

THE BATTALION

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Regents approve Use Fee hearing

By MELISSA NUNNERY
THE BATTALION

A public hearing regarding a 10 percent credit hour increase in the General Use Fee is set to take place Monday, Nov. 25, at 7 p.m. in Rudder Theatre.

The Texas A&M University System Board of Regents gave A&M administrators the go-ahead Tuesday during a meeting via telephone to hold the hearing.

Texas state law requires that state universities hold public hearings before considering a General Use Fee increase.

Dr. Barry Thompson, chancellor of the Texas A&M University System, said the public hearing will be held before the semester break so students can attend. The regents wanted to ensure the forum would be held at a time when students are in College Station.

"[We don't want to] be perceived, as we were last year, as holding meetings when no one was there to attend," Thompson said.

Texas A&M President Ray Bowen said the purpose of the hearing is to inform students about the GUF increase.

"We will explain the increase and how the money will be used," Bowen said.

The majority of the funds generated by the fee increase would be used for faculty and staff raises.

The hearing is open to everyone. Students, faculty and staff will have the opportunity to ask questions about the fee increase.

The regents will consider the GUF increase at a later meeting and will have the final say in whether the increase will be implemented. If passed, the GUF increase would be effective Sept. 1, 1997.

GUF may increase by \$10

By WESLEY POSTON
THE BATTALION

The General Use Fee may increase \$10 per semester credit hour next fall to generate funds for faculty and staff salary increases, pending a Board of Regents decision next year.

Texas A&M President Ray Bowen will hold an informational forum Monday outlining the reasons for the increase and how the money will be used.

Carl Baggett, student body president and a senior accounting major, said he does not want the increase and is unsure as to when increases are going to cease.

"No one wants a fee increase," he said. "The Legislature is not giving us any money. Students are going to have to bear a larger part of the burden."

"I'm worried where this is leading. Where is this going to stop?" The proposed GUF increase

follows a Texas Legislature decision allowing state universities to raise the GUF to equal tuition. The previous cap on the GUF was \$12.

The Texas Legislature sets tuition for all state universities and is increasing tuition \$2 per semester credit hour until the year 2000, when it will then reach \$40.

Tuition at Texas A&M for the 1996-97 school year is \$32 per credit hour and the GUF is \$24 per hour. The 1997-98 academic year tuition will be \$34 per hour and the proposed GUF increase would raise that fee to \$34 as well.

Chris Reed, speaker of the Student Senate and a senior finance major, said the Legisla-

ture has shifted an enormous burden to students.

"The Legislature has decided to fund priorities other than education," he said. "The administration's hands are tied."

Dr. Bill Kibler, assistant vice president for student affairs, said there were two competing philosophies in these decisions.

On one side, there are those who feel everyone should contribute to education because it benefits society, he said. The other side, he said, insists education should be paid for by education's consumers — the students.

"The trend for the past 20 years has been toward consumer-funded education," Kibler said.

HISTORY OF GUF INCREASE

	PREVIOUS		PROPOSED
'94	\$12	'97	\$34
'95	20	'98	36
'96	24	'99	38
		'00	40

Officials estimate that if accepted, the proposed increase will generate \$11 million for faculty and staff pay increases.

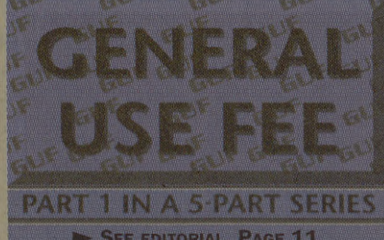
Baggett said the salary increases are necessary to ensure the quality of education at A&M now and in the future.

"It's difficult, but it's necessary," he said. "If the faculty doesn't get pay raises, we're going to see a drain on our faculty."

Bowen said A&M has fallen behind on raises and he is told that faculty are unhappy.

"This will not solve our problem, but it is a step in the right direction," Bowen said.

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Battle of the Bands

Internet letter prompts rivalry MOB member asks Longhorns to vote against A&M

By CARLA RENE MARSH
THE BATTALION

The Texas Aggie Band may be given a run for its money in ESPN's Battle of the Bands if students and faculty at the University of Texas respond to a plea by a supporter of the Rice University Marching Owl Band (MOB).

Bev Blackwood, systems analyst for Rice University, posted a letter on the Internet to encourage fans of the University of Texas to vote against the Aggie Band in its competition today against Stanford University.

Blackwood, a former Rice MOB member, wrote: "Since Rice's MOB has always been a long-time friend of the UT Longhorn Band and both schools HATE the Aggies, could we get you to vote against the Aggies? ... Texas A&M has us completely outgunned in ESPN's Battle of the Bands, and not only that, they've really mobilized their voting forces, with more votes cast for them than any other match-up had

for BOTH schools."

The Aggie Band defeated the Dartmouth University Marching Band in the preliminary round by receiving 74.4 percent of the 13,897 votes cast. No other preliminary competitor came close to that many votes.

Blackwood said she solicited the help of UT fans because A&M's large student population gives the band an advantage.

"It is all about numbers," Blackwood said. "One only has to go back and look at the ESPN voting numbers to see [A&M has] roughly a 9,000 [member] voting pool."

"If you do the math, we (MOB) have to have help if we are going to have any chance of success at all."

Voting in the quarterfinal competition against Stanford University will continue until noon today.

Mike Hays, combined band commander and a senior speech communications major, said the letter shows poor sportsmanship.

"They have to stoop that low to write a letter," Hays said. "There's such

an overwhelming support at A&M. If we make it past this level (quarterfinals), I think we'll do all right."

Joel Neuenschwander, B Company commander and a senior finance major, said the letter goes too far.

