

Texas A&M The Battalion

Vol. 93 No. 135 (12 pages)

Serving Texas A&M since 1893

Thursday, April 21, 1994

New president sets sights on solutions

By Eloise Flint
The Battalion

Dr. Ray Bowen hopes to have solutions to some of Texas A&M's toughest problems when he takes over as University president this summer.

Bowen, who is a member of the Class of '58, was chosen by the Texas A&M Board of Regents last week.

"With all the issues to deal with, my broad goal is for the students to become very comfortable with me and understand that I am concerned with all their needs," Bowen said. "I will have lots of meetings with students, and I also extend an open door policy, providing modern ways of dealing with any problems."

Interim president E. Dean Gage said there are a number of issues he would like Bowen to focus on.

"I think it is extremely important to continue recruitment and retention of minority students," Gage said. "We have some excellent programs that have yielded high results, and we need to make a commitment to meeting those needs."

Bowen said students need to understand what they share in common with other cultures.

"Focusing on multiculturalism prepares students to work in the international economic environment," Bowen said.

Student Body President Brooke Leslie, a senior agricultural development major, said she is highly committed to diversity and is looking forward to working with Bowen in support of students' needs.

Leslie said it is to A&M's advantage to have a president coming in from another university.

"I think he needs to look internally at restructuring of the administration," Leslie said. "That is one of the great benefits of someone coming in with fresh ideas."

University Chancellor William Mobley said Bowen needs to focus on undergraduate programs and research issues.

"We have a lot of opportunities for research such as biology, ocean marine issues, and many others that he'll have a chance to be a part of," Mobley said.

Bowen said the strength of a university is often measured by its research ability, and when he eventually leaves A&M he wants to leave it an even stronger university than it is now.

Leslie said that although research is important, she would like to see Bowen focus on employing good instructors.

"I know we get more money from research, but we need to focus more on teaching," Leslie said. "The way tenure is structured, it's weighted more towards research professors, but we need to research and find good teachers."

Gage also said he would encourage Bowen to focus on undergraduate programs and emphasize excellence in teaching.

"We have initiated a number of programs and would like to see them matured and enhanced," Gage said.

Another issue campus leaders stressed was A&M's athletic program.

Mobley said athletes must adhere to NCAA rules and regulations.

"We've got to ensure total integrity and compliance in athletics," Mobley said.

Gage said Bowen is fully aware of the problems that have occurred in the athletic program.

"We share a commitment to zero tolerance of any problems in any area of education," Gage said. "I have already pledged my complete and full support to help him make the transition smooth."

Matt Segrest, Corps commander for the 1994-1995 school year, said Bowen must be aware of changes the Corps has undergone.

"Bowen was a former deputy Corps commander, so he can relate to us and will be behind us," Segrest said. "Leadership and training in the Corps have changed a lot, and he needs to be aware of where the Corps is going now."

Leslie believes Bowen was the perfect choice for president and that he will have the ability to improve A&M's image.

"I was on the presidential search committee and had the chance to interview him for four hours," Leslie said.

"You automatically respect him when he says something. He has the exact mixture of ingredients of a president we need."

Bowen returns to a different A&M, prepares to engage campus leaders in dialogue on important student issues

