentenced to life in 1982. He claimed he was the victim of "shoddy" police work and a racist judicial system. The black engineer spent more than a year in prison before winning a retrial in December. The trial had been scheduled to begin April 9.

Reached at his office in Greenville Geter said the decision came as a shock.

"I wasn't expecting it. It's wonderful," he said.

He said he had already called his mother in South Carolina.

Wade said in the past 10 days, new information had developed on another suspect.

He said Curtis Eugene Mason, who was being held in Houston on robbery charges, had been identified in a lineup by witnesses and had been in the Dallas area in August 1982, when the robbery for which Geter was tried was committed.

Wade said it was not likely Mason would be tried in the case because the trial involving Geter had tainted witness testimony and because evidence in the case had been tampered with.

The information linking Mason to the Dallas robbery came from a confidential informant, Wade said.

George Hairston, an attorney with the NAACP who led Geter's defense and efforts for a new trial, had hoped all along the case would be dismissed.

But Wednesday, he said he was surprised at the suddenness of the announcement.

Norm Kinney, the lead prosecutor in the case, said despite the criticism that had been leveled against the district attorney's office for its handling of Geter's case, "I feel that personally we're the only ones that have done anything for him. So if he should thank anybody, it should be us."

Edwin Sigel, Geter's attorney in the first trial, said he would not quar-

rel with prosecutors "since they've exonerated Lenell."

"I think basically what they did wrong was that they were just too hard headed. We had plenty of alibi witnesses. We asked for one week so we could research it, but they shoved it to trial and railroaded the man."

"All I can say is it took a lot of lawyers a lot of time to undo what they did over there at that courthouse," he said.

The district attorney's office joined a defense request for a new trial last December after an interview with Geter was televised on "60 Minutes," the CBS news magazine. In that story and other media stories, co-workers placed Geter at E-Systems close to the time the robbery was committed.

Other witnesses at the restaurant, who did not testify in Geter's trial, said that he was not the person who committed the robbery, though five state witnesses identified him as the robber.

Geter's case for a new trial was also enhanced by the acquittal last fall of his former roommate, Anthony Williams, on similar robbery charges.

Repairs delayed for Southwest Parkway

By KAREN WALLACE
Staff Writer

Even the best drivers may find entering Southwest Parkway from Wellborn Road a hazardous experience but an end to the danger may be in sight.

Dodging construction equipment while two-way traffic drives down one side of the street isn't the most convenient way to travel.

But Alfred Miller, director of public service for College Station, said there is just one element to blame for

the delayed construction on the road — the weather.

"We were hoping to finish over Christmas, but we had the worst winter in 40 years," Miller said. "The weather keeps getting in the way."

Miller said the repairs on Southwest Parkway should be completed up to Welch Avenue within the next 45 days — weather permitting.

"We're working, but everytime we get going the weather slows us down," Miller said.

The damage to Southwest Park-

way was thought to be from the heavy shuttle bus traffic, but that was not the main cause, Miller said.

"The age of the street and how it's built caused it to deteriorate," he said.

Daniel Mendoza, who lives in the Oakwood Apartments on Southwest Parkway, said another inconvenience is the changed shuttle bus route.

"The shuttle bus takes too long to arrive now," Mendoza said.

Doug Williams, assistant director of the shuttle bus service, said the

route was changed for safety reasons.

"You would run out of room with two buses going down the same road," Williams said.

The old route ran from Wellborn Road down Southwest Parkway, then back up Southwest Parkway again. The new route runs from Wellborn Road down Holleman Drive, through various back streets, then back up Southwest Parkway.

"We changed the route to decrease the danger of accidents caused by

construction equipment," Williams said.

Williams said there were a few complaints at first about the changed route, but nothing could be done by the shuttle bus service.

Chris Thompson, who works at the Texaco Station on the corner of Southwest Parkway and Welch Avenue, said the construction hasn't hindered the station's business.

"It hasn't affected the amount of work that's been coming in to us, but it's made the traffic a lot worse," Thompson said.

In Today's Battalion

Local

- Student debaters voted last night to close the University's campus to through traffic. See story page 3.
- Women history professors here discuss the changes that women are facing at A&M. See story page 5.
- A GSS speaker lectures about the problems parents face upon finding out that their child is gay. See story page 7.

State

- A San Antonio youth was arrested for the shooting death of his mother. See story page 5.
- Panhandle residents are criticizing energy officials for ignoring farmer's needs when planning nuclear waste dump sites. See story page 4.