

POKERFACE
New Matt Damon film
examines high-stakes
game of card shark.
GGIELIFE, PAGE 3



DECLAWED
• Aggies sweep University
of Houston Cougars in
home opener.
SPORTS, PAGE 7



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The Battalion

105 YEARS AT TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

Leaders examine racial violence

Recent Northgate incidents prompt committee meeting

BY JOE SCHUMACHER
The Battalion

With accusations of racial incidents in the Northgate area, the External Affairs committee of the Student Senate has decided to gather information on the issue. Last night a meeting was held on the Northgate incidents.

David Byrd, chair of the External Affairs Committee and graduate student in agricultural education, said the consensus of the participants at the meeting was that the incidents are a community problem, not just limited to the Northgate area.

"I feel the meeting was very successful. We have our work cut out for us. On one hand, the task is very intimidating just by its size. But on the other hand it is very inspiring to see so many rise to the occasion," said Byrd.

While most incidents described occurred in the Northgate area, other students mentioned racial incidents that occurred in other parts of the Bryan-College Station community.

Manuel Sundiman, a senior management major, said that the proprietors of a business in town told him that they preferred not to conduct business with international students.

Michael "Hoy" Haughey, president of the Residence Hall Association and a senior mechanical engineering major, said he hopes to increase the responsibility of student behavior in the B-CS community.

"This is not a minority problem," Haughey said. "There are many people who are involved."

"Their reasons stem from, 'This is wrong, something needs to be done about this,' to 'We are all Aggies and should not allow this to happen.'"

SEE NORTHGATE ON PAGE 6.

Foiled again



GREG MCREYNOLDS/THE BATTALION

Christian Clem (left), a freshman psychology major, and Arthur Parros (right), a senior history major, practice intermediate fencing for their KINE 199 held in the Reed Building.

Student death inspires Senate bill

Hotel chains offers discounted rates to fatigued student drivers

BY AMANDA STIRPE
The Battalion

Lupe Medina, Class of '98 and former Moses Hall Bonfire crew member, died April 23 when he fell asleep at the wheel driving to College Station from Huntsville late at night, joining the many young drivers 25 and under who make up 50 percent of fatigue-related driving accidents.

Rob Ferguson, sophomore, outside senator and friend of Medina, said he felt Medina's death could not go unnoticed, so he decided to propose and support a bill in Medina's honor.

The Lupe Medina Bill for Driving Safety is meant to discourage young adults from driving drowsy. "I decided to turn death into a positive item and make a difference," Ferguson said.

The bill would allow college students to show valid student ID and stay in rooms at participating Super 8 and Hampton Inn motels while driving late at night, further than

50 miles from their homes, on the weekends and at heavy travel times such as holidays and breaks. The rates and times would be determined by the individual motels.

Ferguson said 11 motels want to start the program if the bill is passed.

"The bill is going to make a difference and save lives across Texas."

— Rob Ferguson
Northside student senator

number of people who fall asleep behind the wheel.

Seventy-eight percent of these sleep-related victims are men.

"The bill is going to make a difference and save lives across Texas," Ferguson said.

The National Sleep Foundation (NSF) supports the bill and will use the Lupe Medina Bill as an example. The foundation has created a "Drive Alert ... Arrive Alive" campaign. The program promotes awareness of drowsy-driving dangers. The campaign is the first major program aimed to fight sleep-related car accidents.

"The National Sleep Foundation supports the principles put forth in the 'Lupe Medina Bill' and wishes you all success in moving this legislation towards implementation," a joint statement by the NSF to Ferguson and to the Student Senate said.

The bill, presented to the Student Senate Sept. 9, has been reviewed by the External Affairs committee and will be voted on Sept. 23.

Career fair makes move to Reed

• Companies recruit engineering majors at the third largest fair in the country.

BY MELISSA JORDAN
The Battalion

The Student Engineers' Council hosts its annual "Capitalizing on Engineering Opportunities" Career Fair to give Texas A&M students the opportunity to get a head start on the process of finding a job.

The fair begins today and will be held in Reed Arena with 189 companies and more than 700 representatives present, making this the largest fair the Student Engineers' Council has ever sponsored. The CEO Career Fair ranks third in the nation in size behind Purdue University and the University of Texas.

Between 3,500 and 4,000 students attended the fair last year, and a comparable turnout is expected this year.

Melissa Conley, president of the Student Engineers' Council and a senior civil engineering major, said holding the career fair in Reed Arena has allowed more companies to get involved and has helped the fair compete with other career fairs in the nation.

Danny Boyer, CEO Career Fair chair for the Student Engineers' Council and a senior mechanical engineering major, said the career fair is an opportunity for students to meet prospective employers.

"It's an excellent opportunity for students to get to know companies that will be returning to campus for interviews later in the semester," Boyer said.

Conley said attending the fair will benefit students who attend and can be the first step toward finding a job.

The CEO Career Fair will introduce freshmen to the job search process and allow sophomores and juniors to find out about internships and co-op opportunities. Seniors will be able to leave resumes with prospective employers and discover possible career opportunities.

A business social will be held on Wednesday evening that students may attend by invitation only.

Each company present at the career fair will have 10 tickets to give to students of their choosing.

Jackson: Accidents unusual for Bus Ops

BY AMANDA SMITH
The Battalion

Two accidents in the first two weeks of school is unusual for the Texas A&M Bus Operations unit, Manager Gary Jackson said, but it happened.

