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Bickering threatens bills

By MIKE LUMAN
The Battalion

State representatives and statewide student lobbies are endangering two bills in the Texas House that would create a student regent position in Texas university systems by disagreeing over fine print.

Texas A&M Student Government members support a bill introduced by Rep. Sylvester Turner, D-Houston, which calls for a non-voting student regent position.

University of Texas student government members want a voting student regent position, as called for in a bill introduced by Rep. Sherri Greenberg, D-Austin.

Rep. Wilhelmina Delco, D-Austin, said Wednesday student governments around the state should agree on amendments to the bills before they reach the House, because the bills affect all Texas universities.

Delco, a long-time supporter of a student regent position, said representatives who favor a student regent might vote against the bills because of various student amendments to the proposals.

"Student disagreements should be ironed out before the bill gets up to this level," Delco said. "If it's a bill

with statewide implications, the students need to get together on it."

Some student governments favor student regent advisory committees instead of student regents, she said.

She said some students and representatives also disagree on term length of a student regent.

Rep. Greenberg said the two bills are different approaches to the student regent question and are not intended to compete in the House.

"I think everyone will pull together on whichever bill has the greatest likelihood of passing," Greenberg said.

Ty Clevenger, A&M's student body president, is proposing two amendments to the non-voting student regent bill introduced by Rep. Turner.

Two students instead of one should be appointed to the Texas A&M University System Board of Regents and should serve a staggered two-year term, he said.

Clevenger said the present bill, which calls for one student appointed to a one-year term, would not give the student regent time to adjust to the Board.

Clevenger's other amendment involves prohibiting students from the

same school within a system from serving back-to-back terms.

For example, two students from Texas A&I University, part of the A&M System, could not serve on the A&M Board consecutively, he said.

Rep. Steve Ogden, R-Bryan, said he supports the creation of a student regent position, but the present bills might be too complex to pass.

"It's getting awfully complicated," Ogden said. "We're going to see if we can come up with something simpler. We need a properly structured Board of Regents bill, but I haven't seen one yet."

State Sen. Jim Turner, D-Crockett, said he believes the Senate will pass a student regent bill but will wait until the bill passes in the House.

He said A&M's non-voting student regent proposal is more "realistic" than UT's voting student regent amendment.

Clevenger, who said he has pushed for a student regent position for three years, said a student regent will serve as an input mechanism from the community to the Board.

"Everyone realizes it's important to have input from people who are

on campus day to day," Clevenger said.

"Another thing is that most regents are well-off financially, and it's important they have input from taxpayers when considering tuition or fee increases," he said.

Gov. Ann Richards will appoint student regents from "nominating pools" provided by student governments, he said.

Richards has said on several occasions she supports the idea of a non-voting student regent.

Chuck McDonald, Richards' deputy press secretary, said the governor would "be glad to sign" a bill that created a non-voting student regent in state university systems.

Richards remains undecided on the issue of a voting student regent, he said.

Sen. Turner said student representation through a student regent is important to A&M.

"I think there needs to be some mechanism for student input in the decision-making process," Turner said.

A&M officials were unavailable for comment because they were out of town.



Salute

KEVIN IVY/The Battalion

Freshman Mark Ybarra lowers the flags in front of the Academic Building Thursday afternoon as senior Rob Wilkenson salutes.

Tempers spin over bike race in park

By Timm Doolen
The Battalion

What began simply as an idea for a mountain bike race has turned into a battle between environmentalists and race sponsors over the use of Lick Creek Park in College Station.

John Haber, forest committee chairman for the Texas Environmental Action Coalition, said Lick Creek Park was created to help preserve an endangered species of orchid, the Navasota Ladies'-Tresses.

Mountain bike racing goes against the ideals upon which the park was founded, he said.

"Recently, people have started mountain biking, which has eroded parts of the park," he said. "I understand there's not many areas to mountain bike, but that's not what the park is for."

He said park officials should not set a precedent for racing in the park because such an event would endanger the condition of the park and the flower.

The original proposal for the race was passed Jan. 8 at the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board's regular meeting.

Several protesters of the race, as well as some promoters of the race, spoke at the Board's next meeting on Feb. 12. The board took no action other than to permit the race to continue.

Since then, the course has been modified to avoid a major patch of the flowers under study by A&M's biology department.

Ken Thurlow, manager of AggieLand Cycling and Fitness and creator of the race, said he intended the race to be for the community, not for personal gain or to threaten the park's environment.

