

ry 16, 1990
990

Texas A&M The Battalion



WEATHER
TOMORROW'S FORECAST:
Partly cloudy with a high chance of rain.
HIGH: 56 LOW: 44

Vol. 89 No. 97 USPS 045360 14 Pages College Station, Texas Monday, February 19, 1990

MSC construction begins despite forecasted rains

By CHRIS VAUGHN
Of The Battalion Staff

The long-awaited \$36 million expansion of the Texas A&M University Center is scheduled to begin today, but Mother Nature may hinder construction efforts.

BFW Construction of Temple erected fences last week in preparation for the major construction work that is scheduled to begin today. But with heavy rain Sunday and more rain in the forecast for today, work is expected to be soggy.

The fountain area of the University Center, Parking Area 60 and the east entrances to the MSC will be closed for the entire construction project.

The bike racks near the main east entrance of the MSC will be relocated to the entrances by the MSC post office and the art gallery.

The Automatic Teller Machines outside the MSC's main entrance are scheduled to be moved inside of the MSC near the main desk later this week.

Dennis Busch, assistant director of the University Center, said areas of the MSC will be closed down during certain parts of the construction project. The bowling alley, video arcade and snack bar on the basement

Expansion plans for Rudder shelved for financial reasons

Several alternate expansion plans in the Rudder Theater Complex were shelved because they were too costly, Steve Hodge, manager of the University Center, said.

A lecture hall, a high-tech meeting room and forum support space were planned for the north end of the Rudder Complex, but, Hodge said, the \$4 million price tag would put the entire project over budget.

The Rudder Theater expansion would have resulted in an addition of 30,700 square feet.

Because of the changed expansion plans, two large oak trees

near the Rudder Theater Complex are out of danger, Hodge said.

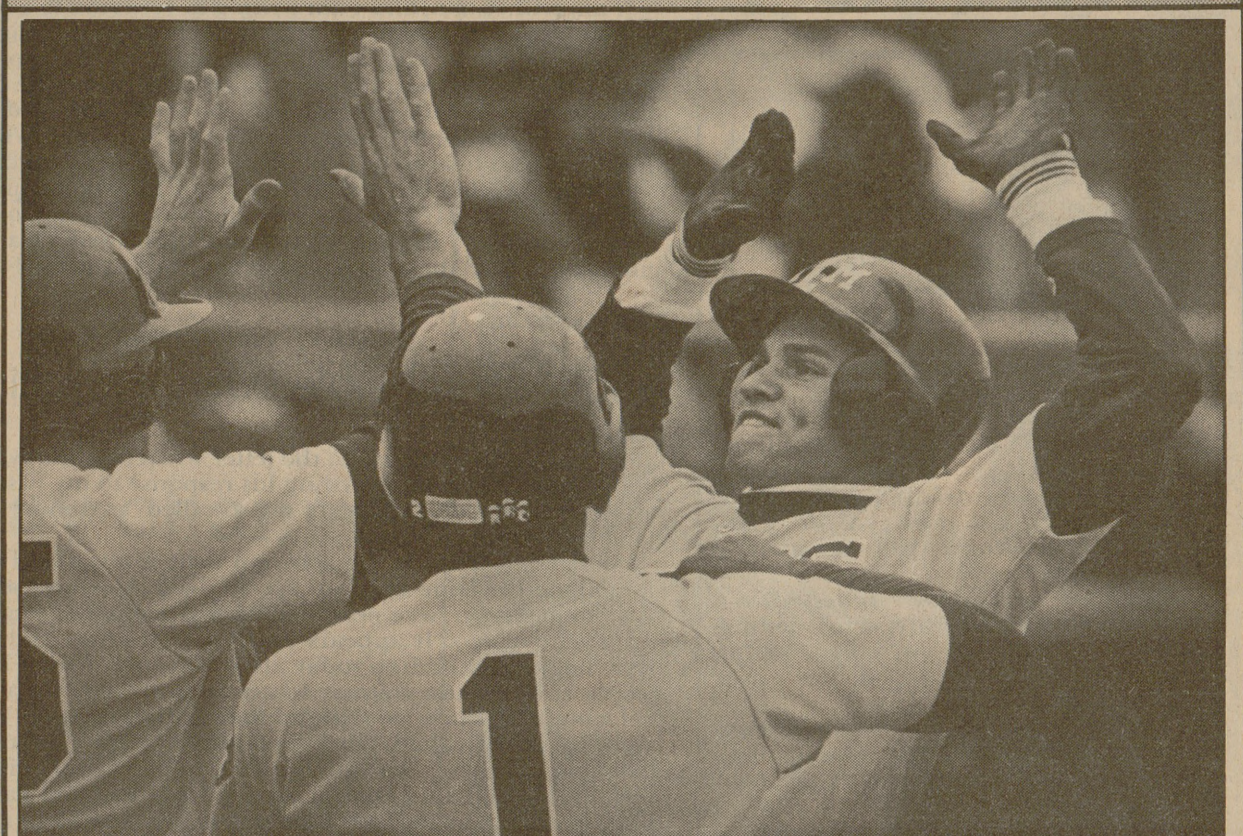
Many students voiced opposition to the expansion, which would have caused several oak trees to be moved or destroyed.