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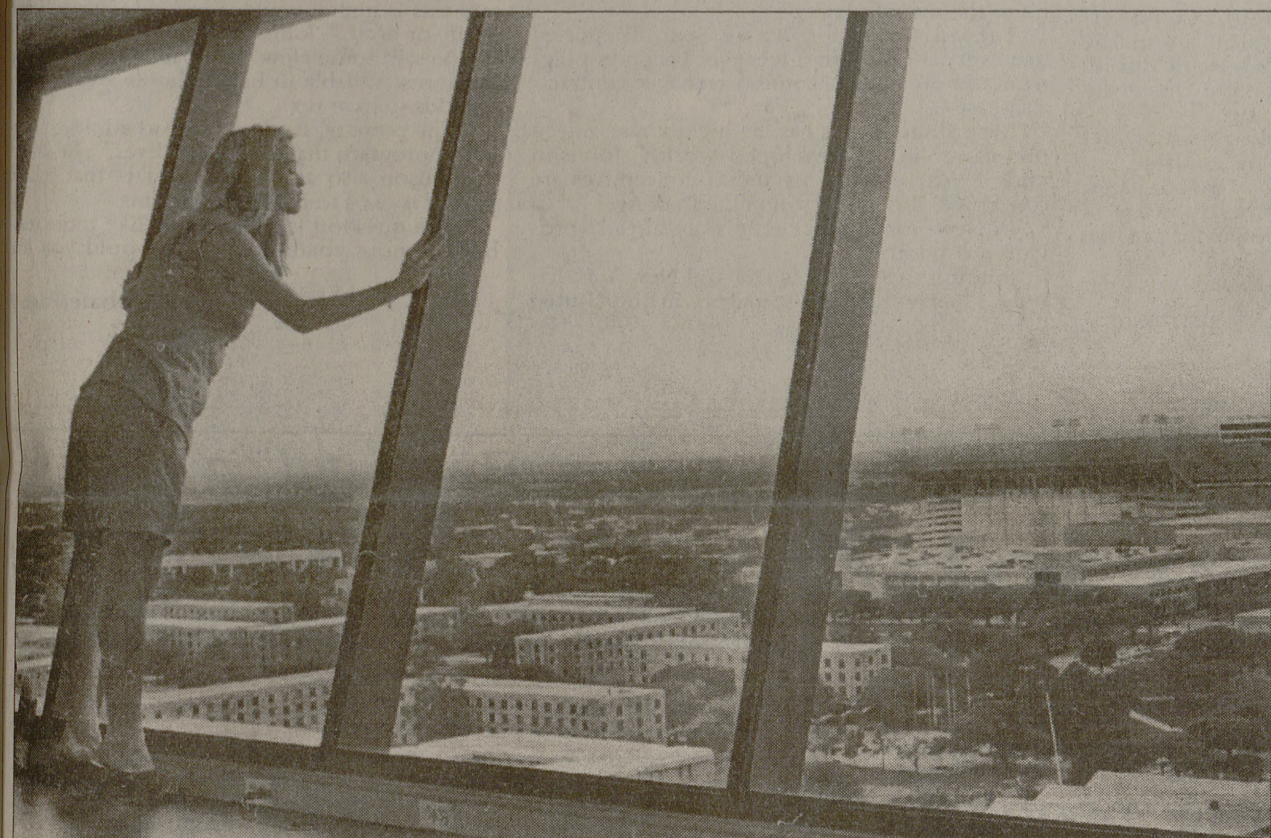
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Bowen

Searching the skies



Jennie Mayer/The Battalion

Kristy Conn, a senior marketing major from Houston, checks out a view of the A&M campus from the observation deck of the O&M building on Wednesday. The deck is open to all students.

Remembering the past

County dedicates marker to original CS train depot

By Jan Higginbotham
The Battalion

Texas A&M University will add a piece of history to its campus today when the Brazos County Historical Commission officially dedicates a historical marker near the site of the original train depot built in 1883.

Dr. Charles Schultz, chairman of the Brazos County Historical Commission, said the city of College Station will pay for the marker to promote interest in historical preservation in Brazos County.

"The railroad was a very significant structure in College Station history," Schultz said. "It was a source of transportation for the first students of Texas A&M. It was a social gathering place in some respects."

Dr. Gary Halter, chairman of the College Station Historic Preservation Committee, said the railroad helped bring a land grant college to this area.

"The reason why A&M is located where it is because of the railroad," Halter said. "It was a very significant factor in choosing Brazos County for the site of the college. Without it, A&M might not be located where it is. You can't divorce the railroad from the history of the school and the city of College Station."

Halter said the railroad was strategic to the school because it provided a means of transporting students.

The first depot built in the area was constructed in 1883, and Halter said it was a very simple structure. A second depot was built in 1911, and another railroad started serving the area about the same time.

