

Opinion

The Bear wouldn't have been scared

So the University of Alabama Athletic Department decided not to send its football team to College Station Saturday. The official reasons given were "the continuing uncertainty of the effects of Hurricane Gilbert and adverse weather conditions in Alabama at the time that the Crimson Tide team was to depart for Texas."

After studying the matter all weekend the editorial board has come to agree with 'Bama officials.

We are positive that it was *not* because Alabama Head Coach Bill Curry didn't want to get in the way of an A&M football team angry over recent penalties from the NCAA, a two-game losing streak and having an extra week to think about it all.

Nor was it because of the knee injury that would have kept starting quarterback David Smith out of the game.

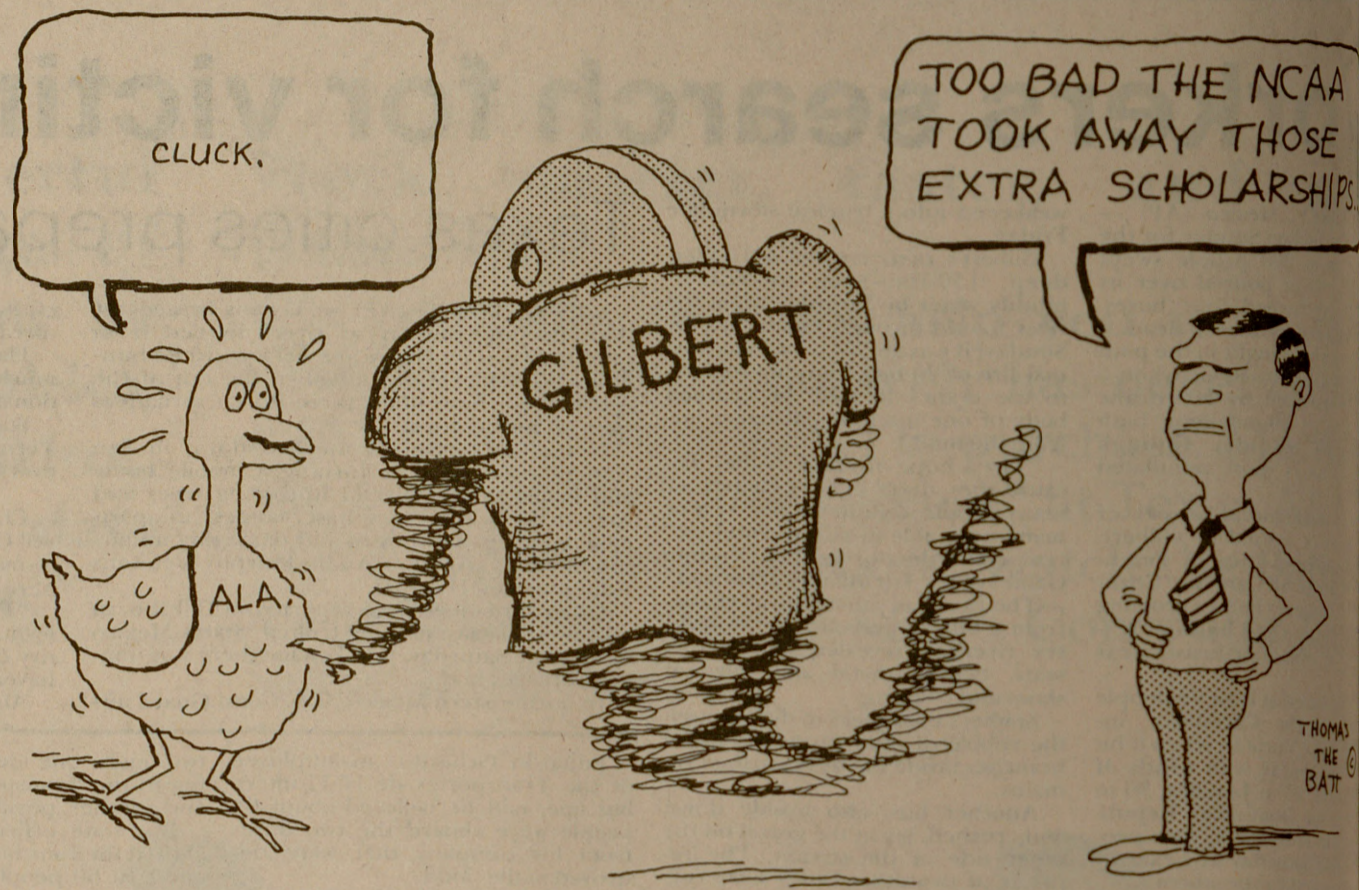
The fact that bowl bids will be extended before the rescheduled Dec. 1 game date is purely coincidental as well.

