



Students query MSC manager about student center expansion

By Holly Becka

Of The Battalion Staff

The manager of Texas A&M's University Center met a barrage of questions and strong opinions Thursday night as emotions ran high during a public forum about the MSC expansion plans.

University Center Manager Steve Hodge discussed in a public forum the plans for the \$34 million expansion project, whose construction begins in March. About 70 people attended the forum, and many of them expressed unhappiness with aspects of the project.

Most concerns were about the relocation and demolition of oak trees surrounding the MSC and Rudder complex. Hodge said that with the expansion five trees will have to be demolished and 15 trees will be relocated on site, while others will be relocated to different areas on campus and new trees will be added.

Hodge said Shade Trees of Texas, a Houston firm, is the company handling the moving of the trees.

"We have done extensive work with the company, and we feel very strongly that trees of this age can be moved successfully," he said. "(The company) has a track record to prove it. They've

moved a hundred and sixty some trees over the last five years and they've lost one. They have moved six trees of the size or larger than the Rudder Oak."

He said the trees to be relocated will be stored in boxes and cared for daily during the two years it will take to complete the expansion.

James Storey, a professor with A&M's horticulture department, said he does not believe the trees can be moved successfully.

"In August, with the extremely high temperatures and the loss of the trees' root systems, it's going to be difficult to get adequate water to the leaves of those trees (the boxes)," Storey said.

Students sat on the stairs in Rudder Theater, waiting to come up to microphones to voice their opinions.

"Did the University try to talk to any professors or department heads about moving the trees?" one student asked. "Did you get any local input?"

Hodge said the head of the forestry department was asked for his opinion.

"He told us all the trees were on the decline and it wouldn't matter anyway," Hodge said.

Another student said he thought the University was not making a big enough effort to preserve green space on campus.

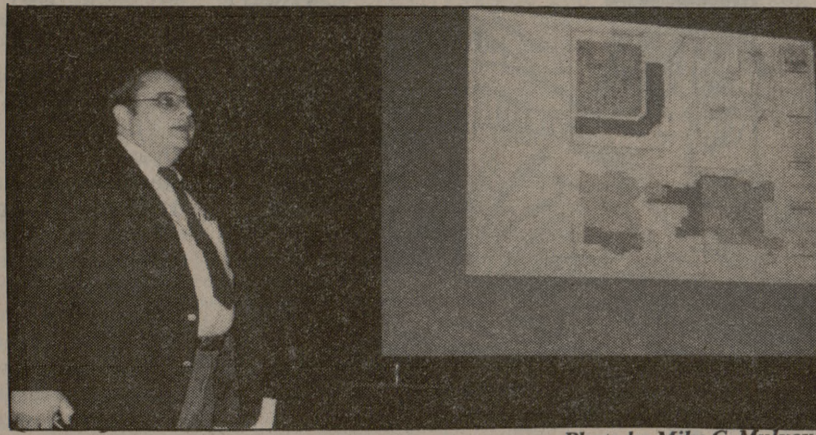


Photo by Mike C. Mulvey

Steve Hodge explains details of the MSC expansion plan.

Hodge replied that if the University had not been concerned with the greenery, then "this all would be a parking lot."

"Parking lots are what we need most anyway," he said.

A woman student said she thought the trees and the grass around the MSC were a living memorial to former students, and therefore, it was unfounded to destroy some of the trees and too risky to move them.

Hodge said the MSC building is the living memorial, not the trees. Walking is not permitted

on the surrounding grass because of Corps of Cadets tradition.

Student Mike Pinkus addressed Hodge about a statement he made comparing the oak trees by the MSC to ones Aggies cut and burn for bonfire.

"The trees they use for bonfire don't have people — Aggies — living under them, being under them and doing whatever they did under them for the past 100 years," Pinkus said. "Now you want to destroy them?"

