

# THE BATTALION

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## Students, faculty face parking problems

### The day-student and faculty lots near the Zachry Engineering Center will be closed for repairs between June 26 and July 24.

Michael Simmons  
THE BATTALION

The closure of several parking lots on campus could create problems for students and faculty this summer. Kathie Mathis, associate director of the Department of Parking Transit and Traffic Services, said parking areas 50 and 51, located near the Zachry Engineering Center, will be closed sporadically for basic repairs between June 26 and July 18.

Two-thirds of parking area 50, day-student parking, will be closed until either Wednesday afternoon or Thursday. The parking lot will be closed again from July 7 to July 18 for sealant and repainting.

"Workers will close the parking lot in sections while they make the necessary repairs," Mathis said. "Once they have finished, they won't hesitate to reopen the lots to students and faculty."

Mathis said faculty parking area 51, also located near the Zachry, is scheduled to close for basic repairs from July 13 until July 24.

Students are encouraged to utilize other available summer student parking areas, Mathis said.

"It is not our intention to inconvenience students," Mathis said.

Mathis said several parking areas are available to students while repairs

are being made. Students can park in lots 48 and 62, by Kyle Field; 89, by the tennis courts; and 95 and 96, along Wellborn Road.

Thomas Williams, director of PTTS, said the repairs are part of an ongoing process to refurbish parking areas on campus.

"In order to keep the asphalt from weathering, the sealant process should be done every five or six years," Williams said.

Williams said the process would be expedited and should not inconvenience motorists too much.

"It is possible there will be alternate parking available on the Bonfire site, when lots 50 and 51 are both under construction," Williams said.

Doyle Warnell, Physical Plant municipal engineer, said the decision to close the parking lots is made by PTTS.

He said the slurry seal, a refurbishing process, is not complicated and should provide a smooth riding surface.

"The process, which combines an asphalt material with an aggregate, provides for the timely repair of these asphalt surfaces," Warnell said.

Several students voiced their concerns about the timing of the refurbishment project.

Tony Espirit, a senior industrial engineering major, said the parking situation would not have been a problem if students would have been forewarned.

"It was real hectic this morning," Espirit said. "I have an 8:00 class, so this is not how I expected to spend my Monday morning."

A sign announcing the closing of the day-student parking area was posted by Monday morning.

The closing of the faculty lot was announced on a sign that has been posted since last week.

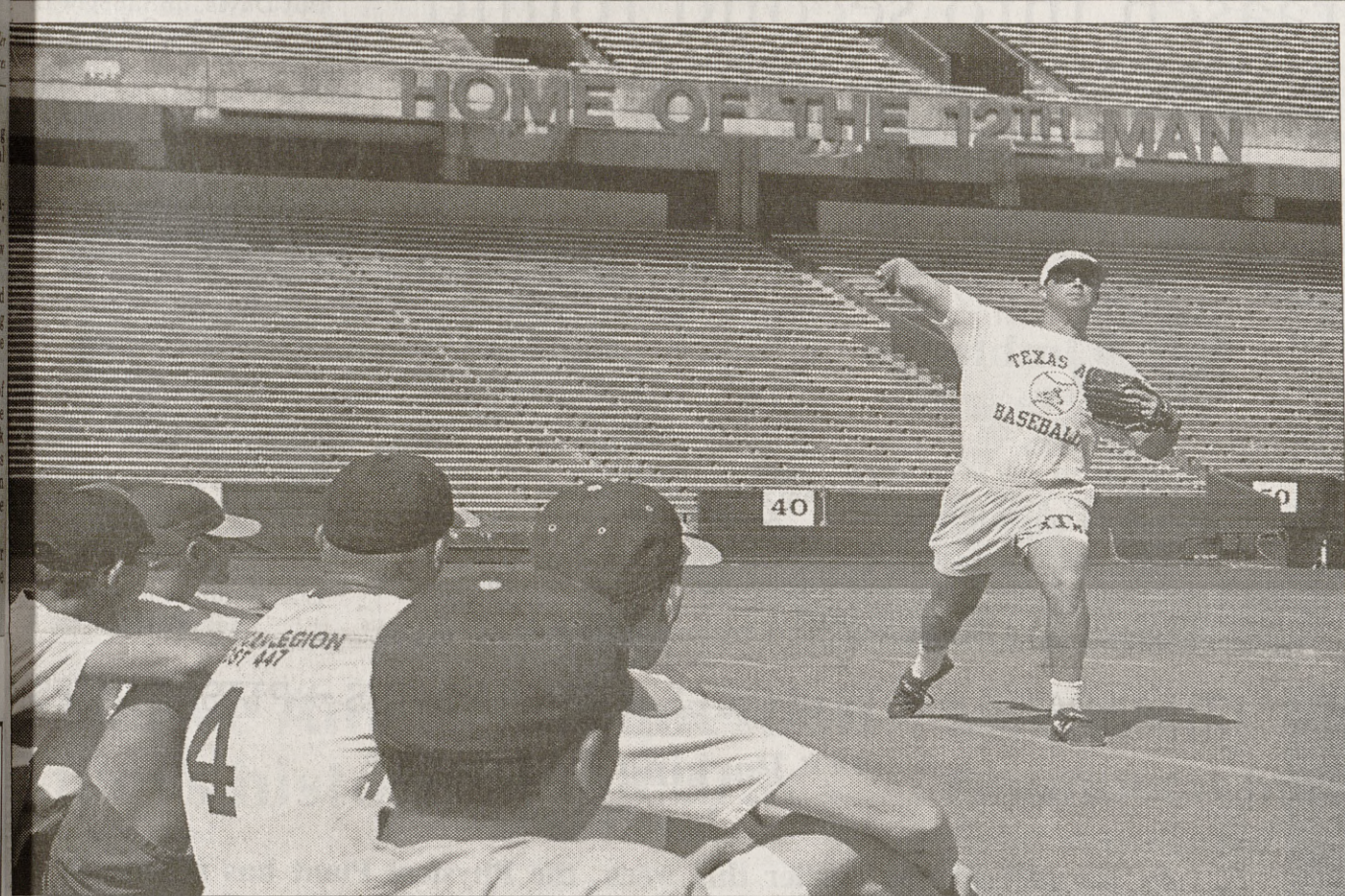
Belen Serda, a senior chemical engineering major, said she would have liked to have known about the closure of the day student lot before it actually happened.

