



ACE OF THE PEN

Aggie pitcher Brian Parker has found success in relief.

Sports Page 7

PRESIDENTIAL PERFORMANCE

Taylor: President Clinton, despite recent improvements, still lacks real credibility.

Opinion, Page 9

LUCKY AND LONDON-BOUND

Graduate student earns chance to see Letterman's "Late Show" in London.

Aggielife, Page 3



THE BATTALION

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"Serving Texas A&M since 1893"

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Students can swap books through A&M computer system

The Bookswap program allows students to buy and sell textbooks on the Internet.

By Kasie Byers
THE BATTALION

Just in time for textbook buy-back, Bookswap, a system on the Internet which allows students to buy and sell textbooks among themselves, is available for use by students.

Student government created the Bookswap system and will provide its funding.

Students can access Bookswap through computer labs on campus supported by the Computing and Information

Services, including the Remote Computer Center, Academic Computer Center, Teague building computer lab and the computer lab on West campus.

Sam Fleitman, programmer of the Bookswap system, said that access to Bookswap is not restricted to these labs.

"These are just common places to access the system," Fleitman said. "But it can be accessed any place where the Internet is available."

Mosaic and Gopher will host Bookswap.

Once accessed, Bookswap will allow students to browse through a listing of books being sold and bought by title and course number.

Within the Bookswap system, stu-

dents can also advertise books by entering information about the textbook and how students can contact the advertiser.

Students are also required to enter an alias and password before they can advertise a book.

Fleitman said the alias is the student's name as it is listed within the University's electronic phone book. The password is the student's social security number.

"If students are not sure what their alias is, they can look it up within the system," he said. "The password is always the student's I.D. number unless they have changed it with the University in the past."

Fleitman said the purpose of the

alias and password is to monitor who uses the system.

"We want to keep people from advertising bikes, houses and personal items on the system," he said. "We also want to keep people who don't attend Texas A&M from using it."

Fleitman said that advertising textbooks is just as easy as browsing through books already advertised on the system.

"The system is very user friendly," he said. "There is help and documentation on the system that will help students work through the process of advertising books."

There is also a delete feature on the system so students can remove adver-

tised textbooks after they are sold. If this feature is not used, the system automatically deletes the book one month to six weeks after its entrance.

"This prevents books from being in there so long that they are outdated," Fleitman said. "It is also for those students who forget they even advertised books."

James Colquitt, a sophomore business administration major, said he is looking forward to utilizing Bookswap.

"The amount of money we get in return for used textbooks is ridiculous," Colquitt said. "I can't help but feel cheated at the end of every semester."

"It's about time the students finally have a means to beat the system."



Amy Browning/THE BATTALION

Just a little off the top, please

Reed Cutshall Sr. gets his head shaved by Ria Jacobus as part of a challenge held by the Baptist Student Union. A group of guys made the promise that they would shave their

heads if \$15,000 was raised to send missionaries on a trip for the summer. The money was raised, and Thursday afternoon the men had their heads shaven.

STANDING OUT ABOVE THE REST RHA selects Puryear as Hall of the Year

The RHA gave awards to Crocker, Davis-Gary, Lechner, and Dunn halls.

By Wes Swift
THE BATTALION

Puryear Hall emerged as the winner when the Residence Hall Association announced its Hall of the Year awards, given to the five residence halls that have distinguished themselves in the past year.

Puryear received the overall Hall of the Year, while Crocker and Davis-Gary Halls won best Male and Female Hall of the Year, respectively.

Lechner Hall was given the Co-ed Hall of the Year and Dunn Hall was given the award for the Most Improved Hall.

Suzanne Lyons, RHA president, said the hall awards were based on the number and quality of activities in each hall.

"We looked at whether they had good social, educational and diverse programs," Lyons said. "We also looked to see if a hall interacted with other halls and their involvement with RHA."

Lyons said Puryear's bid for Hall of the Year was too impressive to pass up.

"They were just a step above all

the other halls," she said. "They have a long history of involvement in the RHA. They had two members on last year's executive board and they'll have two more next year."

Lyons also pointed to Puryear's involvement in activities like RHA Casino, which originally began in the hall, and their volunteer efforts.

Jesse Sanchez, Puryear hall council president, said his hall's activities varied from a trip to San Antonio to visit the Alamo and Riverwalk to a "Potty Mouth" contest where every resident donated a quarter for pizza every time he cursed.

"Whatever someone thought of, we pretty much did," Sanchez said.

Sanchez said the award came as no surprise to the Puryear residents.

"We expected this all along," he said. "But it feels good because we did a lot of work this year."

Puryear and Law Halls will not be used by residents next year while administrators decide whether to demolish or renovate the buildings.

Sanchez said the residents were extra-motivated because it was the last year Puryear may be used as a men's residence hall.

"We wanted to go out on top," Sanchez said.

Lyons agreed. "It's nice that we can send them out with a bang," Lyons said.

Congress considers replacing dollar bills with coin

Republicans claim that millions could be saved by replacing \$1 bills with coins which can last up to 30 years.

WASHINGTON (AP) — Dollars would jangle in Americans' pockets rather than pad their wallets if Republican budget-cutters get their way.

They're eyeing millions in savings that could result from replacing \$1 bills that wear out in 17 months with \$1 dollar coins lasting 30 years.

A diverse coalition of special interests, ranging from blind operators of concession stands to public transit companies to copper-mining corporations, is backing the effort.