Pinkus said he would chain himself to the trees in protest of See Expansion/Page 7

Beutel Health Center modernizes operation with computer system

By Pam Mooman

Of The Battalion Staff

Computer technology will speed up operations at A.P. Beutel Health Center, making it easier for students to see doctors and get relief.

"Computers will not, unfortunately, do away with all the paperwork," T. P. Lackey, administrative assistant to the health center director, said. "(But) it will speed things up dramatically."

Lackey said the computer system will be set up by Nov. 1. Problems in the system will be worked out in November and December, and the system should be fully operational by the spring semester, he said.

Lackey said the health center's priority is to process students through the health center quickly.

"The first system brought on-line will be the appointment system," Lackey said. "That's one of the reasons we picked this system."

Lackey said the system has a good appointment package, so the health center implemented its new appointment system to try it out.

"The manual system is much slower and cumbersome than the automated system (will be)," Lackey said. "I know now that many students are calling and (the phone) is ringing and ringing."

With the automated system, one person will schedule telephone appointments and one person will

schedule walk-in appointments, Lackey said. Currently, one clerk is responsible for all appointment requests, he said.

The new system also will speed up test requests, electronically transmitting them from the doctor to the lab, he said. If it is evident that a patient will need tests, the nurse can send the request ahead to the lab, he said.

"By the time the student gets to the lab, the request will already be there," Lackey said.

The electronic transmission will eliminate errors in interpreting handwriting and save money on printing materials, he said.

Lab results also will be more readily available for doctors to examine, Lackey said. They will be able to pull the results up on a computer screen.

"(The doctors) may be able to develop a diagnosis quicker," he said. Currently the doctors must wait for the results to be delivered to them, he said.

Student records will be computerized, although a paper copy will be printed out after treatment is completed, Lackey said.

Other areas to be computerized include accounting and personnel files, he said.

The computers also will save time with a "key phrase" feature, Lackey said. Two strokes on the keyboard can bring up an entire paragraph.

"(Doctors) won't have to type in

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Northern California feels aftershock of great quake

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Four strong aftershocks rattled a jittery Northern California on Thursday, and officials said the death toll at a collapsed freeway might be far lower than feared because the World Series had reduced rush-hour traffic.

"Maybe we got lucky because of the game," Oakland police Sgt. Bob Crawford said. "Normally at 5 o'clock in the afternoon this area would be bumper-to-bumper. Maybe the World Series saved our lives."

Power and commuters returned to much of downtown San Francisco as a tentative city tried to recover and regroup following Tuesday's earthquake, which officials said claimed scores of lives. An estimated 2,000 people were injured and prop-

erty damage was put at \$2.87 billion.

Residents of the ravaged Marina district, furious at initially being barred from their homes, later lined up for 15-minute passes to fetch clothing, medicine, food and belongings.

At the 1/4-mile stretch of the collapsed double-deck Interstate 880 workers cut holes in concrete and used cranes to pull out pancake-flat cars. Rescuers reported finding the cars as far apart as 60 feet.

That could lower the death toll in the highway rubble — estimated earlier at 250, authorities said.

Firefighter Dan Getreu said he had walked the length of the fallen highway and estimated only about two dozen cars were still trapped.

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Senate defeats flag-burning amendment

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Senate on Thursday defeated a proposed constitutional amendment to ban burning and desecration of the American flag, dealing a sharp rebuff to President Bush on an issue he had put in the spotlight.

Senate Majority Leader George Mitchell, D-Maine, said as the Senate defeated the amendment, "We do not serve our national tradition by forcing Americans to make a false and unnecessary choice between the flag and the Constitution."

However, Republican leader Bob Dole said, "I think the flag should be flown at half-staff after this vote."

The White House said Bush was "disappointed" at the Senate's action.

The proposal won a slight majority, 51-48, but that was 15 votes short of the two-thirds of senators present and voting that was needed for approval.

