

The Battalion

(USPS 045 360)

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Editorial Policy

The Battalion is published daily except Saturday, Sunday, holidays, exam periods and when school is not in session during fall and spring semesters. Publication is Tuesday through Friday during the summer sessions. The newsroom phone number is 845-3316.

The Battalion is a non-profit, self-supporting newspaper operated as a community service to Texas A&M University and Bryan-College Station.

The Battalion news department is managed by students at Texas A&M University and is a division of Student Publications, a unit of the Department of Journalism.

Opinions expressed in The Battalion are those of the editorial board or the author, and do not necessarily represent the opinions of the Texas A&M student body, administrators, faculty or the A&M Board of Regents.

Comments, questions or complaints about any of the editorial content of the newspaper should be directed to the managing editor at 845-3313.

Subscriptions

Mail subscriptions are \$20 per semester, \$40 per school year and \$50 per full year: 845-2611.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Battalion, 230 Reed McDonald, Texas A&M University, College Station TX 77843-1111.

Second class postage paid at College Station, TX 77843.

Location: The Battalion, 216 Reed McDonald, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX 77843-1111. Campus mail stop: 1111.

Advertising

Advertising information can be obtained from the advertising department at 845-2696 Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., or by visiting the office at the English Annex.

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BATTIPS

The Battalion encourages its readers to contribute story ideas and suggestions by calling BATTIPS. The Battalion's phone line designed to improve communication between the newspaper and its readers.

The BATTIPS number is 845-3315.

Ideas can include news stories, feature ideas and personality profiles of interesting people. Readers also are encouraged to offer any other suggestions that could improve the newspaper.

A&M prepares for fresh school of fish

Orientation camp eases transition

By Melinda Cox
The Battalion

A new "school" of incoming Texas A&M freshmen soon will gear up to tackle the challenges of A&M by attending Fish Camp.

Fish Camp is a freshman orientation summer camp that helps freshmen make the transition from high school to college, said Laura Pine, assistant director for the camp.

"The camp deals with issues such as dating, alcohol awareness, preventing date rape and being away from home," Pine said.

The program takes place at the Lakeview Conference Center near Palestine. There are five sessions with five camps per session. Session A begins Aug. 10 and the last session concludes Aug. 30.

The camp, however, has not always been in Palestine. When the program began in 1954, the camp was near Mexia.

Gordon Gay, a former activities director at A&M, was in charge of the first group more than 30 years ago and the tradition has grown and strengthened since then.

And grown it has. This year more than 3,600 freshmen and 700 counselors will be involved in Fish Camp. Freshmen accepted by A&M are sent an application in May requesting their involvement in Fish Camp.

The camp has one counselor for every five freshman students. Counselors must also apply for the camp. Applications are available in February to any student interested in the program and acceptance is based on an application and interview process.

Counselors, however, are not paid for their efforts. In fact, they must pay an \$80 fee for the camp.



Freshman orientation counselors lead their fish camps to a smooth transition from high school to college. Many lasting bonds and fond memories form between incoming freshmen and their counselors during the days of Fish Camp.

Pine said the fee includes room, board and transportation. Buses take students and counselors from Olsen Field to Palestine.

Once the freshmen arrive at the camp, they take part in a three-day session, Pine said. Days are spent learning what college life will be like, becoming aware of opportunities at A&M and adjusting to new responsibilities freshman students encounter.

"Fish Camp gives freshmen a time to ask other students questions about A&M," Pine said. "Freshmen feel more open and can ask more personal questions."

The camp also has mixers for the freshmen, Pine said. After the dance, "fish" gather near a campfire while speakers talk about the University.

"The campfire gives the freshmen a time to reflect back on what they have learned," Pine

said. "Emotions run pretty high."

Amy Courville, an assistant director for the camp, has been involved with Fish Camp since her freshman year. She said the camp helps people work together to make things happen.

"The camp gives freshmen an overall view of A&M and helps them understand what will happen," Courville said. "The camp helps ease some of the anxiety and gives these students a com-

mon ground with other people when they return to A&M."

Courville said freshmen learn what A&M is about and begin to understand "some" of the traditions associated with the school.

Pine said the camp does not only introduce freshmen to college life, but also sets foundations for friendships that will last throughout school. The friendships help little "fish" a big school feel a little more secure, she said.

WHAT'S UP

Thursday

STAGECENTER COMMUNITY THEATER: Live theater, at 8 p.m. Location: 3715 East 29th St., Town & Country Shopping Center. Call StageCenter at 846-0287.

COMMUNITY OF SINGLE ADULTS: Volleyball. All single adults welcome. Oak Park, College Station. For more information contact Don Ball at 846-1370.

COACH'S NIGHT: Sit-down dinner with Texas A&M coaches, including football coach R.C. Slocum. An auction and raffle will follow. The event is a scholarship fund raiser for local students and is sponsored by the Brazos County A&M Club. For more information call 845-0825.

Friday

COMMUNITY OF SINGLE ADULTS: TGIF at Bombay Bicycle Club in College Station at 6 p.m. All single adults welcome. For more information, contact Don Ball at 846-1370.