Robert Smith, vice president for finance and administration, said the planned parking garage will be completed by July 1991, and the remainder of the expansion project by November 1991.

The project will add more than 200,000 square feet to the University Center at a cost of \$36.7 million.

ings.
"We'll just have to cope with it when it happens," he said. "It remains to be seen how much noise there will be."

High five



Texas A&M's Dan Robinson, right fielder, is congratulated by team members after hitting a grand slam during the first game of a double header Saturday. See baseball story/Page 9

Conservatives keep lead

Japan's Liberal Democrats control lower house

TOKYO (AP) — Japan's conservative governing party surpassed the minimum number of seats required for a majority in Parliament's powerful lower house, official returns showed Monday.

The Liberal Democratic party, in power since 1955, looked as if it may have lost about 30 seats in Sunday's national election due to scandals and an unpopular tax. But its seat count reached the bare majority of 257 after vote counting resumed Monday morning, according to returns on Japan Broadcasting Corp. and Kyodo News Service.

Financial markets showed little reaction to the victory of the pro-business Liberal Democrats, which had been predicted in media polls. The key index on the Tokyo Stock Exchange opened a moderate 134.11 points higher Monday at 37,594.43, and the dollar opened slightly lower at 144.28 yen.

A jubilant Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu declared the results had "purified" the Liberal Democrats of scandal. But opposition parties said political reforms still were required, and the legislative outlook was difficult since the opposition controls the less powerful upper house of Parliament.

Vote-counting had stopped Sunday night with the Liberal Democrats in a clear lead and heading for a majority. Then on Monday counting for 81 seats in the Tokyo area started, and the governing party quickly sur-

passed the bare majority.

At 9:30 a.m., with 460 of the 512 seats declared, the Liberal Democrats had 253; the Socialists, 127; the Ko-meito — or Clean Government Party — 32; the Communist Party, 14; the Democratic Socialist Party, 12; the United Social Democratic Party, three; and the Progress-

"Simply being elected does not mean one is absolved. The need for political reform is bigger than ever."

— Tsuruo Yamaguchi, Socialist Secretary General

ive Party, one. Independents held 18 seats, and about a dozen of them were conservatives expected to join the Liberal Democrats in the lower house.

Within an hour the Liberal Democrats' total climbed above 257.

"Simply being elected does not mean one is absolved," Socialist Secretary General Tsuruo Yamaguchi said. "The need for political reform is bigger than ever."

MSC gets absentee voting site

By BILL HETHCOCK
Of The Battalion Staff

Texas A&M students, faculty and staff and other Brazos County residents will have two new locations to vote absentee in the March 13 Democratic and Republican primaries. One of these locations will be on campus at the MSC.

Rodger Lewis, chairman of the Brazos County Republican Party, said the absentee polling site at the MSC will be especially important because the March 13 primary voting date falls during spring break.

"A&M has 17,000 faculty and staff that will benefit from this extra polling place, as well as the students," Lewis said. "The Bryan and College Station schools also have their spring breaks at the same time as A&M, so that should encourage many more people than ever before to vote absentee in the primary elections."

Ron Gay, chairman of the Brazos County Democratic Party from 1983 until January 1990, said he saw potential problems with having an absentee polling site on campus.

On, off-campus absentee voting sites

Absentee voting begins Wednesday and will last until March 9.

On-campus absentee voting in the Democratic primary will be in 146 MSC. Republican primary on-campus absentee voting will be in 138 MSC.

The other three county absentee polling sites are the Brazos County Courthouse on 26th Street in Bryan, Ben Milam Elementary School on Ridgedale Street in Bryan and the College Station School District administration office on Welsh Avenue in College Station.

Any registered voter in Brazos County can vote absentee at any of the four polling sites, even if they are registered to vote in another precinct.

All four precincts will have a complete list of registered voters, so voters who have moved or lost their voter registration cards and don't know where they should vote can vote absentee.

"There is a huge parking problem on campus," Gay said. "People from College Station don't really feel like the campus voting box is accessible to them."