Democrats led the opposition, but the vote was hardly along strict party lines. Thirty-three Republicans and 18 Democrats voted for the mea-

sure, while 11 Republicans and 37 Democrats opposed it.

Congress gave final passage last week to a bill to ban flag burning by simple statute. Bush said he would allow it to become law without his signature but added that he still thought a constitutional amendment was needed, that a mere law wouldn't withstand an expected new legal challenge.

He had called for the constitutional amendment in June after the Supreme Court threw out the conviction of Texas flag burner Gregory Lee Johnson on grounds that a Texas flag-burning law violated his constitutional right of freedom of speech.

Arguing broke out between the parties even after the vote as Democrats charged that Bush and GOP National Chairman Lee Atwater had

pushed the amendment to put pressure on them. "He has used his high office for a low purpose," Sen. Edward M. Kennedy, D-Mass., said of Bush.

But Sen. Arlen Specter, R-Pa., noted that 18 Democrats had supported the measure. "I do not think this is a partisan matter that is being engineered for crass political purposes."

The argument that the issue could be a potent election weapon against senators who opposed the amendment appeared to "lose steam" this week.

Mitchell told reporters Thursday morning before the vote that the outcome, by then sure, was due to the "sound judgment of the American people." Other lawmakers said most Americans apparently are not overly interested in the proposed amendment.

The measure would have authorized state and federal governments to ban burning and desecration of the flag. Critics said the danger to the flag was not as great as to the Bill of Rights.

"For 200 years, they have protected the liberties of Americans through economic turmoil, civil war, political strife, social upheaval and international tension," Mitchell said.

Sociology professor documents women, rising salaries trend

By Julie Myers

Of The Battalion Staff

By the time the female members of the class of 1993 are ready to retire, their wages will be equal to men's salaries, a faculty member of the sociology department said.

Dr. Samuel Cohn, who came to Texas A&M in August, recently became the first man to receive the Jesse Bernard Award from the American Sociology Association.

The award recognizes a scholarly work that enlarges the horizons of sociology to encompass fully the role of women in society.

Cohn's book, "The Process of Occupational Sex Typing: The Feminization of Clerical Labor in Great Britain," analyzes the feminization of an occupation formerly dominated by men.

Cohn concluded that since a woman in 1988 was paid 65 cents for every man's dollar and was therefore cheaper to employ, only the firms that could afford to be inefficient would have discriminatory hiring policies toward women.

"Why would anyone hire a white male?" Cohn asks.

By hiring an equally qualified woman, the company could pay her almost half as much. Usually though, women aren't hired in such situations because of a tradition to discriminate against them.

"Discrimination is massively inef-

ficient," Cohn said.

Labor intensive industries need the cheapest labor, he said, because labor is one of their biggest expenses. Highly mechanized industries, on the other hand, can afford to discriminate because labor is a small part of their budget.

In addition, Cohn said, women fight discrimination from both the rich and the poor social classes.

Although women working in white-collar jobs cannot effectively complain about wage discrepancies because they risk their promotions, those industries need to be concerned with their image.

"People might just sue," Cohn said. "It is no mystery that the law profession became one of the first white-collar occupations to open up to women. Women lawyers were more knowledgeable about the courts than female engineers, for example."

The United States is entering a more hostile corporate climate, Cohn said. As the country struggles to compete with other industrialized nations, companies will be forced to hire more women.

Consequently, while female high school graduates will have more job opportunities at the lower ends of the employment picture, male graduates will be faced with dimming employment prospects, Cohn said.

Eventually women will gain wage parity, Cohn said.

Wages depend on supply and demand, he said. As the demand for a

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Photo by Mike C. Mulvey

Face It

Tabb Tidmore, senior industrial distribution major from Bryan, models a "Friday the 13th"-type Halloween mask a la Jason at a

store in Post Oak Mall. Tidmore chooses from an array of celebrities and ghouls including a Satanic demon and Richard Nixon.