

THE BATTALION

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The Batt Online: <http://bat-web.tamu.edu>

Demolition plans anger Burger Boy owner

BY ERICA ROY
THE BATTALION

Demolition of the 301 Patricia street shopping center in Northgate will force Burger Boy, the only remaining business there, to relocate in late spring or early summer of 1997.

George Sopsakis, Burger Boy's owner, said he must relocate to a space in the Northgate area that is comparable in rent and size to his current location.

Sopsakis said the proposed sites the city of College Station has offered do not accommodate his restaurant's needs.

"The problem being to find a location is very hard," Sopsakis said.

said. "To go ahead and go to a new space and have to pay the

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Todd McDaniel
Northgate project coordinator

same pool of customers that you had before ... it's very hard. When you are a small business and you have a stability, you don't want to upset that stability."

Alternate locations were proposed, which Sopsakis refused. He was unhappy with the location and size of a building near University Tower and the increased rent of the Baskin Robbins' property on University Drive.

In a letter to Sopsakis from the city, George Noe, city manager, said the restrictions Sopsakis placed on the acceptable location made "it almost impossible for us (the city) to be successful in accomplishing a relocation of Burger Boy."

The letter stated that Sopsakis' current rental rate is below the market rate and there is not an available commercial space in the Northgate area.

Todd McDaniel, Northgate project coordinator, said despite obstacles in the relocation search, the city is still trying to find an acceptable space for Burger Boy.

"We're going to make every effort to assist them in relocation," McDaniel said. "That's all we can do."

Sopsakis put in a proposal for the former Kinko's and Chicken Basket building at 201 College Main, but the bid was not competitive.

Texadelphia Sandwiches and

Sports Incorporated, a sandwich shop, was the highest bidder for the building. The City Council will vote Thursday night to approve the contract with Texadelphia.

Sopsakis said the decision to sell the building to Texadelphia is an injustice to him as a small-business owner and a College Station citizen.

"As a taxpayer and a business owner here, I don't think it's appropriate for the city to come and provide Texadelphia, a restaurant ... out of another town, a viable position for us to be in," he said.

"To take the only available space right now ... and give it to somebody from out of town and for us to become their parking lot, I

consider that very inappropriate."

Noe's letter to Sopsakis stated that by law, the city was obligated to negotiate with the best economic proposal for the sale of the building.

McDaniel said a contract was negotiated with Texadelphia because it offered the highest bid.

"We want to relocate Burger Boy, but at the same time we need to do what's best for the city at large," McDaniel said.

He said Texadelphia and Burger Boy had an equal opportunity to bid on the property.

"It's not an issue if we like Burger Boy more than Texadelphia," McDaniel said.

See **BURGER BOY**, Page 6

Polls open for run-off election

BY COURTNEY WALKER
THE BATTALION

Brazos Valley voters will return to the polls today to decide whether Republicans Gene Fontenot or Kevin Brady will fill the District 8 U.S. House of Representative seat left vacant by Rep. Jack Fields' retirement.

A special election in January will determine who will represent Texas A&M in the 75th session of the Texas Legislature.

Brady and Fontenot defeated their Democratic opponents in the Nov. 5 general election.

Voters in District 8, which includes north Harris, Montgomery, Austin, Brazos, Waller and Washington counties, will see the candidates' names on the ballot for the fourth time this year.

Brady defeated Fontenot in the

State Senator Jim Turner was elected to the 2nd U.S. Congressional District on Nov. 5. His position as District 5 senator will be left vacant when he assumes his new office on Jan. 7. The District 14 representative seat was vacated by Rep. Steve Ogden when he announced his candidacy for Turner's position.

Turner refuses to resign his Texas Senate seat until he assumes his new Congress seat Jan. 7.

If Turner had turned in his resignation when he was elected to Congress in November, the special election to fill his seat would have been held today with the run-off election.

But under state law, the governor cannot call a special election until 21 days after Turner has given his letter of resignation or is sworn in to his new office.

The Legislative session begins Jan. 14, which means the Brazos Valley and Texas A&M will be without representation in the Senate for at least two weeks.

State Rep. Steve Ogden, who announced his candidacy for the Texas Senate seat, said this is not an ideal situation, but it should not be a disaster.

"It makes the job a lot harder for whomever wins the election because they won't have as much time to prepare, but the district will survive," he said.

Ogden is currently unopposed for Turner's seat.

Ogden resigned his seat in the Texas House of Representatives, giving Gov. George Bush the option to schedule the State Senate and House elections simultaneously.

Richard Smith, a local businessman and former member of the House Appropriations Committee, and Bill Roman, a local retiree, are the current candidates for Ogden's seat in the State House, District 14.

Ogden told constituents at the McLennan County Republican headquarters that it would have been unfair to leave the 14th House district without representation for the beginning of the legislative session by delaying the resignation of his seat.

"It makes the job a lot harder for whomever wins the election because they won't have as much time to prepare, but the district will survive."

Steve Ogden
State representative



Bear Hug

John Warren, a Bonham student, carries a bear from the Make A Smile Happen (MASH) fund-raiser sponsored by local radio stations. The fund-raiser, which collected food and money for needy children, ran for 100 hours, ending Monday morning at 10 a.m.

Jennifer Fredrickson, THE BATTALION

UPD encourages holiday safety measures

Students can take steps to prevent crime during semester break

BY BRANDON HAUSENFLOCK
THE BATTALION

As the semester break inches closer, law enforcement officials advise vacationers to take preventative steps while preparing for the holiday.

