

Resident Computer Consultant program benefits student life

At Texas A&M today, the only organization to think of as being more efficient and always looking to deal with problems well before anything bad happens is PTTS. A new program, however, specifically designed to help students, is stepping forward to improve the quality of life here on campus. This program is the Resident Computer Consultant (RCC) program.

More often than not, the University waits until a problem crashes across the public eye before doing something about it. Ross street has caved in, so the Physical Plant just routes traffic around it until it gets around to putting it into the budget. There is no parking, so we spend several years building a new garage and continue preaching that there is more than enough parking on campus.

But, for once in the history of this fair university, a university organization has seen a problem in its childhood and is taking steps to squash it before it gets out of hand.

Since the Computer Information Service (the CIS we all know and love) has been making a big push to "wire" every hall on campus with ethernet access, a need has arisen for informed, knowledgeable staff members in every hall.

In a stroke of intelligence unrivaled since the last time something intelligent



CHRIS HUFFINES
columnist

happened, the RCC program was born. Doug Keegan, RCC for Clements Hall, said, "[RCC's] provide easily accessible face-to-face support for residents with computer problems or questions." Keegan was also quick to point out that the entire program was currently being funded without a fee increase.

And it is about time. It has always been tragic, but true, that the University has made a point of not fixing a problem until it was too big to ignore — or some alumnus donates a lot of money.

This is not to say that I'm complaining about this system. After all, I like cruising Fish Lot late at night, looking for the white whale of a parking spot. It's relaxing, after a few hours. And I personally like walking down the damaged part of Ross street. It's like playing with death.

Who knows, maybe a gaping chasm to the center of the earth and a doubtless warm reception will open up below me.

And by putting problems off until they are larger, more expensive and can be foisted off on the next few generations' pocketbooks, I can practice to be a United States congressman.

The University cannot go back in time and fix problems that are enormous today, but it can look at itself and take preventive action before things get out of hand.

It would take intelligence and thinking on the part of the University to do so, but it is not like students do not expect this to be the outcome anyway.

Chris Huffines is a sophomore speech communications major.

Taking baby steps

A&M needs a childhood development center

Texas A&M is finally trying to meet one of the growing needs of a changing population by building a day care for its students and employees.



ANNA FOSTER
columnist

Although this project is long overdue, another method of integrating the children of the community into the campus that should be given consideration is an early childhood development center.

Early childhood development centers are elementary and preschool classrooms that allow researchers to observe children's educational and social development in a learning environment.

Ordinarily, observers have to invade a teacher's established class a few days or weeks at a time to watch how students learn. By doing so, the researchers introduce artificiality and bias into the observations because the students and teachers know they are being observed.

Any group being observed in this way will change their behavior to what they think the observer wants to see.

Any graduate of a public school has experienced this phenomena during teachers' appraisal time. Good behavior while the ap-

praiser is in the room is rewarded, and bad behavior is punished. The classroom the visitor sees is not necessarily the everyday environment the students experience.

This effect is eliminated in a childhood development center. The Early Childhood Development Center on the campus of Texas A&M University at Corpus Christi is an elementary school in the Corpus Christi Independent School District on the university campus.

One hundred and ten children, between the ages of three and 10, attend the school. The center is a part of the department of education at Texas A&M at Corpus Christi.

Undergraduate and graduate students use the facility to observe children while they are learning and playing. Student teachers also work in the classroom setting and interact with students without ever leaving the college campus.

The students also benefit from this arrangement. The teaching methods are the newest the academia has to offer. The curriculum writers have creative leeway to try innovative subjects.

The facility is staffed with fresh and eager people, not teaching veterans burned out with years of dealing with educational bureaucracy.

The center's main focus is directed toward the children's overall development. Physical, emotional and social development receive as much attention as students' intel-

lectual development.

According to the homepage for the center at Texas A&M at Corpus Christi, by the time a child is nine, he or she has acquired most of the intelligence that is acquired in a lifetime.

A child's ability to succeed in middle and high school is determined heavily by how well they do with basic skills learned in the elementary grades.

Early development centers are an asset to both education and psychology students who must work with children as part of a requirement for class have ample opportunity to participate in the center's programs.

Psychology students can use the opportunities provided by the center to observe children's social development in a natural environment.

The large number of students in both areas of study also ensures that classrooms will always have plenty of staff on hand who are ready to work with the children.