It didn't even have anything to do with the Tide's punter being 6-5 and having to drop the ball more than two feet on each punt attempt during heavy winds.

It was, pure and simple, a decision made to maximize the safety of Alabama athletes.

Bill Curry ought to do Isuzu commercials.

The Battalion Editorial Board



Bonfire occupies potentially useful, risky spot

As I approached the top of the stairwell on the fourth floor of Moses Hall (a.k.a. Moses Empire) I heard the distinct sounds of a young RAB ("Real American Boy" for those of you who still believe in the Easter Bunny) softly sobbing. A lonely fish was sitting in the hallway, the remnants of a once-preppie haircut in his hands and a beautifully sculpted "E" positioned atop his head.



Anthony Wilson

Students' biggest problem this semester has been the lack of parking spaces because of residence hall construction on Southside, residence hall renovations on Northside, the delay in the opening of the parking garage and the abolishment of green parking stickers. Unless you arrive on campus at 8 a.m., finding a parking space is a frustratingly impossible task.

An unpaved parking lot was graveled behind the University Police Department where the married students housing was formerly located.

But this spot is an inconvenient location at best. It's so isolated from the rest of the campus that walking to class has become a quest for knowledge.

Another parking garage is scheduled to be built on Southside following the completion of the new residence halls. But parking spaces are needed now and bonfire site is logistically the best place. It is in a central spot on campus and certainly much closer to any classroom on campus than the spot behind UPD.

Although the parking problem is inconvenient for most students and building a parking lot would help to appease the grumbling masses, the biggest justification for moving bonfire is safety precautions.

Rumors are circulating that because no one actually checks to see how high bonfire is, centerpole reached a height of 96 feet last year instead of the regulation 80 feet it is supposed to be. Because bonfire is growing each year, the sparks from the fire are traveling farther and farther.

It's just a matter of time before some of those sparks land on the dry roof of one of the houses in the residential section across the street from bonfire.

In fact, many College Station residents forgo Thanksgiving vacations so they can stay home and water their houses.

If an unwatered house were to catch on fire, it would undoubtedly burn to the ground. The traffic on Texas Avenue and Jersey Street is so congested on bonfire night, it would take at least an hour for a fire truck to arrive at the scene of a blaze.

Ahhh, bonfire time is upon us again.

And like every other bonfire for the past umpteen years, a controversy has risen faster than the centerpole.

Last year it was women being harassed inside the perimeter area. Before that critics argued that bonfire is a tradition that should be discontinued because of the tremendous number of trees sacrificed each year.

Bonfire controversies have become as much of a tradition as bonfire itself. But the validity of this year's controversy can hold its own.