Thurlow said as of Thursday more than 30 people had signed up for the race, although he expects 100 to 200 people to actually participate.

Dr. Hugh Wilson, an A&M biology professor, said the mountain

bike race might threaten the flower's habitat.

Wilson said the orchid in question is a flower of "highly constrained distribution," which means it is found only in one or a few counties.

He said the flower has only two known populations — one in the park and the other in a neighboring county, also under the threat of extinction because of nearby lignite mining.

He said the orchid is "teetering on the edge of extinction because of development south of College Station."

Paul Koenigsamen, owner of Thundercloud Subs and another sponsor of the race, said participants and spectators will be warned to stay away from certain areas of the park.

"We're going to try to organize and educate the bikers and spectators," he said.

Thurlow said the race will have a positive impact on the park because he is donating \$100. He also has signed a contract to clean the park for one year.

"We're not going to do any damage," Thurlow said. "You won't know the bikes have been there, especially if it's a dry day."

He said the race has received so much support that the organizing group had to stop taking sponsors. The race will bring much-needed revenue into the community, Thurlow said.

"We have to view this as a positive thing," he said.

Wayne Bryan, owner of AggieLand Cycling, said racers will not ruin the area around the track because damage would hinder chances for future races.

Bryan said the racing group has received full cooperation from the city. A&M's parks and recreation department also has cleared parts of the track for the organizers.

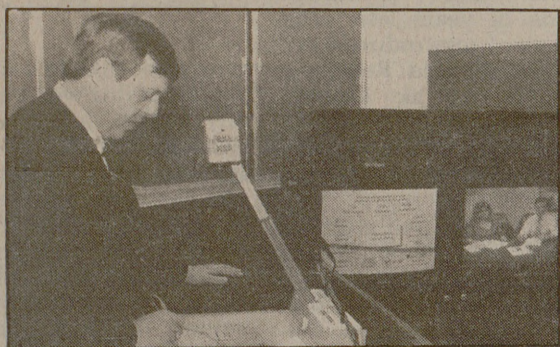
Dr. Wilson, however, said even with these precautions he still sees the bike race endangering the flower.

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Network links campuses

By Julie Hedderman
The Battalion

The Texas A&M University System leads the nation in inter-university system communications with the Interactive Services Network, says the director of Educational Broadcast Services at A&M.



HUY THANH NGUYEN/The Battalion

Dr. Rodney Zent

Dr. Rodney Zent, also general manager at KAMU-TV FM, says the two-way video conferencing network connects A&M with its 14 branches and makes it possible for a professor at one university to lecture and answer questions face to face with students at another university.

"The compressed video network is a major effort on the part of A&M to link all of these campuses together so we can share ideas, information, research, classes and administrative duties," he says.

College of Agriculture uses satellite system/Page 3

Each campus has a unit, costing \$65,000 each, which includes two television screens, a video camera, VCR, slide projector and overhead projector.

Slides can be stored on the unit's computer disc so professors can send graphics or illustrations to viewers at other campuses, he says.

A&M has three units, two at KAMU and one at the A&M Systems Building. Zent says there are other points on campus the unit can be

moved to, including Rudder and the Board of Regents' office.

Zent says the University was given one year, beginning in September, to install the service at all sites. The project is 70 percent complete and ahead of schedule, he says.

A&M is the central connector between the other universities, making it possible for a person at Laredo State University to see and speak directly to someone at Corpus Christi State University.

Technology using table microphones and audio-switching automatically projects the speaker on the screens.

Zent says A&M is like a telephone company because all the signals go through the University.

The network uses T1 telephone lines, which carry computer data among universities. The compressed video is converted to computer data and sent over the lines.

As a result, movement has a slow motion appearance, he says.

"It's not broadcast-quality television; it's not intended to be," he says. "This isn't a production tool; it's a communications device."

Iraq accepts Soviet peace plan calling for withdrawal; Bush studies proposal

MOSCOW (AP) — Iraq accepted a Soviet peace plan that calls for an Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait and an end to the Persian Gulf War, a Kremlin spokesman said early Friday.

The United States said it was studying the proposal but President Bush had "some concerns" about it, a White House spokesman said.

The agreement contained no mention of the Palestinian problem or the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The Soviet spokesman, Vitaly Ignatenko, announced the agreement following more than two hours of talks between President Mikhail S. Gorbachev and Iraq's foreign minister, Tariq Aziz, on the terms of a Soviet peace plan proposed earlier this week.