STAGECENTER COMMUNITY THEATER: Live theater production at 8 p.m. Location: 3715 E. 29th St., Town and Country Shopping Center. Call StageCenter at 846-0287.

NORTH SIDE RESIDENCE HALLS: Donations drive (belongings and food) benefiting international students and Brazos Food Bank. For more information, contact Chong Hsu Liu at 847-1083.

Items for What's Up should be submitted to The Battalion, 216 Reed McDonald, no later than three business days before the desired run date. We publish the name and phone number of the contact only if you ask us to do so. What's Up is a Battalion service that lists non-profit events and activities. Submissions are run on a first-come, first-served basis. There is no guarantee an entry will run. If you have questions, call the newsroom at 845-3316.

DEADLINE

ANNUAL COMPETITION FOR FULBRIGHT GRANTS TO CLOSE SOON
The 1992-93 competition for Fulbright Grants for graduate study abroad will close on October 7, 1991. Only a few more weeks remain in which to submit your draft proposal and meet with the Study Abroad Director. **Qualified graduate students must meet with the Study Abroad Director before September 25 to allow ample time for proposal revision.**

Most of the grants offered provide round-trip transportation, tuition and maintenance for one academic year; a few provide international travel only, or a stipend intended as a partial grant-in-aid.

Applicants must meet the following requirements:

- be a U.S. citizen at the time of application;
- hold a bachelor's degree or its equivalent before the beginning date of the grant;
- be proficient in the language of the host country;
- must not hold a Ph.D. at the time of application.

Application forms and further information for students currently enrolled in Texas A&M University may be obtained from the TAMU Study Abroad Office, which is located at 161 Bizzell Hall West, 845-0544.

Note: The deadline for interviews is **September 25, 1991** the deadline for application is **Monday, October 7, 1991.**

**INFORMATIONAL MEETING:
THURSDAY, AUGUST 8 2:30 - 3:30 PM
ROOM 251 W. BIZZELL HALL**

Judge favors school finance tax system, rejects wealthier school districts' claim

AUSTIN (AP) — State District Judge F. Scott McCown on Wednesday upheld the property tax system created by Texas' new school finance law, rejecting a challenge by wealthy school districts.

But he also said the new law must be funded to provide equity, in what some called a strong message to lawmakers meeting in special session to write a state budget that will include education funding.

The new law is designed to shift hundreds of millions of dollars in property tax revenue from wealthier to poorer school districts within new education taxing regions, drawn largely along county lines.

The measure was passed in response to a Supreme Court order to even out school districts' ac-

cess to education funding. Large disparities have resulted from districts' reliance on their own property tax bases, besides state funding and some federal aid.

The county education districts are "a valid exercise of the Legislature's power," McCown wrote.

"As long as each district has substantially the same, then the political process will work to ensure that each has enough," McCown said. "As long as some districts have substantially more, the political process will not work. Those with more will have no incentive to help those with less. Those with less will have insufficient political power to ensure adequacy."

But McCown, who conducted a 2½ day hearing that ended June 19, added that other chal-

lenges to the law have yet to be considered in court. Other issues that have been raised include whether the law provides adequate funding.

"For S.B. 351 (the new law) to provide equity it must be funded," McCown wrote. "The Legislature is now working on the state's budget. As soon as the Legislature's work is completed, the court stands ready to adjudicate the remaining questions."

The House passed a state tax increase proposal on Tuesday that would fall far short of funding the school finance law over the next two years.

"It's time to go to work and get school started," Kevin O'Hanlon, general counsel for the Texas Education Agency, said after the ruling.

Violation of constitutional rights?

House gives early approval on bill to restrict demonstrations at Capitol

AUSTIN (AP) — The House gave preliminary approval Wednesday to a measure that would place restrictions on demonstrations at the Capitol, a move opponents said would violate the constitutional rights of free speech and assembly.

The measure passed 83-56, and also included a provision to exempt the state from having to pay the local prevailing wage to workers on the massive Capitol restoration and expansion project that is already under way.

Another vote is needed before the bill will be sent to the Senate for consideration.

State Rep. Edmund Kuempel, R-Seguin, said the proposal was in part prompted by the frequent demonstrations during the Persian Gulf War.

One small group of anti-war protesters set up a temporary station near the main entrance, which included a desk and file cabinet and remained until after the war.

Recently, a group of wheelchair protesters occupied the Governor's Reception Room overnight demanding better programs for the physically impaired.

Under Kuempel's bill, the State Preservation Board would be in charge of rules regulating visitor activities in the Capitol. He said the rules are needed because some demonstrations present fire and safety hazards.

But Rep. Glen Maxey, D-Austin, said, "We've now said that instead of people having First Amendment rights, they have to

go get permission from the State Preservation Board to do what any citizens group should be able to do, and that is to come to the Capitol grounds."

The rules would prohibit attachment of signs to the Capitol, placement of furniture for longer than 24 hours, overnight parking of vehicles intended for human occupancy and setting up camping equipment or shelter.

In addition, no one would be permitted to sleep or lie down on the Capitol grounds during the night.

Maxey said these rules would inhibit "die-in" protests traditionally used by anti-war and gay rights groups.

The rules also allow the Preservation Board to charge fees for demonstrations.