

**CELEBRATING DIVERSITY**

A&M staff members work to help minority students feel welcome. Aggile, Page 3

**BACHELOR'S IN FUTILITY**

Miller: Liberal Arts degree leaves students envious of engineering friends with job prospects. Opinion, Page 11

**BIG**

Freshman center Brad Stricker is filling Aggie hopes and lanes. Sports, Page 7



# THE BATTALION

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## Students wary of hasty fee increase

**Several students said they wonder if the administration is wasting money.**

By Heather Pace  
THE BATTALION

A proposed increase in the Texas A&M general use fee is angering students and causing them to wonder if fees are properly allocated and if they will ever stop increasing. Dr. Ray Bowen, Texas A&M president, who recently proposed

an increase of \$8 per semester credit hour in the general use fee, is planning a series of public hearings to discuss how the money would be used.

Amelia Taurel, a senior international studies major, attended one of Bowen's hearings prior to a fee increase that was implemented last semester.

"It made everyone there realize why we needed the last fee increase, when Bowen explained it to us," Taurel said. "I think all students should go to the meetings, because if they are arguing against fees, at least they know more about what is going on." Taurel disagrees though

with the most recent fee-increase proposal.

"It is too soon to do another fee increase, and it is too much all at once," Taurel said. "A&M is supposed to be affordable, but it is getting to the point where it isn't."

Students are concerned that frequent fee increases will undermine their ability to pay for an education at A&M.

Connie Vasquez, a freshman computer science major, said the fee increase would make financing college much more difficult for many A&M students.

"Just because our general use fee is drastically increased doesn't mean our financial aid will be in-

creased as well," Vasquez said.

Many students, including Stephanie McAfee, a junior special education major, said they want to know how income generated by increased fees would benefit them.

"When I heard about it, I was curious to know why they needed more money," McAfee said.

Students said they want to know if the fees they currently

pay are being spent wisely.

Liz Rayburn, a junior psychology major, said audits of the general use fee should be made easily accessible to students.

"If they are going to raise our

accounting on the student service fee, so they should do something for the general use fee so we can find out what is going on."

Mark Floyd, a sophomore speech communications major, said the administration spends money frivolously.

"The rec center is fun and all, but they need to get their priorities straight," Floyd said.

Taurel said the general use fee should not be increased if a more efficient way to spend the funds generated by it can be found.

"We see a lot of money wasted," Taurel said, "and it just makes you wonder how our money is being spent."

**"Just because our general use fee is drastically increased doesn't mean our financial aid will be increased as well."**

— Connie Vasquez  
freshman computer science major

fees, we need to make sure the extra money is actually going to help us," Rayburn said. "They do

## Faculty Senate members span political spectrum

**Primary records from 1994 indicate that the Faculty Senate is a politically diverse group.**

By Wes Swift  
THE BATTALION

The Texas A&M Faculty Senate is composed of an almost equal number of Republicans and Democrats, a statistic that surprises student leaders who have labeled the Senate a liberal organization.

Brazos County voter registration and 1994 primary records show that 32 senators are listed as Democrats and 32 as Republicans.

Eight senators were not affiliated with either party, and 19 were not registered to vote in Brazos County.

One senator was listed in the records of both parties. David Brown, Texas A&M College Republicans president and a junior political science major, said he was surprised by these statistics because the

See Faculty, Page 12



## Local gym attendance falls

**Some Bryan-College Station health clubs have decreased emphasis on students and are targeting other portions of the population.**

By Greg Fahrenholt  
THE BATTALION

Local health clubs have reported declines in business since the opening of the Texas A&M Student Recreation Center last semester.

Students pay a \$50 fee each semester in Rec. Center fees, whether they use the facility or not.

Steve Lumpee, owner of Gold's Gym in College Station, said his business has suffered greatly since the West Campus facility opened. "Anytime that a business is

competing with Texas A&M University in an effort to attract student business, the University is going to be much more successful," he said.

Lumpee said his business has dropped 15 to 20 percent since the Rec. Center opened.

"We're playing on such an uneven playing field since the University is already forcing students to pay to use their own gym," he said.

To make up for the loss of student patrons, Lumpee said he is targeting other segments of Bryan-College Station.

"We're now trying to attract older, more business-oriented customers," he said.