"The party has never been opposed to students voting on campus, but what we're looking for is bal-

ance. If you put the box on campus, then you need to balance it out in other areas of the community. There are people in the community and in the rural areas of the county

See Vote/Page 13

Mandela's release sparks student rally

By CHRIS VAUGHN
Of The Battalion Staff

The release of South African nationalist Nelson Mandela from prison just over one week ago sparked celebrations all over the world, including one at Texas A&M Friday.

The Mandela rally, sponsored by Students Against Apartheid and the African Student Association, drew about 70 people to Rudder Fountain to celebrate Mandela's release from prison in South Africa after 27 years.

Zachee Ngoko, a student from Cameroon and president of the African Student Association, told the crowd that apartheid is crumbling.

"The people of South Africa and all the other oppressed people of the world have strong hopes," Ngoko said. "With the power of God, things will change."

Ngoko said he sees a time when people are not identified by the color of their skin.

"The time will come when you don't see me as a black," he said. "You will see me as a brother."

Another African student, Eustacius Betubiza, read an open letter he wrote to Mandela.

Betubiza, a native of Uganda, congratulated Mandela and told him that A&M wishes him godspeed in his attempt to establish a democratic government in South Africa.

"We want you to know that we are working hard here to eradicate apartheid in South Africa," Betubiza wrote Mandela.

But the words of the African students were optimistic compared to the speeches by two members of Students Against Apartheid.



Students gather by Rudder Fountain for a rally celebrating Nelson Mandela's release.

"Why is it, in a land so rich, there are so many poor?" Irwin Tang, a former president of SAA, asked. "Why?"

Tang, a sophomore political science major, asked why U.S. corporations invest in South Africa, why the United States does not put more pressure on South Africa to end apartheid and why a form of protest like the anti-apartheid shack is destroyed.

"Apartheid. It is hatred," Tang said. "It's not a black and white thing. It's a people thing. It's not a past or present issue. It's a now

issue. It's a life and death issue."

Paul Kennedy, an SAA member and a graduate student in sociology, said that although Nelson Mandela is not behind bars anymore, he is not a free man.

"Nelson Mandela is not free to vote," Kennedy said. "He is not free to run for political office. He is not free to choose where he lives. He is not free to send his children to the school of his choice. Nelson Mandela is not a free man."

Kennedy said apartheid is not only South Africa's problem; it

also exists in Israel, Sri Lanka and the United States.

He said American Indians, migrant workers and Americans who live in the nation's ghettos are all victims of apartheid.

"Apartheid is not over," Kennedy said. "Only through unity and strength can we change it."

Portions of Mandela's speech to the crowd in Cape Town last Sunday were read by SAA member Todd Honeycutt.

The speeches were preceded by three gospel songs sung by the Voices of Praise.

Paper says grant cut affects airport quality

HOUSTON (AP) — About a third of the 262 city-owned airports in Texas have deteriorated since the state canceled a modest airport grant program three years ago, a newspaper reported.

The dormant grant program was revived this year when the state Legislature appropriated \$1 million, but the amount was so small and the pent-up needs so pressing that the Texas Department of Aviation board spent the entire year's grant budget at its January meeting, the Houston Chronicle reported.

Some state officials say there is a simple solution for the struggling airports of Texas — an aviation fuel tax. The tax would generate enough funding to maintain the smaller airports properly, expand them where needed and also provide additional revenue for public education.

But they say the user tax has little chance against a powerful airline lobby led by Dallas-based Southwest Airlines.

"We're about to lose a bunch of our small airports, which are a great economic development asset for Texas," State Sen. Carl Parker, D-Port Arthur said. "We're the only state in the union that doesn't tax aviation fuel."

Parker said some of the publicly owned airports can no longer operate at night because of deficient lighting and are losing business because of runways in disrepair.

Parker and other legislators and state officials say the airlines — which pay aviation fuel taxes in other states — have successfully buried the tax proposal in the last two legislative sessions.

"You've got a very charismatic fellow running Southwest Airlines, and

he's hired some nice fellows to lobby who've done a good job," Parker said, referring to Southwest Chairman Herb Kelleher. "That's a prime example of how special interests dominate the Legislature."

"As a result, an elderly couple driving across Texas and poor people riding the bus are paying a fuel tax, but rich folks drinking whiskey and riding first-class in an airplane are not paying a penny's worth."

— Carl Parker, state senator

ple riding the bus are paying a fuel tax, but rich folks drinking whiskey and riding first-class in an airplane are not paying a penny's worth," he said.

Kelleher has been touting a recently released economic study he commissioned as chairman of the Partnership for Improved Air Travel, a national organization formed to influence aviation policies.

The study, completed last year, estimates that commercial and general aviation and aircraft manufacturing activities generate \$39 billion annually in economic activities in Texas.