"In 1963, when Wellborn Road was widened, the depot was torn down," Halter said. "The original site of the depot would be in the middle of Wellborn."

Halter said the historical marker is being placed about 150 to 200 yards from where the actual depot was located.

David Gerling, special facilities superintendent for the College Station Parks and Recreation Department, said Edmund Davis, governor of Texas in 1871, was looking for a site for a land grant college that had access to good transportation and was close to Houston.

"He chose this site because there was already a current railroad in place," Gerling said.

As trains went through the area, Gerling said, the conductor would walk down the aisles and announce, "College Station, next stop."

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Senate discusses changing calendar

Senators indicate approval for more exam reading days

By Kim McGuire
The Battalion

The Student Senate indicated it would approve a change in the academic calendar the Faculty Senate is considering that would implement two reading days and six days for finals.

Ben Dale, former academic affairs chairman and faculty senate liaison, took an unofficial vote to gauge the Senate's opinion before the academic affairs committee of the Faculty Senate votes on the change.

Dale said the committee is considering converting the academic calendar to include either four reading days and four days of finals or two reading days and six days of finals.

"I feel like if the academic affairs committee voted tomorrow, the 6-2 plan would go over with a little discussion," Dale said. "The 4-4 plan would be a fight."

Dale said he felt students were fully justified in asking for more reading days.

"Most universities have an average of two reading days for finals," Dale said. "A&M and Texas Tech are the only schools in the Southwest Conference with one reading day."

Dale said the 6-2 plan passed, reading days would be on Monday and Tuesday with finals beginning on Wednesday and ending a week later with the weekend off.

He urged the senate to propose a resolution either approving or disapproving of the action the academic affairs committee takes before they present their recommendation to the Faculty Senate.

In other business, the Senate heard the initial plans of the athletic department to change the way students acquire tickets to athletic events.

Instead of using student identification cards to draw tickets, students will now use an athletic identification card, department officials said.

Penny King, assistant athletic director for business, said the card will have the student's social security number and an encoded strip on the back, similar to the identification card.

She said the athletic department decided

to go for a new system because students having to leave their ID card with friends when they got tickets caused problems.

"When students have to leave their ID to get tickets, they can't use their card to eat or use their Aggie Bucks," King said.

She said next year all of the dorms are going to a system where students will use their identification cards to enter the buildings, which the athletic department thought might also be a problem when drawing tickets.

Jim Kotch, athletic ticket manager, said the person drawing tickets will have to bring their student ID along with the athletic identification cards.

He said for athletic events other than football, students will have to show both cards.

King said students who register for the athletic options will be sent the card in the mail during the summer and incoming freshmen will be given their cards at orientation.

In the Senate elections, they elected Darla Marburger as academic affairs chair, Becky Silloway as elected external affairs chair and Pete Manias as student services chair.

Marburger said one of her goals as

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U.S. Senate approves Easterwood funding

By Juli Rhoden
The Battalion

Easterwood, which is located on FM 2347 in College Station, is one of 46 airports in Texas to receive funding.

U.S. Sen. Phil Gramm (R-Texas) said in a press release that Easterwood will receive \$838,080 to reconstruct drainage facilities, construct perimeter fencing and install a new handicap lift system.

"The passage of this legislation will free up needed airport improvement funds over the next 60 days to help pay for safety construction and expansion at many Texas airports," Gramm said. "Improvements to the Easterwood Airport are on the FAA's list this year, and I am hopeful they will be funded as soon as possible."

Harry Raisor, director of aviation at Easterwood, said since the bill is not law, they have not decided what position to take.

"Until the president of A&M gets something on the matter, we aren't reviewing anything at this time," he said.

Julie Hillrichs, a spokeswoman for Gramm, said the

process to receive funding was very competitive.

"The funding is based on need," she said. "Each airport submitted proposals, and based upon projects, the needs were met as best possible."

Hillrichs said a bill is being handed to the U.S. House of Representatives for a vote. If the bill is approved by the House, it will go to the White House for President Clinton's signature.

Officials in A&M's Office of the President were unavailable for comment.

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