The opposition — paper and

ink companies and the unions involved in printing the bills — has over the years succeeded in blocking the coin forces. But the coin proponents' cause has been given new life this year by the Republican Congress' struggle to balance the budget.

"Significant government savings are no further away than our wallets or purses," Rep. Jim Kolbe, R-Ariz., told the House Banking subcommittee on monetary policy Wednesday.

Although it costs twice as much to mint a coin as print a bill — 8 cents vs. 4 cents — the coins last 21 times longer, said Kolbe, who has introduced legislation to replace the dollar bill with a coin.

The Congressional Budget Office estimates the savings at \$120 million to \$180 million a year.

And switching to coins will

save millions for private industry while offering added convenience for the public, proponents argue.

No longer would commuters riding express buses from Staten Island to Manhattan have to pay with 16 quarters — twice a day — because New York City buses don't accept dollar bills. No longer would shoppers in downtown Washington have to feed meters with 16 quarters to park for two hours. No longer would the Chicago Transit Authority have to pay 20 full-time employees to straighten out and stack the dollar bills its receives.

Nearly every other major industrial nation already has switched to high-denomination coins. Canada, for instance, has a one-dollar coin, nicknamed the "Loonie" after the picture of a loon that it carries, and plans to introduce a \$2 coin next year.

Clinton challenges GOP's on Medicare funding

Democrats press Republicans to explain how they will cut taxes and balance the budget without also cutting health care services.

WASHINGTON (AP) — Maneuvering for political high ground, President Clinton went before thousands of senior citizens Wednesday and challenged Republicans to explain how they hope to wring upwards of \$250 billion out of Medicare.

Republicans, eager to draw out Clinton's own ideas on the sensitive matter of Medicare cuts, accused the president of shirking leadership by refusing to go first.

"You shouldn't run for re-election if you are not prepared to do the job," said House Speaker Newt Gingrich, R-Ga.

Neither side seemed inclined to budge in the in-

creasingly testy political impasse.

"I think the hope is diminishing that we can quietly lower the rhetoric," said Sen. Pete Domenici, R-N.M., chairman of the Budget Committee.

It is a sign of older Americans' political power that each side wants the other to make the first move to rein in spiraling Medicare costs. The popular health insurance system for the elderly is expected to go broke by 2002 without corrective action.

Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole, R-Kan., joined Gingrich in renewing an invitation for Clinton to come to Capitol Hill to work toward a solution.

Instead, Clinton chose a friendly audience at the White House Conference on Aging to



Clinton

See Clinton, Page 6

Yard sale to benefit rape victim

The money raised will help pay medical bills, and students are asked to donate items that they might otherwise throw away.

By Lisa Messer
THE BATTALION

A College Station family is asking students to donate items they were planning on throwing away at the end of the semester for a yard sale to raise funds to help pay for psychiatric treatment of a victim of sexual abuse.

The yard sale will be held May 19-20 on Lee Street with all proceeds going toward the girl's medical bills.

Carol Haddock, who is helping arrange the yard sale, said the benefit will help pay some of the family's \$12,000 in doctors' bills.

"Students can donate things they particularly don't like or that they'd throw away anyway," Haddock said. "I can do any mending. If it's missing a button or a zipper, I'll fix it. We're also willing to fix up furniture."

Haddock said many apartment complexes and sorority houses have set aside areas for students to put their donations.

"I can come and pick up the items from students off campus or on campus," Haddock

said. "Anyone can just call me and say, 'I'm setting it on my doorstep.' I'm still not sure what to expect, but anything will do some good."

The girl's mother said her daughter was sexually abused 10 years ago while she and her family were overseas.

The mother said that while her husband was flying fighter planes for the Marine Corps in Okinawa, Japan, she was hospitalized in a coma.

She said her husband was spending a lot of time with her at the hospital so the mother of one of her daughter's friends was watching the children.

The friend's mother, she said, left the girls with the friend's father while she went shopping, and the father raped the two girls.

"The man told her that he and his German shepherd would kill her and her family if she ever told anyone," the mother said. "She was scared so badly. Right now, she's afraid her doctors are going to get killed."

"She can't separate fact from fiction. We try to tell her there's no way that dog is still alive, but then she gets defensive and says we don't believe her."

She said that since her daughter told her nine months ago about the rape, the girl has tried to commit suicide six times, been in and out of hospitals and regressed to behaving like a six-year-old, which is the age she was

when she was raped.

"We're hoping long-term therapy will help, but we're just financially behind right now," she said. "It's just been one thing after the other. I was in the hospital. Then my husband had to go the Gulf War and we lost our business. Now it's this."

"We've never asked for assistance before. We're not necessarily asking for donations now, but just for stuff kids would throw out anyway and we can fix up."

Karen Kalergis, the public information officer for the Office of the Attorney General, said many compensation programs, including the Texas Crime Victims Compensation program, exist to help the victims.

"Our program has eligibility requirements that a person must meet to receive payment, but the people who administer the program are very sensitive toward the victims," Kalergis said. "Our program works."

Haddock said she wants to continue this event to help other sexual abuse victims.

"The real big problem we're working with is continuing to do this on the basis of helping other victims also," Haddock said. "There's a real need for it. Abuse is something that needs to come out in order for the person to heal."

Haddock said any student wanting to donate belongings to the yard sale can call her at 764-7714.