Sgt. Betty Lemay, a crime prevention specialist at the University Police Department, said most crimes can be prevented.

"(Historically,) more crimes are committed this semester (fall) than any other," Lemay said. "[Students] should take their valuables with them and keep them in the trunk where they can't be seen."

Book theft, Lemay said, is a significant problem on campus during the final exam period.

"While everyone is studying in the library, we get hit a lot for book theft," she said.

Lemay said students should always keep their belongings with them while studying at the library.

Lt. Bert Kretschmar, UPD crime prevention unit supervisor, said vacationers need to remain aware of their surroundings.

"Because of the hustle and bustle of the season, people are very caught up in the holiday spirit and they let their guards

down," Kretschmar said. "They forget about their personal safety, so they need to stay alert and be aware of what's going on around them."

Kretschmar said citizens are encouraged to visit UPD's crime prevention web site at <http://www.tamu.edu/upd> for more information regarding holiday safety.

"We covered the whole gamut on holiday safety at the web site," he said.

Residents who will be away for the holidays can call the College Station Police Department and register their homes with the "Dark House" pro-

gram. The program provides a holiday watch by the CSPD upon resident request.

Residents must give information such as what cars might be parked at the house, who has a key, and a phone number where the resident can be contacted during the break. CSPD can be reached at 764-3600.

Walter Sayers, a senior officer in the CSPD crime prevention unit, said residents should take a few preventative measures to protect their homes from burglaries.

See **SAFETY**, Page 6

THE BATTALION TODAY

Study Spells

Students take to using charms and rituals to bring themselves luck on finals.

Aggielife, Page 3

Still Rising

Coach Laurie Corbelli and the A&M Volleyball program made great strides in 1996.

Sports, Page 7

Merry Finals

Jackson: Before hitting the egg nog, students will be hitting the books.

Opinion, Page 11

A Living Piece of History

Wiatt's unique past inspires present

BY ANN MARIE HAUSER
THE BATTALION

Bob Wiatt wanted a more challenging career than his degrees in business or law could offer. The Federal Bureau of Investigation provided that — and more.

Wiatt, director of the Texas A&M University Police Department, now leads a serene life in a college town, but the path that brought him here is anything but commonplace.

As an FBI agent, Wiatt played an integral part in numerous high-profile investigations, achieving the challenging career he desired.

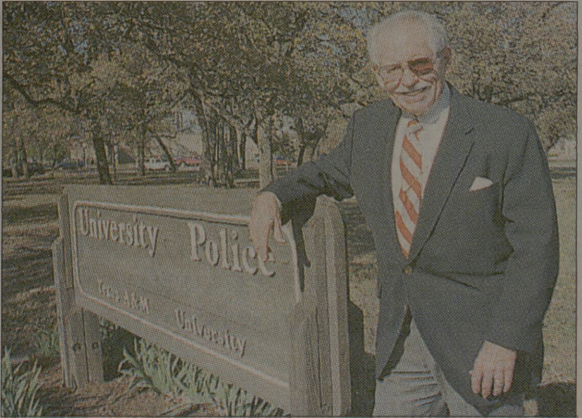
"I thought I was going to be a humdrum lawyer," he said.

Wiatt became an FBI agent after graduating from the University of Cincinnati and Chase Law School and serving two years in the U.S. Navy during World War II.

One of his first posts was in New York City, where he was assigned to espionage and Communist Party cases, including the case of famous Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, who were falsely accused of spying for the Communists.

On assignment in San Juan, Puerto Rico, Wiatt and other agents were involved in a six-hour gun battle after trying to round up terrorists of the Nationalist Party of Puerto Rico.

The Party had attempted to assassinate President Truman in 1950.



Rachel Redington, THE BATTALION

Bob Wiatt, University Police Department director, worked for the FBI after attending law school and serving two years in the U.S. Navy.

During the disorder of the 1960s, work found Wiatt active in numerous civil rights cases and the Kennedy assassination case.

He said he was considered the most "despicable and hated agent" by the Ku Klux Klan because he would quell potential members' desire to join by warning them that they were being watched.

See **WIATT**, Page 12

BookSwap provides Online marketplace

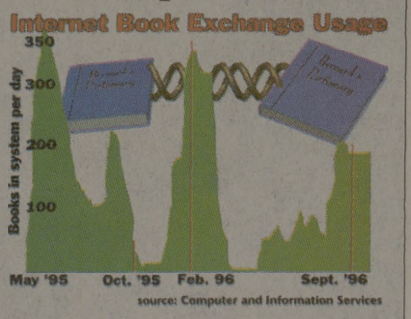
BY JOANNE WHITTEMORE
THE BATTALION

Buying books for the spring semester will be one of the first things students at Texas A&M do upon returning from the Christmas break, and for those worried about paying high prices, Student Government offers an Internet option.

Student Government, with the assistance of Computing Information Services (CIS), has a BookSwap program on the Internet that allows students to contact others who are interested in buying or selling textbooks.

Chris Cochran, vice president of communications for Student Government and a senior industrial engineering major, said BookSwap is a money-saving alternative.

"I think it's an opportunity for students to save money," he said. "I know with all the fee increases, a lot of students are on a tight budget. If this saves them a dollar here, or a



source: Computer and Information Services

dollar there, every little bit counts."

BookSwap takes out the "middle man" normally involved in textbooks sales, which eliminates the costs incurred by their attempt to make a profit.

Keith Marrocco, one of the original programmers of BookSwap and an Internet analyst with CIS, said BookSwap allows students to enter information into a database, which other students may view.

See **BOOKSWAP**, Page 6