

Texas A&M The Battalion

Vol. 82 No. 214 USPS 045360 8 pages

College Station, Texas

Tuesday, September 23, 1986

Regents vote to augment faculty salaries

By Mona Palmer
Senior Staff Writer

The Texas A&M Board of Regents Monday allocated \$3.3 million to the Available University Fund to supplement faculty and staff salaries to counteract out-of-state job offers to key University personnel. The regents also tapped the AUF for \$3.3 million to support the engineering program, \$4.3

million to the school's computer system and \$400,000 to the University's humanities and social sciences programs in the liberal arts college.

The Available University Fund is derived from investment returns from the Permanent University Fund.

Regent John Mobley of Austin said the decision to dip into the AUF for salaries resulted from the

Board's concern about the retention of distinguished faculty members since the general faculty and staff salary increase has been flat.

The Board's action does not represent an across-the-board bonus, he said, but rather a pool of money the administration will use to retain outstanding faculty and staff members.

"We've spent 20 years or more building the quality of this faculty

and we don't want to lose them," Mobley said.

He said the \$3.3 million for salaries is a part of the "Commitment to Texas" the regents passed in July.

As for the Board's engineering appropriations, A&M President Frank E. Vandiver told the regents in a written recommendation that the monies will fund specific initia-

tives made by the engineering department heads, recruitment and support of graduate students and new faculty, and research equipment purchases.

In addition, the \$4.3 million financial boost to the University's computer system is designed to enhance A&M's computer network by upgrading equipment and increas-

ing student and faculty access, Vandiver wrote.

He added that the humanities and social sciences appropriation was needed, saying society's problems cannot be solved by technology alone. A&M's historical concentration on technological studies has tended to overshadow the growing role of the liberal arts, Vandiver wrote.

Regents accept interest on tract of land as gift

By Mona Palmer
Senior Staff Writer

The Texas A&M University System acquired a valuable asset Monday when the Board of Regents accepted an undivided 10 percent interest in a 7,833-acre tract of land in Austin.

Minnie Belle Heep gave the University the interest in the land, which is currently an operating ranch.

James Bond, A&M deputy chancellor, said a provision of the gift is that the regents serve as nine of 10 directors. In their capacity as directors, the regents will manage the property and the revenue it produces, Bond said.

He explained that this type of not-for-profit corporation is used when donor wants to stipulate who will control the property.

At present, Bond said the amount of money A&M will receive from the rental of the land is minimal — \$40,000 to \$40,000 a year. The value of the gift won't be fully realized until later, he added.

"It's mainly holding a major asset that property can be sold, developed or utilized — transferred to an investment-type asset," Bond said.

In other action, the Board allocated \$5,000 to begin a proposed \$2 billion expansion of the Memorial Student Center to house an art collection donated by J.W. Runyon.

The regents also gave final approval to the Center for Historic Resources. The center will house architectural drawings, photographs and manuscripts. It also will provide

hands-on experience and training for students in professional programs.

The Board also discussed "Shaping The New Economy of Texas" — a symposium scheduled for Oct. 1 and 2.

The symposium will emphasize ongoing research that could affect the Texas economy. Each of the 12 sessions has a moderator and several noted panelists.

Session topics deal with research

and how that research relates to the public.

Panelists include Lt. Gov. Bill Hobby, state Sen. Kent Caperton, state Rep. Richard Smith and San Antonio Mayor Henry Cisneros.

Registration for the symposium will be from 7:30 a.m. to noon in Rudder Exhibit Hall.

The proposal submitted to the Board for the construction of a flight museum for vintage aircraft at Easterwood Airport was withdrawn.

Refunds will be sent for video yearbook

By Rodney Rafter
Staff Writer

President Frank E. Vandiver has accepted the resignations of the video yearbook staff, but hopes to revive the suspended project next year, *The Battalion* has learned.

Bob Piwonka, manager of Student Financial Services, said refunds for the video yearbook will be sent to students when drop-add refunds are mailed.

Students who bought the Video Aggeland and the print Aggeland as a \$52.56 package should get a refund of \$31.53, Piwonka said.

Students who purchased only Video Aggeland should receive a check for \$47.31, he said.

Seven of 10 video yearbook staff members resigned Sept. 5 because of what they termed as ongoing conflicts with Educational Broadcasting Services.

As part of a compromise reached this summer, Student Publications was to rent equipment from EBS to produce the video yearbook.

The agreement was made under Vandiver's instructions after it was discovered the president had authorized the production of two video yearbooks.