"I wish they would think of the students every once in a while," Serda said.

Ivan Zarak, a senior industrial engineering major, said prior notice of the construction would have been helpful for students.

"If we had had a chance to make plans to take the bus or get a ride, the repairs wouldn't be so bad," Zarak said.

Other parking areas scheduled for construction or refurbishing this summer are 54, located near the Administration Building; 88, beside Duncan Field; 59, near the tennis courts; and 46, in front of the Read Building.



Nick Rodnicki, THE BATTALION

### PITCHING THE AGGIE WAY

Former Texas A&M baseball player Brian Parker demonstrates proper throwing techniques during a baseball camp at Kyle Field Monday afternoon. The camp is open to high school baseball players.

## Bill enables parents to prepay college education

Beginning January 1996, college tuition can be paid in advance to the state. The money will be invested and will accrue interest.

By Wes Swift  
THE BATTALION

A new bill that allows parents to prepay their children's college education will not affect admission standards or finances at Texas A&M, officials said.

Texas House Bill 1214, recently signed into law by Gov. George W. Bush, allows Texas parents to pay tuition and required fees in advance, at near-current prices.

The bill drew fire from critics like Michael Olivas, a University of Houston law professor, who told the Dallas Morning News that prepaid tuitions could make poorer students less attractive to schools, because they are less able to pay.

But Dr. Sallie Sheppard, associate provost for undergraduate programs and academic services, said the scenario Olivas describes is not likely to happen at A&M.

"We do not decide our admissions in terms of their ability to pay," Sheppard said. "We look at other credentials. It's not a question of whether you can pay or not. It's a question of your qualifications."

Parents who participate in the program will sign a contract for their child to go to a junior, four-year or private college. The

terms of payment would be based on a state comptroller's analysis of typical rate increases in tuition and fees, administrative costs and length of the contract.

Money paid into the contract will be invested and allowed to gain interest. The money is then transferred to any public or private Texas university in which the child enrolls.

The difference in higher education prices when a contract is signed and when a child enrolls in school would seem to create a funding void.

But Dr. Stanton Calvert, chief of legislative affairs for the Texas A&M System, said that while the program would seem to take away funds from universities like A&M, any concerns about funding problems are overstated.

"This won't really affect Texas A&M's funding at all," Calvert said. "The state will take the investment income and apply to the difference between the contract prices and the current prices. It really won't increase or decrease funding at all."

Calvert said the program was a good one and would give parents an excellent alternative to fund education.

"It's good for students, but it's even better for parents," Calvert said. "It allows parents and grandparents, or whoever's paying the bill, to pay for education at a low cost."

Calvert said there are also some benefits for students.

"There might be a time when there's more than enough money in the account," Calvert said. "Then maybe we could use that money to help students pay for other costs, like clothing or housing. We might even be able to give them some money to help with other expenses."

## Congress considers cutting college financial aid programs

The proposed financial aid cuts could be voted on by the end of July.

Tara Wilkinson  
THE BATTALION

Congress is considering adopting proposals that would add nearly \$13 billion to college expenses over the next five years, according to a report from Rep. Ed Edwards' office, D-Texas.

The proposals, which are now being debated in a conference committee, might be voted on by the end of July.

Congress has proposed eliminating subsidized Stafford Loans, College Work Study, Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants and Perkins Loans.

A report from Edwards' office, based on a Sept. 22, 1994, House Budget Committee Republican staff document, said the House Budget Committee proposed cutting financial aid programs by approximately \$12.4 billion.

Republicans in the House Budget Committee consistently have proposed such reductions, Edwards' report said.

The Congressional Research Service released a list of education programs in May 1995 for which fiscal year 1995 rescissions have been proposed. A rescission is money, formerly allocated in the budget for a specific purpose, that is restricted from being spent.

