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A&M celebrates Earth Week with clothing drive, campus recycling bins

By Pamela Benson
THE BATTALION

Texas A&M students and faculty will have the opportunity to renew their hope for the future of the Earth by participating in A&M's Earth Week.

Earth Day is celebrated nationwide today, but the Student Government Environmental Issues Committee decided the event merited an entire week of campus acknowledgment.

EIC has designed the week's events to celebrate the Earth and to make students aware of the importance of recycling.

Katie Kam, EIC Earth Day subchair and senior biology major, said students often do not participate in Earth-conscious activities because of time. Therefore, EIC attempts to make such activities more accessible to students.

"We can't make students recycle," Kam said. "It is our job to make it easier for students to recycle."

Today from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. by Rudder Fountain, students can visit more than 20 booths, a trash art exhibit, an earth-friendly vehicle show and a book swap.

Environmental companies and academic departments are stationed at several booths, providing information about pursuing a career in environmental fields.

In addition, students can participate in the Clothes Mountain project, which is an area by Rudder Fountain where unwanted clothes can be deposited.

Jessica Porrazzo, Clothes Mountain coordinator and sophomore international studies major, said she hopes students will take seriously this opportunity to get rid of extra clothes.

"I'm hoping that students will go through their closets and do some spring cleaning and bring us their unwanted clothes," Porrazzo said.

All donations to Clothes Mountain will go to Twin City Mission.

Students will have an opportunity this week to turn in items for which recycling bins are not normally available on campus.

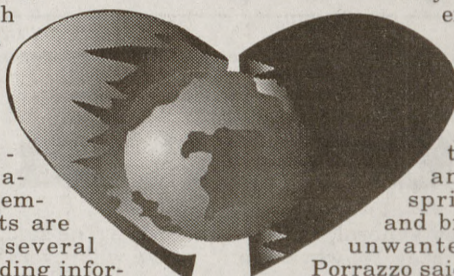
Bins for glass, plastic, aluminum and paper will be provided.

Katy Morrow, a senior education major, said students should get involved with Earth Week because environmentalism is an issue that affects everyone.

"The more people that get involved, the better the outcome," Morrow said.

If students are too busy during the week to participate in Earth Week festivities, they can join the fun on Saturday, April 27, when the city of Bryan, the city of College Station, the Texas Environmental Action Coalition and the Peace Institute will team up for an Earth Day celebration.

From 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on campus soccer fields, participants can visit 70 booths, a variety of foods and shop a garage sale.



Prayer

Continued from Page 1

other coaches of bringing their religion into the school's athletic programs.

Among the allegations are that Baca and Osborn led team prayers, played Christian music in locker rooms and posted biblical passages on athletes' lockers.

Osborn's contract tentatively wasn't renewed earlier this month. A final decision is scheduled for Monday night. He didn't immediately return a telephone call from The Associated Press seeking comment.

Baca, who has coached in Houston-area schools and in another community outside Austin, admits playing Christian music and leading team prayers. But he said he's never been challenged.

"If someone told us, 'Coach, watch what you're doing' or 'That's against the law,' we wouldn't have done it," he said. "I understand (the separation of) church and state, but with the team it's not so clear."

Baca said he posted only one biblical passage in the Wildcats locker room and never tried to coerce players into attending church.

"I'm a Christian," he said, adding that part of being a Christian is following the law. "I know you can't go into a classroom and open a Bible and say, 'We're going to learn.' But as far as praying with the team, I've been involved with that in every team I've been involved with down to the time I played football."

Baca said he uses prayer and Christian music as a way to provide "an envi-

ronment conducive to positive living."

"What is the main theme in rock and roll music and country western music," he asked? "Sex, drugs, suicide, gangs. We're not going to have that here. Not because I am a Christian, but because I don't think moral, young people should be exposed to that."

Texas ACLU executive director Jay Jacobson said the law is clear that teachers can't bring religion into schools for any reason.

"All of our plaintiffs are God-fearing Christians. They are not irreligious people," Jacobson said.

"What that shows me is the degree to which the religious right has pushed people's buttons. It is not just minority religions being effected."

Jacobson said a settlement agreement is pending between the coaches and students in which the coaches would agree to refrain from religious activities in school and admit to having acted improperly.

Baca said he would sign the agreement if it did not say he coerced and intimidated students. "I want this to be a good testimony," he said.

Biology teacher Melinda Vague said she believes her students who say Baca exerted religious pressures. But she said the issue needs to be resolved so the focus can return to teaching.

"They wouldn't lie to me," Ms. Vague said of her 9th- and 10th-graders at the 600-plus student school. "Talking with teachers on our faculty, we wish the school board would have settled this (by now). It just keeps going and going."

Band director Van Henry said he's unhappy with the attention the lawsuit has brought to the school, about 20 miles east of Austin.

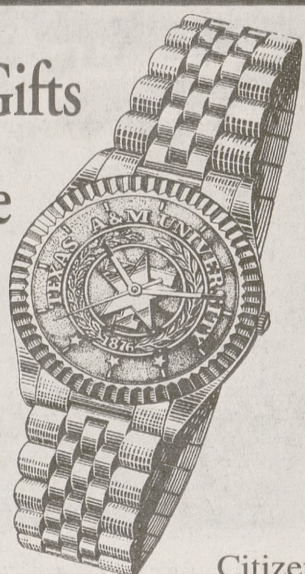


Evan Zimmerman, The Battalion

SHIP SHAPE

Steve Rienhart, Jr. (middle), an ocean engineering major, takes a tour of a tanker that is docked in Galveston. The ship will be leased to Mobil Corp. for use off the coast of Africa.

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(713) 270-5946

EARTH WEEK

EARTH DAY

MONDAY, APRIL 22

Rudder Fountain 10-4 p.m.

- Clothes Mountain, EcoOlympics, Recycling, Earth friendly vehicle show, Recycle Art & More

TRASH ON THE PLAZA

TUESDAY, APRIL 23

Rudder Fountain 10-2 p.m.

An exhibition of environmental legislation & waste

ENVIRONMENTAL CAREER FAIR

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 24

MSC Flagroom 10-4 p.m.

For science, engineering, liberal arts and undecided majors. Want to find out what's up in the environmental field? Looking for a job or a major? Come to the Fair!

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