One of the major conflicts between the student staff and EBS revolved around the question of the quality of the equipment EBS provided under a rental agreement with Student Publications. The video yearbook student staff claimed they were given faulty equipment by EBS.

Donald C. Johnson, Student Publications coordinator, said he anticipates EBS and Student Publications will work together on the project next year under an agreement similar to the one reached this year.



Photo by Tom Ownbey

Candid Camera

Grace Riggan, a junior environmental design major, uses a pinhole camera made from an oatmeal box to make a four-minute exposure for a photography course.

Tax plan presented to House Sponsor expects battle for passage

AUSTIN (AP) — House Speaker Gib Lewis began the push for a tax hike Monday, but the sponsor of a tax increase bill said it could be difficult to persuade a majority of House members to approve it.

Lewis held an antax briefing before the full House to explain to lawmakers various tax increase plans.

The members were told that besides a \$2.8 billion deficit for the two-year budget period that ends on Aug. 31, 1987, the state could face a shortfall of \$6 billion or more in the 1988-89 budget years.

"We have a serious problem," said Lewis, D-Fort Worth.

Rep. Stan Schlueter, chairman of the tax-writing House Ways and Means Committee, said it would be a battle just to find a way to get the tax bill out of his committee.

"The committee was set up last session to kill tax bills," Schlueter said. "When you have a committee that's set up to kill tax bills, it's a pretty good mountain to cross to let a bill out in any form."

The Legislature is in its second special session of the year as it attempts to rewrite the 1986-87 budget to eliminate a projected \$2.8 billion deficit.

The problem has been that Senate leaders and the governor favor a mix of budget cuts and tax increases to balance the budget, but House members have favored slicing the budget instead of raising taxes.

The split continued throughout the first special session in August and it wasn't until late Friday night that a conference committee reached a compromise on budget cuts.

Now the issue is whether to pass a tax bill.

House members had approved \$739 million in cuts and the Senate only \$418 million. Many House members said they wouldn't vote for a tax hike, which senators favor, unless they won a majority of the cuts.

Schlueter said the tax bill he introduced Monday is a "dummy bill" designed only to bring up the tax issue.

Schlueter's bill calls for a temporary increase in the sales tax from 4 1/2 cents to 4 3/4 cents, a 1-cent per pack increase in the cigarette tax and a 0.5 percentage point increase in the hotel-motel tax.

Reagan's U.N. speech expresses optimism for arms control talks

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — President Reagan told the U.N. General Assembly Monday that "the ice of the negotiating stalemate could break" during the current round of Geneva arms talks with the Soviet Union.

Although Reagan said "a pall has been cast" over U.S.-Soviet relations by the Nicholas Daniloff affair, he did not suggest the case would stand in the way of progress toward reducing both medium- and long-range nuclear weapons.

Referring to the FBI's arrest in August of a Soviet employee of the United Nations accused of spying for the Kremlin, Reagan said: "Misusing the United Nations for purposes of espionage does a grave disservice to this organization. The world expects better."

Reagan's speech used stern words to criticize the Soviets, not only for their treatment of Daniloff, an American journalist arrested in Moscow, but also for their treatment of civilians in Soviet-occupied Afghanistan and their insistence on supporting Marxist-Leninist insurrections around the world.

Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard A. Shevardnadze listened to Reagan's address, making notes without signaling any emotion, and sat quietly as representatives of other nations applauded when Reagan finished speaking.

Reagan cited Daniloff's arrest and his subsequent confinement to Moscow on spy charges as "a particularly disturbing example of Soviet transgressions against human rights. The Soviet Union bears the responsibility for the consequences of its action."

Later, as he was going into a meeting here with foreign ministers of U.S. allies, Reagan told reporters: "I'm not going to comment now. Everything's too delicate."

On arms control, however, Reagan's tone was unusually conciliatory.

He said the Soviets, while unwilling to accept U.S. proposals for a 50 percent cut in intercontinental missiles, bombers and submarines, have "now embraced our idea of radical reductions in offensive systems."

Officials: Barton lacked OK to use logos

From Staff and Wire Reports

Officials at Texas A&M and Texas Christian University say 6th District Rep. Joe Barton didn't get permission before using school logos on campaign materials.

Campaign officials are writing to Texas A&M to ask if campaign stickers stating "Aggies for Barton" should be recalled, and stickers incorporating the Texas Christian University logo have been withdrawn, according to Cathy Hay, Barton's campaign manager.