Some local health clubs are trying to make up for the loss of student memberships by adding services such as child care and circuit training.

However, Lumpee said that nothing can entirely make up for student loss.

"Every business in Bryan-College Station has to rely on students to an extent," he said.

Larry Isham, marketing director at Aerofit, said business has not suffered too much at Aerofit because it is not dependent on student memberships.

"We have a steady base of older clients and have still been able to profit despite a slight decrease in new memberships," he said.

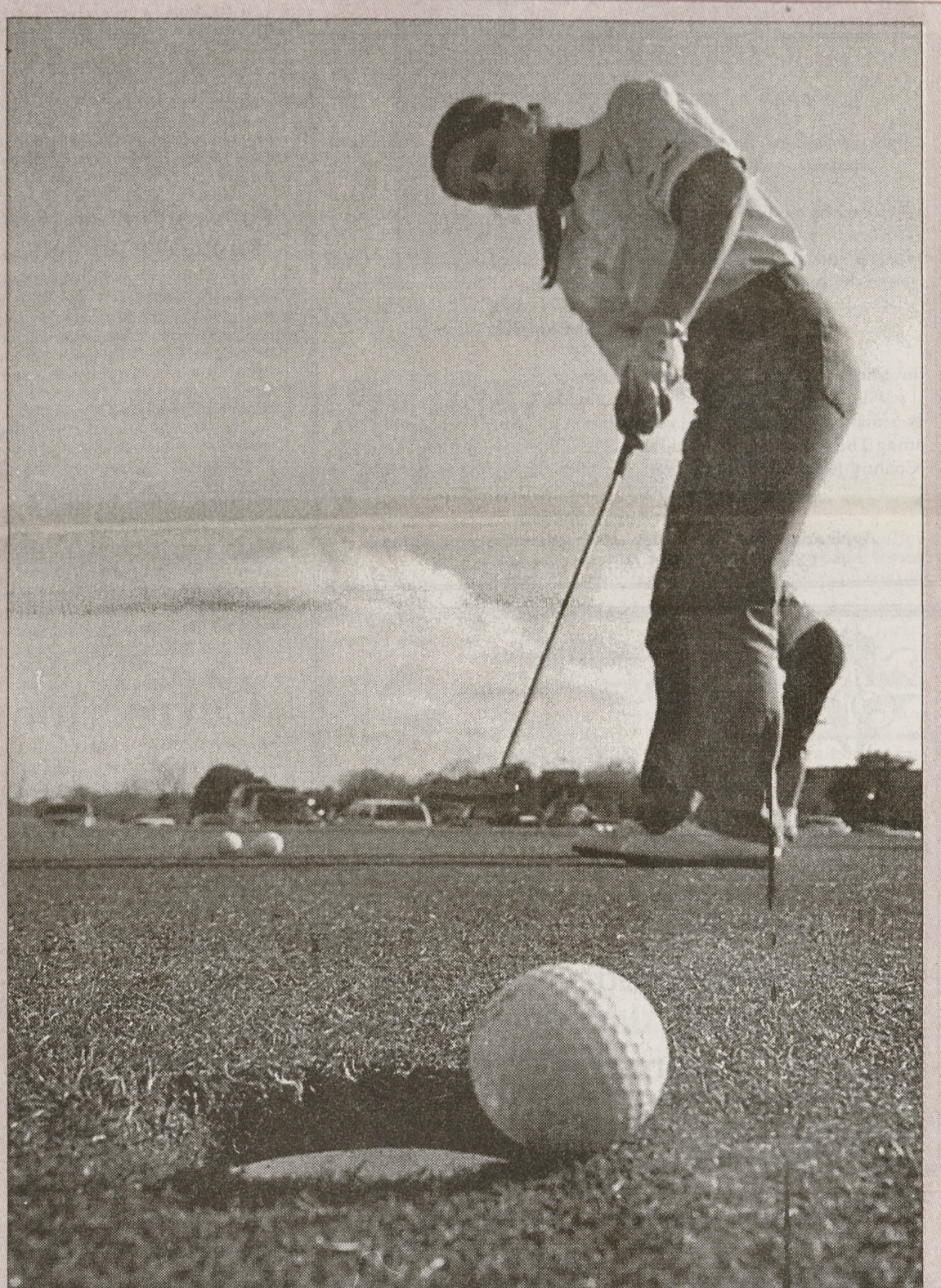
Jeremy Lambert, a junior genetics major who had an off-campus health club membership before the Rec. Center opened, chose not to renew it.