"The response is positive," Ignatenko told reporters immediately after the meeting, which began shortly after midnight. "The two parties came to the conclusion that it is possible to find a way out of the military conflict in the gulf."

In Washington, presidential spokesman Marlin Fitzwater said Bush had no immediate response and would

be studying the plan. However, Fitzwater said the United States had concerns about aspects of the agreement.

"The war itself continues," Fitzwater added. "There's no change at this point in our prosecution of the war."

Ignatenko said the two sides agreed on eight points, starting with Iraqi agreement to a full and unconditional withdrawal from Kuwait.

The pullout would begin two days after a cease-fire and would be monitored under U.N. auspices by countries not directly involved in the month-old Gulf War, Ignatenko said.

Iraq also agreed to release all prisoners of war immediately after the cease-fire, the spokesman added. He said details of the plan would be worked out and presented to the U.N. Security Council later Friday.

Gorbachev spoke to Bush by telephone shortly after the meeting with Aziz. Bush had previously said the Soviet plan was not acceptable, although he said he was encouraged by the possibility of talks about withdrawal.

Specialist: Recycling fights pollution, disease

By Elizabeth Tisch
The Battalion

Disease and pollution will escalate by the year 2000 if Americans fail to make stronger efforts to recycle, says a Texas A&M waste management specialist.

"We are running out of landfill space," Dr. Roy Hartman says. "The way we landfill now causes both air and water pollution."

Paper and yard waste make up 65 percent of the waste deposited in landfills and easily could be disposed of without burying, he says.

One cause of the enormous amount of unrecycled waste is that landfills are cheaper than recycling programs and alternative waste-to-energy technologies.

Hartman says there is no single solution, but people should begin by changing "our throwaway society and identify new markets for waste."

Every person in the United States discards one ton of trash a year, he says.

In fact, Americans throw away enough glass bottles and jars every two weeks to fill both 1,350-foot twin towers of New York's World Trade

Recycling

a three-part series

- Recycling at A&M
- Recycling in B/CS
- Why we recycle

Center.

Every Sunday, more than 500,000 trees are used to produce 88 percent of newspapers that are never recycled.

Society's lack of education about recycling remains the No. 1 factor why so much waste is needlessly deposited every day.

A&M student Mark Cervenka, with the help of Texas Environmental Action Coalition, drafted a campus-wide recycling proposal last semester to stop students from throwing away recyclable products.

Cervenka says his plan could profit the University about \$1,600 a week.

Hartman says A&M has greatly improved its recycling efforts. He credits most of the University's success to TEAC.

However, if some major miscon-

ceptions are not cleared up, further recycling efforts will be hindered or even prevented.

Studies report that biodegradable items actually do not decompose like people believe.

Hartman says less than 30 percent of biodegradable items actually decompose, even in the best landfills.

"According to studies done by the University of Arizona, newspapers have been found in landfills that are 20 years old," he says. "They have even reported finding corn on the cob that was 15 years old."

For the items to decompose, micro-organisms essential for the decomposition process need moisture and light, he says.

In addition, people tend to believe paper cups are better for the environment than foam cups. However, unless they are recycled, paper cups take up as much landfill space as foam cups.

Hartman says society must get involved with recycling by becoming aware of the other options to throwing trash away.

A few options are:

- Take your name off advertis-

ers' mailing lists. About 11 million pounds of junk mail will be mailed to American homes every day.

- Unwanted clothes should be given to charity organizations instead of being thrown away.

- Re-use envelopes with new address stickers.

- Borrow or rent items that are infrequently used.

- Mend and repair rather than discard and replace.

- Buy rechargeable batteries.

- Use coffee mugs instead of paper cups.

- Use rags instead of paper towels.

- Keep water in the refrigerator instead of running the tap for cold water.

- Use organic waste for garden compost.

- Keep tires properly inflated to increase the tires' lives and get better gas mileage.

- Don't use paper or plastic bags when running errands. Bring your own cloth, reusable bag.



FREDRICK D. JOE/The Battalion

Texas Commercial Waste employee Walter Causey collects glass bottles at the recycling collection site behind Cafe Eccel. This site is used for collection of all types of recyclable material.

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Focus

Tough Teams.
Aggie teams face highly ranked foes this weekend.

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