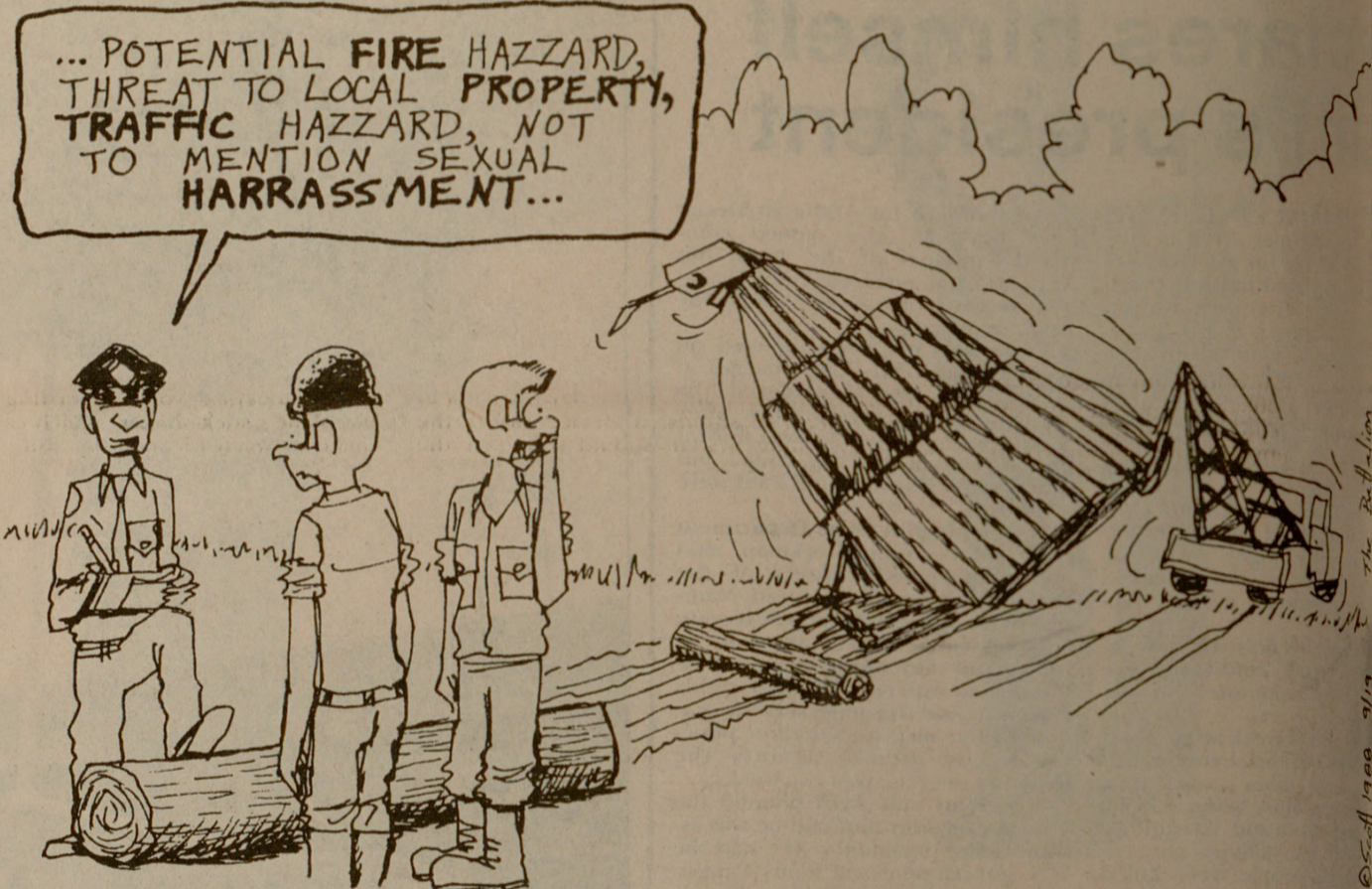
Because of recent developments on campus and past occurrences concerning bonfire, the time is right for the site to be moved.

There are arguments for why bonfire *shouldn't* be moved, the chief one being tradition. And of course tradition is right up there alongside cleanliness and godliness in Aggie land and is a hard thing to break away from.

The only other point I've heard about why bonfire should stay put (and it's a weak one) is that if it were moved, the Corps would be inconvenienced. Cadets would no longer be able to step out of their dorm, cross the Quad and be at bonfire site within a matter of seconds.

But face it, the Corps of Cadets is so gung-ho about bonfire, they're going to work on it no matter where it is.

And because of the cramped accommodations on campus, especially on the south side, the space occupied by bonfire could be put to better use.



Because bonfire is located in a populous section of town and draws large crowds, a great amount of damage always occurs to cars and houses. The houses across the street from bonfire have to be painted every other year and a layer of ashes and smoot ruin many paint jobs on cars.

If bonfire were moved to a more isolated space, these would no longer be worries.

I'm not suggesting that bonfire be moved to Snook or North Zulch. After all, Texas A&M has the largest campus in the country — most of it unused land across the railroad tracks on the west side of campus. That land would be a perfect spot for bonfire.

