

The Battalion

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Group hosts bonfire debate



KARL A. STOLLEIS/The Battalion

Panel discussion focuses on bonfire's effect on environment, alcohol abuse

By REAGON CLAMON

Reporter of THE BATTALION

A mostly pro-bonfire crowd argued the pros and cons of the Texas Aggie bonfire last night at a debate sponsored by MSC Great Issues.

The audience of about 50 students questioned the panel on how bonfire affected everything from the environment to alcohol abuse.

Most of the questions came from students supporting the annual event and were aimed at the anti-bonfire panelist — Dr. Hugh D. Wilson, professor of Biology and Genetics.

Dr. Bill Kibler, associate director of student affairs, moderated the debate and Stephen Owens, head stack for the Class of 1993 Bonfire, represented the pro-bonfire

opinion.

Greg Blackard, senior redpot for the Class of 1993 Bonfire was also slated to be a panelist but stepped down, sitting with the general audience, when Wilson complained that the panel was one-sided.

Wilson told the audience he collected signatures from Texas A&M faculty opposing bonfire two years ago because he felt the event was destructive and hypocritical.

"My concern is our nation dictating to other nations to ease deforestation and the burning of large areas of hardwood when we, as an academic institution, are doing the exact same thing," Wilson said. "This is an issue of environmental damage and of hypocrisy."

Owens responded by saying that for every tree cut down for bonfire and other

forestry operations in the country, five trees are planted in its place.

"What's the purpose of keeping old growth forests around if you can't use them?" Owens asked. "Why not get them out of the way and plant forests you can use and are worth something to the population?"

Wilson argued that the replanting of the bonfire workers do every year is a waste of energy. The Texas Municipal Power Authority (TMPA) — who has allowed the bonfire committee to cut trees on land slated to be strip-mined — is required by law to replant anyway, he said.

"Does it bother you that you are providing TMPA with free labor that would cost them hundreds of thousands of dollars?" Wilson asked.

The replant projects were done on TMPA land because no other area could be found, Owens said.

"Nobody had a place for us to replant," Owens said. "This year we're currently looking for a place to replant that wouldn't be required to be replanted by law."

Bush to talk with Clinton

41st, 42nd presidents carry out 'ritual'

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — In time-honored tradition, George Bush and Bill Clinton will act as new-found friends Wednesday when the incoming president comes calling on the outgoing.

Rivals no more, the 41st president and the 42nd will talk one-on-one in the Oval Office, carrying out a ritual as old as the Republic, one surely feeling quiet pleasure, the other private pain.

"It struck me how hard it is for a defeated president to suddenly see cameras facing in the other direction," former vice president Walter Mondale said Tuesday. "Your formal transfer occurs on Jan. 20 but the psychological transfer occurs before then."

President watchers attach much significance to the first meeting in the Oval Office, which is as much a symbol of power as it is a workplace. Often, the smoothness of the transition is determined there.

The official word out of the White House is that "there is no fixed agenda — whatever president-elect Clinton wants to talk about."

Before their first formal meeting, Dwight D. Eisenhower derided the incoming John F. Kennedy as a "young whippersnapper" — the 1960 version of Bush's reference to Clinton and Al Gore as "bozos."

But afterward they walked arm-in-arm into the Cabinet room and Eisenhower was described by a top aide as "overwhelmed by Sen. Kennedy, his understanding of the world problems, the depth of his questions, his grasp of the issues

and the keenness of his mind." Kennedy had a different view of their first meeting. His brother, Robert, said that Kennedy "went out of his way to make sure that Eisenhower wouldn't hurt the administration by going off at a tangent ... not that Eisenhower ever gave him any advice that was very helpful."

And their discussion wasn't all world problems. Eisenhower "taught him how to use the panic button that would bring a helicopter to the back lawn of the White House in a hurry," Kennedy aide Kenneth P. O'Donnell wrote later. Ike demonstrated "and Kennedy watched the fluttering helicopter coming down outside the windows within a few minutes."

The outgoing Jimmy Carter, whose own handoff from Gerald Ford was a transition model, had prepared meticulously for his first meeting with successor Ronald Reagan.

But, said Mondale, "it all went over Reagan's head and Carter really was shaken by it."

Ron Ziegler, then 29, recalls arch-Republican Richard Nixon and arch-Democrat Lyndon Johnson deep in conversation about the Vietnam War and the social unrest and division convulsing the country in 1968.

During the whole transition, the Nixon press secretary said on Tuesday, "there always was a 'connect' between the two men, a mutual respect, sort of understanding."

In his memoirs, Nixon wrote

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U.S. senators receive lost Vietnam relics

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

HANOI, Vietnam — Three U.S. senators on Tuesday were given fading photographs, flight suits and other sad relics of American servicemen missing from a war that ended two decades ago but left wounds on both sides.

On what he termed "an extraordinary day," Sen. John Kerry, D-Mass. and Sens. Tom Daschle, D-S.D., and Hank Brown, R-Colo., became the first American officials to tour the Citadel, Hanoi's equivalent of the Pentagon.

Vietnamese officials also gave the members of the Senate Select Committee on POW-MIA Affairs military logs of downed U.S. aircraft, a U.S. Army survival manual and a flight helmet said to have belonged to Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., a Navy flier who was shot down over Hanoi and taken prisoner in 1967.

The visit comes amid rising optimism that the United States may lift a trade embargo and diplomatic freeze it has maintained to-

wards Vietnam since the Communist regime in Hanoi took over U.S.-backed South Vietnam in 1975.

U.S. policy has been that relations with Hanoi will not be normalized until Vietnam offers a full accounting of the 2,265 American servicemen missing in the Vietnam War, including 1,657 in Vietnam.