"Normally, people would encourage others to vote for and not against," he said.

The single-elimination, virtual reality Battle of the Bands competition will continue until Nov. 26.

The MOB won its quarterfinal competition against the University of Wisconsin and will compete against Princeton University in the semifinals.

If the Aggie Band defeats Stanford in the quarterfinal round, the Aggie Band will take on Grambling State University in the semifinals.

If A&M defeats Stanford and Grambling State, and if Rice defeats Princeton, the Aggie Band will face the Owl Band in the finals.

See LETTER, Page 12

Planes collide killing 13 people

QUINCY, Ill. (AP) — A commuter plane coming in for a landing collided at a runway intersection Tuesday with a small private plane that was trying to take off, igniting a fireball that killed all 13 people aboard both aircraft.

The planes collided on runways that "intersect, actually cross," said David Smith, manager of Baldwin Municipal Airport.

The airport, which serves smaller planes, does not have a control tower.

The incoming plane was a United Express flight with nine passengers and two crew members that

had originated in Chicago and made a stop in Burlington, Iowa, before heading on to Quincy.

The private plane, with two people aboard, was from the St. Louis area, but it was not immediately known where it was headed.

Mike Coultas, a private pilot, was arriving at the airport when the crash occurred.

"I kept thinking to myself I can't believe this aircraft on Runway 4 does not see the other aircraft," which was landing, Coultas told CNN.

"Just about the time I got to the fence to park my car, the two aircraft impacted at the intersections

of the two runways and then exploded into a ball of flames," Coultas added.

Thick black smoke could be seen from 10 miles away, said firefighter Darren Smith.

"The only thing that resembled an aircraft was the United Airlines tail section," Smith said. "It was still intact."

"I never did make out the other plane," said David Douglas, another firefighter.

Coroner Chris Boyer said the bodies would remain in the planes overnight because of the difficulty of working in the dark.



Dave House, THE BATTALION

Balancing Act

Natalie Hawes, a sophomore mechanical engineering major, rides her unicycle to her classes from Underwood Hall. She's been riding since May.

THE BATTALION TODAY

Power Pop

Austin-based band Fastball looks for a rockin' crowd to show Vertigo tonight. Aggiefife, Page 3

Young Blood

With the loss of five seniors, the Lady Aggies are looking to its corps of freshmen to produce. Sports, Page 5

Kickback

Goodwin: Celebrities die slow deaths, thanks to devoted entrepreneurs. Opinion, Page 11

Women continue to play pivotal role in building Bonfire

By ERICA ROY
THE BATTALION

The roles of women in the building of Aggie Bonfire have evolved from dropping off lunches at cut site in 1979 to wiring logs on the fourth stack in 1996.

Micki Helm, a pinkpot with Women's Bonfire Committee and a junior elementary education major, said women now play a more important role in building Bonfire than in years past.

"Now, we've become a pivotal role in the building of Bonfire," Helm said.

The Bonfire Reload Crew began in the early '80s and is comprised of 150 women who serve cookies, punch and hot chocolate at stack. Donations from the Aggie Moms Club provide funding for the Crew.

Sarah Sullen, a Mosher Hall co-chair and sophomore history major, said she is the cut and stack pot for Mosher, which requires her to be present at all Aston Hall cut and stack shifts.

Sullen said women make a big donation to the building of Bonfire.

"A girl can contribute as much as a guy can if she's willing to work hard," Sullen said.

Women have the opportunity to participate in cut and stack through their residence hall or with Off-Campus Aggies.

The WBC provides lunches and water

for the students at cut site. They also provide water at stack and make sure the redpots are fed while working. Selling soft drinks at the Coke shack at stack site is another WBC responsibility.

James LaMarr, a junior redpot and a construction science major, said every person building Bonfire makes a contribution. He said he thinks the women are comfortable helping out.

"I see a lot of women that come out regularly and they seem to be having a good time," LaMarr said. "They wouldn't keep coming out if they didn't (have a good time)."

Erin Hopkins, BRC director and a senior theater arts major, said she works at stack because she enjoys being there and watching students build Bonfire.

Sullen said working on Bonfire results in a feeling of satisfaction which, along with friends, encouraged her to continue helping out this year.

All three women said the treatment of women at cut and stack has changed over the past few years.

Hopkins said the treatment from men at Bonfire has improved compared to when she first started working.

"Over the five years I've been here, it's evolved tremendously," Hopkins said. "Women feel more comfortable going out there now."

Helm said the relations between men and women building Bonfire are positive. The men want the women to come out to cut and stack, she said.

"Guys seem to appreciate us, and we love being out there," Helm said.

Sullen said women working on Bonfire are respected.

"I think that if you come out there to work, guys respect you," Sullen said. "They're going to admire you for what you're doing regardless if you're a boy or a girl."

Hopkins said the treatment of women can vary depending on what outfit or residence hall they are with.

Sullen said Mosher Hall is fortunate to work with Aston Hall because crew chiefs and residents are supportive of Mosher residents who come to cut and stack with them.

Helm said when women do participate in Bonfire, they are expected to contribute as much as the men.

"Most of the dorms (male residence halls) expect as much out of you as ... any guy out there," she said.

Hopkins said Bonfire Adviser Kevin Jackson has worked to improve the way women are treated at Bonfire.

"Kevin Jackson has done a tremendous job of cleaning it (Bonfire) up, and making it better," she said.



Rony Angkriwan, THE BATTALION

Jennifer Minor, a freshman biology major, wires logs at Bonfire on Monday night. Women can participate in cut and stack through their residence hall or with Off-Campus Aggies.