There's plenty of room across the tracks to accommodate the masses of people that bonfire attracts, parking space is more abundant and the area is

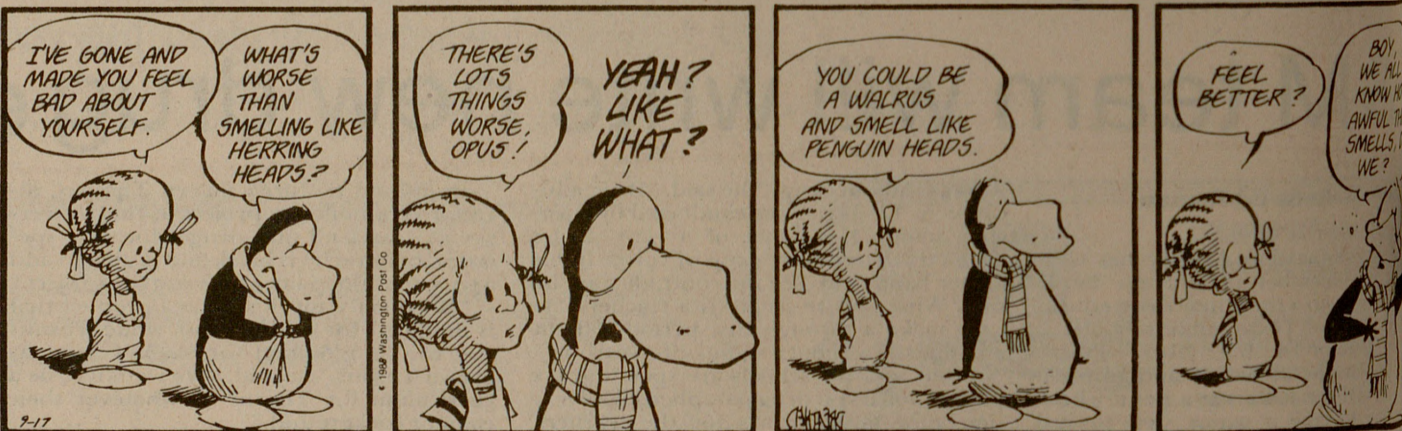
not populated, making fire a lesser arid.

And since the site would be on campus, it would still be accessible to anyone wanting to work on or attend bonfire. It would just be minus the dangerous problems the current site offers.

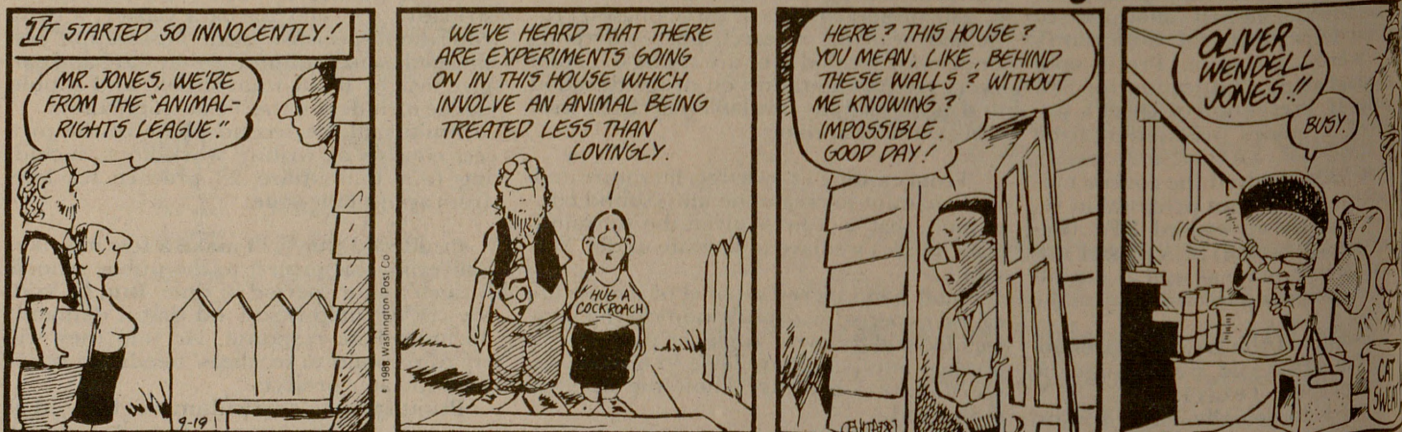
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by Berke Breathed

BLOOM COUNTY



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