

HIGH	98°
LOW	75°
TOMORROW	
HIGH	95°
LOW	75°

# THE BATTALION

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY • COLLEGE STATION, TEXAS

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**Opinion:**  
Students become like robots when they study core curriculum, but do not soak up knowledge.

## PTTS proposes bus fee

By ROD MACHEN  
Asst. City Editor

A fee being proposed by the Department of Parking, Traffic and Transportation Services would enable Bus Operations to more effectively serve campus, PTTS Director Tom Williams said.

Williams said he will propose the transportation fee this summer to fund a restructuring of Bus Operations. The proposed \$50 per semester fee would go into effect Fall 2000.

"We must have a long-term funding mechanism to get the system we need," Williams said. "The bus system is one of the most vital functions we have."

Currently, on-campus bus operation's portion of the student service fee is approximately \$20.

"For another \$30 we could make a full service system," Williams said. "Then the 100,000 student services gives us could be used for whatever they wanted."

In the meantime, Bus Operations runs a budget of \$2.6 million. This consists

of money from the student service fee, bus charters, subsidies from PTTS and bus pass sales.



"Bus pass sales have slowly but surely declined," Gary Jackson, manager of Bus Operations said. "They're not going to hack it."

The cost of a bus pass has increased \$10 in the last 16 years to \$110.

Jackson said, to break even, a bus pass would have to cost \$185. The new system

would eliminate the bus pass.

The system would allow students unlimited access both on and off campus.

It also would expand the service area by going to apartments that are currently unserved, and by possibly running on weekends.

The new system also would have routes running by shopping centers, allowing on-campus residents to avoid using their cars.

Speaker of the Student Senate Amy Magee said the Senate previously had been presented with another bus-funding measure.

"The universal fee was something we questioned," Magee said. "It was not that we didn't see a need. We are more than happy to work with Bus Ops to help improve service."

Jackson said improved service would require an increase in funding for Bus Operations, which will soon start cannibalizing unrepairable buses for spare parts.

"Our buses are so old that parts aren't available anymore," Jackson said. "If we don't do something soon, these buses are going to die."

## Ross Street closed for future construction

By ROD MACHEN  
Asst. City Editor

Ross Street, which has been closed over a year, will be turned into a pedestrian mall between Ireland and Spence streets, Tom Williams, director of the Department of Parking, Traffic and Transportation Services, said.

The change will coincide with other building projects planned for the area.

A new Chemical Engineering building is planned for the corner of Bizzell and Ross streets, next to Wisenbaker Engineering Research Center.

In order to run utilities to the new building, Ross St. will have to be torn up.

Williams said this will be a perfect time to make the

changes to Ross St.

After the Ross St. project is completed, Williams said PTTS also is considering reversing the directions of Ireland and Asbury streets, which run by the Northside Parking Garage, to aid the flow of traffic.

PTTS is going to close Lubbock St. to automobile traffic, creating another pedestrian mall in front of the Commons.

During peak times, such as residence hall move-in, the street will be temporarily reopened.

Other changes under consideration for the southside area include replacing the greenhouses with a park and making Mosher Lane and the Commons loading dock into another primary entrance, Williams said.

## All aboard



JAKE SCHRICKLING/THE BATTALION

Eric Cook, a member of the Brazos Valley Modular Railroad Society and an eighth grader at College Station Junior High, fixes his train at the society's exhibition set up at the mall in College Station Sunday.

## NEWS BRIEFS

### Closure of Munson Avenue at Dominik Drive starts today

Full closure of College Station's Munson Avenue at Dominik Drive will begin today at 7:30 a.m. The closure will prohibit entry and exit onto and from Munson Avenue just north of the Dominik Drive intersection.

On May 28, College Station City Council voted to test a total closure of Munson Avenue north of the Dominik Drive intersection. The total closure is a trial measure to determine the impact on traffic in this area.

### Victim of attempted sexual assault escapes uninjured

College Station Police officers responded to an attempted sexual assault Sunday at 12:30 a.m. in the 900 block of Colgate Drive.

The initial investigation revealed that the victim was at a party at another location when a suspect attempted to sexually assault her. The victim was able to fend off the attacker and escape uninjured.

The alleged attacker is described as a white male, about 6 feet tall and 170 pounds with brown hair.

### University Physical Plant accepts applications for apprenticeships

The Texas A&M University Physical Plant is accepting applications through June 30 for its apprenticeship programs. The programs provide training in air-conditioning and refrigeration, carpentry, electronics, plumbing, electrical, sheet-metal or power plant-related trades.