A&M should consider building an early childhood development center on campus to complement the day care center.

Facilities similar to the one at Corpus Christi can be found on campuses across Texas and throughout the nation. The best university in the state should have one also.

Anna Foster is a junior journalism major.



MAIL CALL

Forget profanity, respect the work

I take exception with the Battalion's commentary on profanity. Bonfire articles, specifically pots.

First of all, how can anyone classify a word as "obscene?" I want, there are obscene things in the world, but obscene words? Not because I think sex with farm animals is obscene, that doesn't include me from talking about it.

The federal government ran into this dilemma when they tried to make the words "breast" and "abortion" illegal on the internet. All of a sudden, no one could discuss breast cancer on the internet without committing a crime. This is just silly.

Second, assuming one can classify words as obscene, which ones should they be? What makes "f---" any different than "feces?" "P---" is "dick" any different than "penis?" How is "p---y" any different than "vagina?"

All of these pairs of words refer to the same things. I use all of these words in everyday conversations and do not understand why they can be called "obscene" or "profane." Some people might throw around phrases like "throat interest" or "community standards." I, for one, don't care what the community "thinks." Immunities can not think.

Only individuals can think. Community thinking is just a convenient name for following the herd. These same people could criticize Bonfire participants for playing "following the leader." At worst, one might say that they are impolite, but I do not consider being impolite illegal or immoral.

Next, if we were to assume that certain words, perhaps selected randomly, were to be considered obscene, who is to say no one can use them? We do have freedom of speech and freedom of the press in this country, or have we forgotten?

This country would be much different if someone had decided at the ideas of Martin Luther King, Jr. or Susan B. Anthony were immoral. Granted, we do

not have a cause as global as either of these people, but we still have the right to say what we want.

People have no right to impose their own morality on anyone else, and we (the Bonfire people) do not appreciate your attempt to do so. Just because we do not agree with your ideas about what is acceptable does not mean you have the right to tell us what we can or cannot say.

Looking at the issue from a totally different perspective, anybody who has taken sociology (and paid attention) can tell you that different social groups communicate using different vocabularies and speech patterns in order to promote unity.

People just naturally feel comfortable around those who talk and act alike. Note, that according to Kevin Jackson, this is one of the three stated goals of Bonfire: safety, spirit and unity.

Finally, almost every student at Texas A&M goes to Bonfire when it burns in November, as do most of the staff and faculty. Average attendance at Bonfire is around 60,000 people.

Maybe 10 percent of the people will actually help build it. Many of us give up every weekend from first cut until Bonfire burns. Many of us give up several afternoons during the week at unloads and swamps. If you do not appreciate our language, at least appreciate the work we do.

I do not see how the other 90 percent have any right to complain. While this type of language may not have been associated with Bonfire in 1909, I'll bet it was there. So-called "foul language" goes with Bonfire like dirt: it just kinda happens.

We choose to display our language, like our dirt, because we are proud to build the largest cooperative effort at this University. If you want to help, please come out. If you do not, please do not whine about how we do our job.

Kevin Horn
Class of '96

ated with an activity that has not succumbed to the pressures of society to conform. I am not a sensitive man, I do not have a feminine side. I did not grow up hanging out at the mall. I grew up working hard on a ranch.

I am secure enough in myself not to run away crying when someone calls me a bad name. I reserve the right to be associated with an activity that is overridden with testosterone.

On campus, NOW can spread the message in the MSC to whomever wants to come and listen. You can argue that it is in a distinct area and does not require the participation of anyone not interested, or who would be offended by the content.

When was the last time that the average student not associated with Bonfire ever made it out to the polo fields? How is this different from other activities considered by many to be offensive, such as homosexual issues, or that Tom Short guy everyone has to listen to?

As an open-minded person, I must recognize that other organizations have legitimate reasons for doing what they do. Why does this only work one way? The fact remains that this is a public university, which means all viewpoints should be in the open. We have the right to act as we consider appropriate.

John Wayne is rolling in his grave.

Kyle Wundt
Class of '99

fannies that would never be said in public."

Aggies, is this image of Bonfire representative of a world-class university dedicated to intelligence, maturity and learning? A mature, intelligent student of knowledge would understand that traditions are not always positive.

After all, is the tradition of racism that has engulfed this country for more than 200 years positive, just because it is a tradition? I hope not.