The first accident occurred the first week of school when a car attempted to turn right between the curb and a bus that was also turning right. No injuries occurred, and no tickets were given.

The second accident involved a collision between a bicyclist and bus. The bicyclist suffered no serious injuries.

Both bus drivers are still employed by Bus Operations.

Bus Operations, a division of the Department of Parking, Traffic and Transportation Services, said less than five accidents occur per every 100,000 miles driven.

The average bus travels 35,000 miles each year, with buses traveling a total of more than two million miles per year.

"The (Texas A&M) accident rate is lower than the national average (for similar bus operations)," Jackson said. "We have found that more than half of the accidents have occurred with drivers having

less than one year of experience."

Currently, more than 300 students drive for Bus Operations. Of those, 95 are new drivers who trained this summer.

Trevor Hull, a bus trainer and a senior history major, said students spend time learning in the classroom before they get behind the wheel.

"Each driver is training more than 40 hours," Hull said. "The driving does not include their classroom time."

Bus drivers are required to complete a 10-day, 40-hour training period and spend a minimum of 20 hours driving.

Drivers must pass a Department of Public Safety (DPS) examination to receive their commercial driver's license and then pass a separate test written by Bus Operations focusing on passenger transportation.

"Consideration is given to driving with smooth stops and evaluation driving with passengers," Jackson said.

Bus Operations updates motor vehicle reports on drivers annually, Jackson said.

To receive their commercial license, drivers cannot have a DUI charge against them.

SEE BUSES ON PAGE 6.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Senate accepting great applications

The Student Senate is taking applications to fill open seats. Vacancies include two College of Engineering, one Northside, one College of Agriculture and five Off-campus seats.

Applications are available at the Student Senate office in the Koldus Building and are due Friday, Sept. 12 at 5 p.m.

Contact the Student Senate at 53051 for more information.

Organizations host blood drives

Two blood drives are being held on the campus of Texas A&M.

Alpha Phi Omega service fraternity is sponsoring a blood drive in conjunction with the American Red Cross. The drive ends this Friday.

Five sites have been set up across campus to collect blood: Commons, Rudder Fountain, Biochemistry/Biophysics building, the Quadrangle and the archery building.

The Commons location will accept donations from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. All other sites will accept donations from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The University Health Science Center's College of Medicine is also hosting a blood drive that will be held tomorrow from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the pay lot located directly in front of the Reynolds/Medical Building.

All donors must weight at least 110 lbs. and be at least 17 years old.

Heritage month opens with Diez y Seis celebration

BY NONI SRIDHARA
The Battalion

The Hispanic Presidents' Council (HPC) and the Committee for the Awareness of Mexican-American Culture (CAMAC) is kicking off Hispanic Heritage Month this week with a variety of celebratory events.

In 1974, Congress proclaimed a National Hispanic Heritage Week to promote awareness about the Hispanic culture, and in 1989 Congress and President Reagan expanded it to a month-long celebration. Hispanic Heritage month runs from Sept. 15 through Oct. 15.

This year's celebration kicks off with a Diez Y Seis celebration at 10 a.m. at Rudder Fountain. Diez y Seis is the date Mexico gained independence from Spain. The celebration will include a festive display of booths where students can participate in activities from learning various Hispanic dances to playing Mexican-themed bingo.

D.J. Flores, conference director for CAMAC and a senior accounting major, said the month is meant to educate all students.

"We want everyone that passes by to stop and take a few minutes to visit some of the booths," Flores said. "This is not only for us to celebrate our heritage, but we also want other students to learn about our culture. This is especially important here because the Hispanic culture is such an important portion of Texas."

On Thursday, Sept. 17, Maria-



Christina Garcia, a history professor, will speak at a forum titled "What is a Latino". The forum is presented by Lambda Theta Phi fraternity at 7:30 p.m. in the MSC.

Fiesta Week ends Friday, but other events will take place throughout the month. The Caliente '98 Festival will be presented by the Hispanic Business Student Association (HBSA) at the Academic Plaza on Sept. 26 from noon to 6 p.m.

Chris Wallingsford, president of HBSA and a senior management information systems major, said the nine-year old festival expects a large turnout.

"This has been a long-standing tradition for HBSA, because the Caliente festival has been here since 1989. We will have the Aggie Wranglers, a youth Mariachi group and also a jalapeno-eating contest."

This is the first year that there will be a Mr. & Miss Hispanic Heritage Month pageant, which will be sponsored by Kappa Delta Chi Sorority.

SEE HISPANIC ON PAGE 6.

Bus rerouting plans rely on increased funding

BY AMANDA SMITH
The Battalion

Bus Operations at Texas A&M University is conceptualizing a plan that could transport a student living off campus to the Bush School, to the Wehner Building or to the Zachary Building without changing to an on-campus bus.

Kathie Mathis, associate director of the Department of Parking, Traffic and Transportation Services, said the new bus schedule, which combines on- and off-campus routes, could go into effect as early as Fall 1999.

"What we have now are off-campus buses and on-campus buses, and never the two shall meet," Mathis said. "It's a big clockwork process, and we want to double-use our buses. Our goal is to have a transportation system where nobody has to buy a bus pass."

Currently, students pay \$110 per semester to use off-campus buses.

SEE ROUTES ON PAGE 6.