"My hope is that the President will receive the information that we bring back, and that when we meet with him, he will listen carefully to the arguments for why there ought to be a U.S. response of some kind at this point in time," Kerry said. "You cannot make this a one-way street forever."

Daschle raised the possibility of reciprocating by providing information about Vietnam's MIAs, thought to number about 300,000.

The two sides must "resolve to bring people together and end the pain and uncertainty relating to our past conflict," he said.

The senators on Tuesday visited Hanoi's Central Military Museum.

Museum director Col. Pham Duc Dai gave Kerry three large albums of fading pictures of dead and captured U.S. servicemen, and originals or photographs of

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RHA proposes \$3-\$7 housing hike

By TANYA SASSER

Staff Writer of THE BATTALION

On-campus housing rates may rise if the Residence Hall Association approves a proposal which calls for a \$3-\$7 rent increase starting next fall.

RHA President Kim Tenpas said the money would be used for "hall programming."

"The real purpose of this fee is to take the pressure off the residents to raise money for their hall," she said. "It will be used to program for the halls."

RHA Treasurer Chip Breier said the money earned from this fund will go into a special account.

Under the proposal, one percent of the rent increase will go to the RHA. The remainder will be divided by the total number of occupants of on-campus housing. Each hall council will receive a certain dollar amount according to the number of residents in the

Additional money to reduce pressures of fund-raising for residence hall plans

It will be up to the individual hall council to decide how they will use the funds, Breier said.

It is important for the halls to be active in RHA, but it is hard when the residents have to be concerned about finances, he said.

"Due to the fact that the majority of residence halls are funded by fund raising, the halls that start off with no money are forced to be inactive or pay out of their own pocket," Breier said.

The small fee would help the halls tremendously because it would enable them to participate in more hall activities without worrying about money, Tenpas said.

"Basically, the halls have to raise their own money," she said. "This starts the halls off on a bad

note at the beginning of the semester if there is no money in their fund."

The halls use programming money in a variety of different ways, Tenpas said. Halls can have social events, build volleyball or basketball courts, or use the funds for hall improvements, she said.

Tom Murray, assistant director of Student Affairs/Residence Life, said he supports the proposal even though it has not yet been completed.

"I support it because the halls need more programming money," he said. "This would be a lot cleaner way to collect funds and it would probably be less expensive in the long run."

"This system is common at a lot of other schools," Breier said. "(Texas) Tech and Trinity Univer-

sity already use this system with a seven dollar fee."

Ten percent of on-campus residents were surveyed, Breier said. The reported results show that 80 percent of the residents are for the proposal and 20 percent are against it, he said.

Currently, the halls receive most of their money through fund raisers, Murray said.

"The individual residence halls receive most of their money from Casino Night, which has gone down in the past couple of years, and from selling activity stickers to their residents," he said. "These stickers cost anywhere from \$5 to \$10."

The halls also receive money from a "Coke fund," Murray said. The residence halls receive \$1 per student, per semester from the money raised by vending machines on campus, he said.

The rent increase will be proposed at tonight's RHA meeting.

U.S. hunts for terrorists, offers rewards

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — The United States is mounting an international search, including "Wanted" ads and \$2 million rewards, for Iranian-backed suspects secretly indicted for kidnapping and murdering Americans, officials said Tuesday.

The Justice Department has obtained sealed indictments against at least four alleged terrorists identified by U.S. intelligence this year as responsible for killing American hostages in Lebanon and blowing up at least one airliner, said two U.S. officials who spoke on the condition of anonymity.

The Justice Department declined to comment on the indictments, first reported Tuesday by CNN.

One of the sealed indictments is against the

suspected killer of either the CIA's Beirut station chief, William Buckley, or Marine Lt. Col. William Higgins, said another source familiar with the indictments, who also requested anonymity.

In addition to Buckley, who died in captivity in Lebanon in 1985, and Higgins, killed by his Shiite Muslim captors in 1988 or 1989, kidnapped American Peter Kilburn was killed in 1986. It was unclear whether his alleged killer was among those indicted.

The Associated Press reported previously that some of the Lebanese kidnapping group, including its leader, Imad Mughniyeh, took refuge in Iran in the last year.

"To bring these murderers to justice, the U.S. government offers rewards of up to \$2 million," said one of the ads being placed in U.S. and international newspapers in the coming days. It shows pictures of all three murdered

Americans and urges anyone with information to contact the FBI or the nearest U.S. embassy.

Rewards can reach up to \$4 million under an arrangement of matching funds from U.S. airlines for information that prevents terrorism against U.S. carriers or leads to the arrest and conviction of perpetrators of airline terrorism.

Also among the terrorists identified by the United States in the last year are those responsible for placing a bomb that exploded aboard a TWA plane over Greece in 1986, sucking four passengers to their death, said the second source.

The ads also seek information about that attack.

One stark ad shows a pair of baby shoes under a caption that says:

"\$2 million won't bring baby Demetra back. But it may bring her murderers to justice."

In Advance

The Texas Hall of Fame and several Texas A&M organizations are sponsoring a smoke-free night of dancing.

It will take place from 9 p.m. to 1 a.m. tonight at the Texas Hall of Fame. Admission is free. Door prizes will be given to the first 160 people.

Eta Sigma Gamma, Aggie Alliance and the American Cancer Society are sponsoring the event.

"We are hoping patrons will express good sentiments about the idea and we want to promote awareness (about the dangers of smoking)," said Chip Schaeffer, assistant lecturer with the physical education activities program.

Schaeffer said he he would like to see the smoke-out become a regular, annual event.