"I figure that since I'm already paying to come here (the Rec. Center), I might as well use it," Lambert said. "Everything here is new, and most of the other gyms are much smaller."

But not all students are abandoning off-campus health clubs.

But Ryan Avery, a senior psychology major, said he will keep his membership at an off-campus gym to avoid the Rec. Center's large crowds.

"It's way too crowded at the Rec. Center," Avery said. "I don't always have enough time to wait in line to use the machines."



Dave House, THE BATTALION

## PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

Kristina Edfors, a senior economics major and member of the A&M golf team, practices to perfect her putting Monday afternoon at the A&M golf course.

## Dome holds unspoken histories

**The Academic Building has nooks and crannies unexplored by most A&M students.**

By Courtney Walker  
THE BATTALION

The serene exterior of Texas A&M's Academic Building hides a well-kept secret. The building's single dome is, in actuality, two.

Between the dome seen from the outside of the building and the dome seen from the inside of the building is a graffiti-covered space accessible from the fifth floor by crawling through a window.

Both the stairway to the building's fifth floor and the window to access the dome are kept locked.

Dr. Dudley Poston, Academic Building proctor, said people are allowed into the dome only to play Silver Taps or for building maintenance.

He said the dome is unsafe for general-public access because of the unlit stairway and lack of handrails.

A Silver Taps team member said playing the solemn hymn from the dome has always been part of the Silver Taps tradition.

"It's an obvious place for us to play, that is out of the way, where we can be heard and not seen," he said.

Silver Taps team members are instructed to keep their identities a secret so that the attention goes

not to them, but to the A&M students honored in the services.

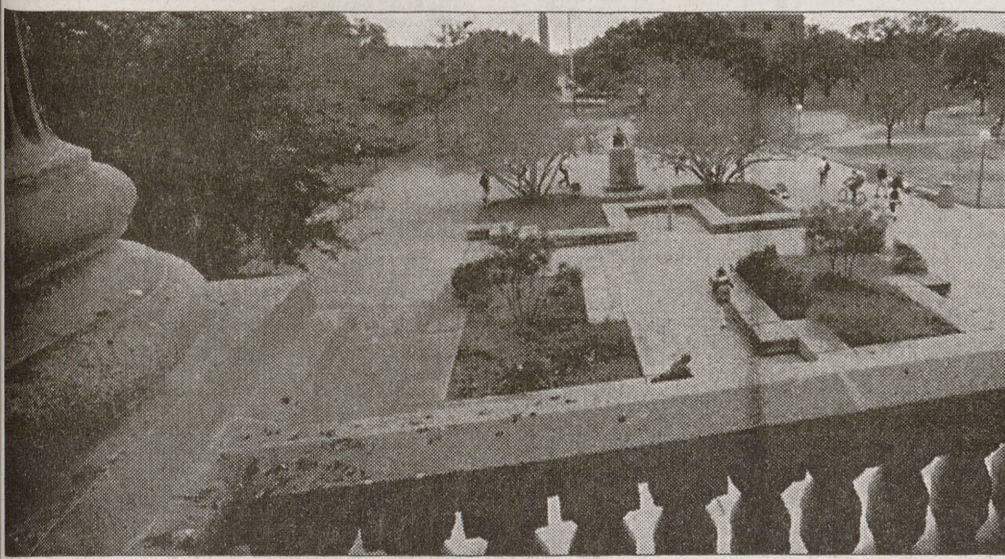
"There is a lot of tradition and stuff, like names that are kept secret for history and integrity purposes," he said.

Team members do, however, reveal their identities by inscribing their names on the walls of the inner dome each time they play Silver Taps.

Lists of decades of Silver Taps team members and other Corps-related graffiti covers the walls inside the dome.

Another inaccessible area of the Academic Building is the second-floor balcony outside the office of Dr. Steve Oberhelman, modern and

See Dome, Page 2



Stew Milne, THE BATTALION

The balcony on the second floor is only accessed briefly for cleaning. Opening the doors inter-feres with the air conditioning.