So Aggies, stop, look and try to live up to your continuous efforts to make this a world-class university.

Jayson Pope
Class of '99

Bonfire discussion needs reevaluation

I don't know about the rest of the Ags out there, but I am getting tired of all the crap being written about Bonfire pots and their vulgarity.

Bonfire, like other traditions at Texas A&M, is here to unite Aggies, not pull us apart. Everyone is getting so caught up with what is offensive and politically correct that they are losing sight of the real purpose of Bonfire.

The pot I wore last year displayed Christian symbols. Those symbols can be just as offensive to non-Christians, but no one made a big stink about it. A pot is a personal expression, and it should be allowed to say whatever the wearer desires, be it a cross or a curse word.

Everyone needs to reevaluate the purpose of Bonfire. When we stop griping about vulgar pots, the behavior of those wearing them, stop labeling people as too sensitive and stop harassing newspaper columnists, then we can truly build a great monument.

Terry Lea
Class of '98

Coverage shows abuse of position

I would like to pose a few questions for people to think about amidst all of the commotion over Bonfire pots.

If the Battalion is such a highly acclaimed college newspaper, why not report on meaningful state and national events instead of matters such as this? It seems as if the only reason why the pot issue was brought up was because the Battalion could come up with nothing better to write about. Which is a pretty pathetic reason.

If the Battalion likes to take a liberal stance on most issues, why

is it wasting paper (trees) on this issue? For those who have written these articles or at least agree with them, how many times have you been to/participated in cut or stack? My guess would be none. And yet you will still claim Bonfire as something you took part in when bragging about it to your t.u. friends and when you watch it burn. Why should it be any of your concern what people put on their pots and their clothes? After all, isn't this a free country?

It seems that the only people who think of what is on the pots as sexual harassment or assault (which are using these terms in an extremely far-fetched manner), never actually go out and help build Bonfire.

This is the fourth Bonfire I have taken part in, and not once have I ever heard somebody say that they find the pots offensive. Not even women, and not even during events such as father/son cut. Like usual, the Battalion has blown things way out of proportion and taken things (quotes included) way out of context.

And yet in the Tuesday editorial you state that you are trying to present the "truth", when in fact, as always, you are presenting the "selective truth". Selective in a way that you seem fit.

My last question is: why does the Battalion do articles such as these? Instead of attempting to upset as many people as possible and split up as many people as possible over some issue that should be of the least of society's concern, why not try to motivate people and bring them together to benefit society?

Use your position, don't abuse it. Just thought I would bring up a few thought-provoking questions.

Trip Franty
Class of '98

bashes Bonfire, and the students that build it, another log is taken away from stack.

And the accused is not given fair representation. The only Pro-Bonfire remarks that the Batt prints are the small amounts of space that occupy the Mail Call.

And even those remarks are side by side opinions of people who are anti-Bonfire. If these people are so disgusted by what we are doing out on the polo fields, then why do they still come? Or are they getting all their information from the Batt articles?

By the way the Batt paints the picture, Bonfire is nothing more than a throw back to Prehistoric times where men carried around big sticks, grunted obscene noises, and were amazed when they created a fire.

In reality, Bonfire isn't about "sexual phrases" and "obscene language". It's about student unity, bonding. It's when over 300 students can come together, as a single body, and work toward a single goal.

There are no ethnic or religious barriers. The only rule is: You must work. And perhaps that is what most frightens those that speak out against Bonfire. The idea of manual labor.

When all this is over, those that are so opposed to what is happening at Bonfire site will still be there when it burns, watching in awe with the rest of us.

Perhaps you shouldn't ask how the fire is built, but merely say "Thank you for this symbol of Aggie spirit." Otherwise, pick up and pot and come out to Cut, because like the saying says, "From the outside looking in, you can't understand it."

From the inside looking out, you can't explain it." Evidently, the Batt doesn't understand it.

See you when it burns!

Hunter Ekvall
Class of '99

Yellow journalism threatens tradition

In response to the articles about Bonfire:

I've been reading the articles in the Battalion about Bonfire for the past few days, and I've come to one conclusion. "Yellow journalism" has returned, and it's target is Bonfire.

The idea of "yellow journalism" came from the time when newspaper men would create news to sell more newspapers. That's exactly what the Batt is doing now. With its widely-biased articles against Bonfire, it is threatening one of the biggest symbols of Aggie spirit.

With each new article that

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