The program, which began in 1974, is one of the Physical Plant's principal methods of attracting new employees and training them. Participants receive three to four years of on-the-job training and are offered the same benefits extended to full-time university employees.

Interested individuals are encouraged to contact a Physical Plant training branch representative.

## Hate crime leaves small town fearful more may follow

JASPER (AP) — R.C. Horn still remembers eating turnip greens and bread with little Raymond Durdin. He remembers all those muggy summer afternoons dunking each other in the swimming hole — the African-American sharecropper's son and the white farmer's boy.

They were best friends, and skin color made no difference to them. Neither understood why Horn had to sit in the honky when they went to the movies, or why Horn could not join Durdin at the drug store counter for a Coke.

Horn is 66 now, a graying man with a soft voice, and he's become the mayor of this little town of 8,000 people.

It's a town where African-Americans and whites get along just fine nowadays, as Horn and Durdin did those many years ago. It's a town that has banished overt racism of their childhoods.

Orso Horn believed until last Sunday, when he heard the news: The body of James Byrd Jr., an African-American man known for singing as he walked along the streets, was found mangled and decapitated out on Huff Creek Road. Three whites in a pickup truck were ac-

cusced. Byrd's funeral was Saturday.

"I didn't know we had people like this in Jasper," said Horn, the first African-American mayor of the town, which is 55 percent white. But the three young men did live in Jasper — two were raised here.

Horn knew that racism lingered in the piney woods of East Texas. He had seen it in glances not met, in hellos not returned. But sickening violence?

An African-American man chained by the ankles to a pickup truck and dragged like a tin can in a ghastly game of crack the whip?

What does a mayor tell his town about this?

Even Kerry Cartright, a 32-year-old African-American man who lives in the apartment next door to the suspects — John William (Bill) King, Lawrence Russell Brewer and Shawn Allen Berry — could never have imagined anything like this.

"I'm not used to people hating like that," he said. "If they felt that way, it could easily have been me."

He knew his neighbors didn't much like him. They would never smile, or even look directly at him, when they

passed on the stairs. He just thought they were folks "who didn't like black people," Cartwright said. "When you've been taught you're superior, how else are you supposed to act? I knew not to speak to them. It's a small East Texas town, you know how that is."

He didn't know King and Brewer were ex-cons who claimed to be members of the Aryan Brotherhood, or that the tattoos on King's arms were symbols of white supremacy.

Byrd's murder has ripped the scab off old wounds. Fear is spreading that the three suspects now charged with murder might have friends around town who will pick up where they left off.

"It scared my family more than anything because my wife is white," said Arlandus Chimney, an African-American insurance agent whose wife is pregnant with their second child. "My mother-in-law worried that like the old days, they'll hang you by a tree."

Alton Booker, a 20-year-old African-American college student home for the summer, says he won't go out after midnight.

"During the day I look at all of them

the same, but after 12 o'clock at night, there's not too many good things out there," Booker said. "Many innocent white folks are going to be looked at differently. It's not that we're prejudiced, but when something like this happens, you don't know who to trust. Black people are scared."

Horn's childhood friend, Durdin, is 70 now, still living on the family farm. The murder shocked Durdin, shocked him most of all because he believed, wanted to believe, those days were gone for good.

He remembers a time in the 1950s when a young African-American man accused of flirting with a white woman was severely beaten by police.

He remembers a Little League game in the 1960s, when an African-American family was "asked politely" to leave. He still feels bad that he didn't speak up about that.

Just five years ago, in the nearby town of Vidor, a white supremacist threatened the first African-American residents of a housing project.

But that was Vidor, not Jasper, where African-Americans and whites work to-

gether, share the same neighborhoods, linger over coffee in the cafes; Jasper, where Horn beat four white candidates in the mayor's race last year; Jasper, where the school superintendent and the president of the Chamber of Commerce are African-American.

"I really don't think that this is going to tear everything apart," Durdin said. "I think we got too many citizens black and white that can reach above that kind of thing."

What is a mayor to do? Hope that Durdin is right; assure his town, the world, and himself that what happened here last week says nothing about the people of Jasper.

"I know," Horn said, "that we will come together and console each other and continue to do what we need to do and look to the Lord to continue to lead us. I am doing my best to keep the city together and not let the hate spread."

Horn and Durdin don't see each other much anymore but say they are still good friends. The last time Horn came out to the Durdin farm, he was sent home with a bag of squash, tomatoes and peas.