The report also provides fiscal year 1996 House budget requests for education. Fiscal years begin in October.

A conference committee, composed of members from the House and the Senate, has proposed about \$880,000 worth of rescissions for all 1995 Department of Education programs, according to the Congressional Research Service.

This figure was a compromise between approximately \$1.7 billion worth of rescissions proposed by the House and \$400,000 worth of rescissions proposed by the Senate.

Sherry Marsteller, legislative assistant to Sen. Jack Fields, said none of the figures quoted in the Congressional Research Service report have become law yet. They are proposals that have been made during House, Senate and conference committee sessions which will be altered further in conference committee debates.

"Changes quite often take place," Marsteller said. The total amount requested for education in the 1996 federal budget was \$30.4 million, \$3.3 million less than the education budget for 1995, according to the Congressional Research Service report.

Marsteller said rescissions and budget cuts are necessary in order to balance the 1996 budget. She said it is necessary to cut government funding of these financial aid programs and make state institutions more responsible for money owed to the federal government because many student loans are not paid back.

"This has to do with getting programs under control that are out of control," Marsteller said. "Many loans are not going to be paid back, and the system will eventually break down. We want to build in some accountability so that when funds go down, states and state institutions will take care of it."

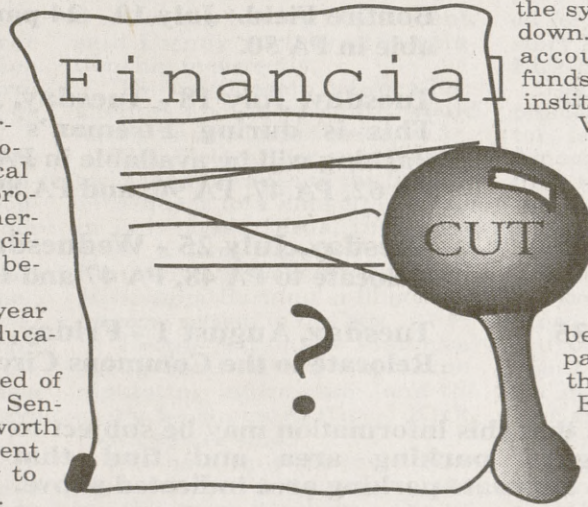
Vance Gore, legislative assistant to Edwards, said the financial aid cuts are a thinly-masked means of providing a tax cut to people with incomes more than \$200,000.

"Republicans have zeroed in on programs that benefit the middle class to pay for their tax give-away to the wealthy," the report from Edwards' office stated.

Gore said members of Edwards' office are opposed to the financial aid cuts because they will not benefit students.

"Sen. Edwards fully and wholeheartedly supports reducing the deficit, but not at the price of hurting college students."

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## Texas Democrats convert to rival Republican party

U.S. Rep. Greg Laughlin and state Rep. Warren Chisum lead a pack of 19 officeholders switching to the GOP.

"Real conservatives, people who believe in the little guy, are still a critical aspect of the Democratic coalition in Texas."

Laughlin and Chisum — staunch conservatives in their respective seats — topped the list of Democratic turncoats.

Laughlin, whose district stretches from the western outskirts of Austin east to the Gulf of Mexico, made his announcement in Victoria. His switch gives Republicans a 232-202 majority in the U.S. House and decreases the Democratic lead in Texas' House delegation to 18-12.

With Chisum's switch, the number of Republicans in the 150-member state House rises to 62.

"It's great to be home," said Chisum, who as a Democrat headed the Texas Conservative Coalition for the past three years.

Chisum said he switched parties because he felt he could not advance his conservative agenda as a Democrat.

"The Republican Party is the only party that has an agenda for the family. That's where I want to be," he said.

Chisum, whose district includes 16 Panhandle counties, is serving his fourth term as a state House member. His term expires in January 1997.

Also making the switch Monday were Victoria County District Attorney George Filley; five state district court judges from Fort Worth, Houston, Abilene and San Marcos; one county court-at-law judge from Houston; three Panhandle sheriffs; and two county commissioners; one justice of the peace; and four constables.

Martin said the changes were not as numerous as Republicans had touted.

AUSTIN (AP) — Texas politicians are flip-flopping, but the switch is over parties rather than issues.

Nineteen Democratic officeholders Monday converted to the rival Republican Party, including U.S. Rep. Greg Laughlin and state Rep. Warren Chisum.

GOP leaders, whose party has gained a total of 31 converts this year in Texas, said the swaps are representative of a state that is becoming more and more conservative.

"Today is yet another statement that the people in our state recognize that the conservative party in Texas ... is the Republican Party," said Republican Gov. George W. Bush, who joined U.S. Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison and other GOP leaders at a news conference announcing the party transfers.

"I think that what we're seeing is a reflection of the way Texans think now," Bush said.

Democrats said that the conversions had more to do with personal politics than philosophy.

"What you found here is a handful of people who because of expediency or other personal reasons chose to switch parties," said Ed Martin, executive director of the Texas Democratic Party.

"It doesn't have anything to do with conservative. Conservative is a word that is used far too liberally by Republicans," Martin said.