University officials say Barton, R-Texas, didn't ask for permission be-

fore incorporating the logos, which are registered trademarks. Hay said the A&M stickers were used in 1984 and campaign officials didn't know anything was wrong until they got a call from TCU officials.

Don Powell, director of business services at A&M, said the University was not contacted for permission to use the logos.

Supporters of Barton's Democratic opponent, Pete Geren, say the bumper stickers are trying to create the impression the schools endorse Barton.

The Aggie sticker is colored mar-

oon and white and features the "Gig 'Em Aggies" thumbs-up sign. The campaign printed 3,000 stickers and about 100 T-shirts.

Chris Efrid, president of A&M's Young Democrats, said, "As an Aggie, I'm offended that the congressman is exploiting the University for political means. . . . If he'd gone through the process and gotten permission, it'd be one thing — because then we (Geren supporters) could go to the University and, at least theoretically, also get permission."

"But as it is, (it makes it appear) the University is endorsing Joe Bar-

ton. I don't know . . . if they wanted it to appear the University was endorsing him or if they didn't know any better."

Similar sentiments were expressed by Geren supporters in Fort Worth.

At TCU, the purple and white stickers say "TCU Congressman Barton Backer" and include the school symbol of a horned frog peering out of the "o" in Barton's name.

Rick Ally, leader of TCU's Young Democrats, said, "What's upsetting is that he (Barton) is exploiting the University."

Tax bill may affect college employees

Fate of retirement plan unknown

By Sondra Pickard
Senior Staff Writer

The fate of the primary retirement plan used by most Texas higher education employees still depends on the tax reform bill pending before Congress.

Although the blanket overhaul of the tax rate structure still must be approved by both houses of Congress, the bill has strong White House support and is expected to pass with few amendments.

About 30,000 administrators and faculty at 95 colleges and universities in Texas are covered by the Texas Optional Retirement Program. The plan was created by the Legislature in 1968 to recognize the specific needs of faculty and professional administrators in institutions of higher education.

In the new bill, a non-discrimination clause was added to the tax code sections that govern the ORP. The clause could make the ORP illegal because the plan is available only to state university faculty and professional staff and not other state employees.

Also, elective contributions made to retirement plans by faculty will be limited to \$9,500 annually, whereas before there was a \$30,000 ceiling. This most likely will affect senior professors with large salaries who want to shelter income from taxation until retirement.

In a recent article in News & Comment,

Thomas G. Head, of the Association of American Universities, said it is unlikely the university community will have an opportunity to get "deficiencies" (including pension plan restructuring) in the legislation altered. The article also said majority leaders in both the Senate and the House are expected to limit, if not prohibit, efforts to change the tax reform bill.

The pension plan used by all primary and secondary school employees in Texas, as well as the non-professional staff of the colleges and universities, is the Texas Teacher Retirement System. But an employee must have a minimum of 10 years of service to get TRS benefits.

This is a disadvantage to college faculty, who often move from state to state during their academic careers. On the other hand, ORP gives the faculty or administrators the ability to contribute to their retirement plan without gaps while pursuing a career.

Mike Lytle, special assistant to the chancellor for federal relations, said a person covered by the ORP can't go back to the TRS without losing benefits. If the ORP is abolished because of the tax bill, the Texas Legislature will have to create special legislation to allow faculty back into the TRS or develop a new retirement plan that probably wouldn't have the same advantages as the ORP, he said.

Lytle said he and his counterpart at the Uni-

versity of Texas fought for the ORP until August, at which time the bill was sent into conference committee.

A conference committee is composed of members of the Senate and the House who negotiate the differences in the two chambers' bills, and who eventually produce, if all goes well, a conference report, which is generally a compromise bill with a chance of being accepted by both houses.

Lytle said the higher education lobby continued to work until the conference report was written and submitted to the two houses, at which time it was not subject to further amendments.

He said Sen. Lloyd Bentsen and Reps. J.J. Pickle, D-Austin, and Bill Archer, R-Houston, did everything they could to prevent the loss of the ORP.

The Ad Hoc Tax Committee, a group of tax experts and lawyers involved with higher education, spent hundreds of hours trying to develop alternative language to protect the pension plan, Lytle said.

"They beat themselves to death up there," Lytle said. "We didn't just let this thing drop. We'll be fighting to the very end."

"If the tax bill goes through like it is, there's going to have to be a whole restructuring of pension plans nationwide. The final impact we don't know yet because it's still up in the air."