



# The Battalion

105 YEARS AT TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

THURSDAY

February 18, 1999

Volume 105 • Issue 95 • 14 Pages

College Station, Texas



## aggielife

• Brazos Valley Museum's 'Backyard Monsters' gives visitors huge insight into the world of insects.

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## today's issue

Toons ..... 2  
Wellborn speed limit ..... 12

## Friday's issue

A&M should contribute funds toward the relocation of the railroad track near West Campus.

## sports

• A&M's men's basketball team loses to Baylor shooting 18 percent in first half while women fall as Kera Alexander leads in points with 22.

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# Child or Choice?

## Ribbon cutting marks opening ceremony of Planned Parenthood Clinic in B-CS

BY MEREDITH HIGHT  
The Battalion

Two-hundred people attended Planned Parenthood's open house and ribbon-cutting ceremony for its new Bryan clinic, which also drew about 100 protesters outside the clinic.

Susan Nenny, vice president of communications for Planned Parenthood of Houston and Southeast Texas, said the new clinic, which will offer abortion services, is an improvement over the previous clinic, which operated in Bryan for 24 years.

The new clinic has been open since December. "This offers a more dignified atmosphere for health care, and the addition of a resource center, that helps us to better educate the community," she said.

Clinic director Dyann Santos said the event was a big success.

"This exceeded all our expectations," she said. "We are really looking forward to providing this service for the community."

The Rev. Howard Moody, a Baptist minister at Judson Memorial Church in Greenwich Village in New York City, spoke about the right of a woman to choose abortion.

"The right to choose is God-given," he said. "Without choice, humans are robots."

Moody said one of the geniuses of the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision was that it recognized the continuum of the existence of the fetus.

"When do we say a fetus is a person?" he said. "With each stage of development there's more of a moral question."

"The deification of the fetus is a furious heresy," Moody said. "I'm preaching to the folks out there (protesters) now. The right to life is really a right to be born. Then our religion and traditions speak to that issue."

"Being born is never seen as anything but a gift, a gift of God," he said. "Rights begin with birth. Rights are not indisputable, even after birth. There is no freedom as fundamental as choosing the time to have one's children. There is no economic policy as demeaning as that of poor women having to have a child in the name of theology that declares the embryo has the constitutional rights of a human being."

Moody said he hopes there will be a time and place where every woman will have access to the knowledge and means of reproductive capacity.

"We need to hear from the religious community," he said. "Pontiffs, rabbis and teachers need to speak out."

SEE OPEN HOUSE ON PAGE 12.



PHOTO OF FETUS BY DR. RAINER JONES  
ALL OTHERS BY MIKE FUENTES/THE BATTALION



## Volunteer escorts provide support, offer counseling to clinic patients

BY MEREDITH HIGHT  
The Battalion

He straps on a blue vest and stands guard in the parking lot.

He is a volunteer escort, and his job is to provide support for clients who arrive at the Bryan Planned Parenthood Clinic, which will offer abortion services, while protesters are present.

He is a clinic escort because he believes in a woman's right to choose. He believes fetuses do have a moral standing, but they do not have the moral significance of humans. Fetuses, he said, and comatose humans are on the same plane as far as moral significance.

Gary Varner, an associate professor of philosophy at Texas A&M, volunteered his services to Planned Parenthood when he learned they

planned to expand to offer abortion services.

Varner said he anticipated that the community would not support the new service.

"I thought in this community, there would be a lot of protesters," he said. "It is important for pro-choice people to help out by being escorts. This is something I feel very strongly about."

Varner said there are issues he writes about in philosophy that he is unsure of, but he is certain of his pro-choice stance.

"I feel quite confident in my opinion about this," he said. "It's very important that the new clinic will soon begin providing abortions locally, because we have a real apartheid system in the country at present. Middle- and upper-income women who have cars and can eas-

ily afford to take off work could get to Austin or Houston for an abortion, but lower-income women can't. To me, it makes a lot more sense to provide abortions locally than to have women go through with unwanted pregnancies because they can't get to the service."

In Varner's two-hour escort training session, Planned Parenthood representatives described what escorting is like at clinics.

"Sometimes I feel a little awkward because there are no protesters," he said. "But given there will probably be more protesters in the future, it's good to have a show of support in the parking lot."

Varner said the escorts are necessary because clinic staff cannot be present outside to help women entering the clinic.

SEE ESCORT ON PAGE 2.

## Woman recounts tale of making pro-life or pro-choice decision

BY MEREDITH HIGHT  
The Battalion

She left the day he broke a beer bottle across her face, leaving her with 11 stitches.

That was two days after she confronted her husband about the bruises she discovered on the back of her oldest son Julian's legs.

Julian, 10, and Juan, 9, share the same father. It was Lance, 5, whose father she was married to for seven years and confronted one July night.

She broke the door down, demanding to know if her husband had "whipped him." He denied it.

This is the same man who told her he had married her because she "was just a n—r slave to him."

Ginger's outlook on life does not mirror the difficulties of her past. She smiles often and laughs when she tells stories about her boys.

Last March, Ginger had a miscarriage. Later that same month, she discovered she was pregnant.

The father, Francisco, wanted her to have an abortion. She did not know what to do. When she was three months pregnant,

she walked by the Brazos Valley Coalition for Life, across the street from her duplex, and met Lauren Donohue, executive director.

Donohue showed her pictures from a Life magazine insert illustrating pictures of a fetus at early stages of development.

She was fascinated by it. But she still did not know what she should do.

A friend of Ginger's, who recently had her third abortion, took her to Houston so she could have one. Somehow, they never ended up at the abortion clinic. Her friend took her to the airport to watch the planes and out to eat lunch.

When Ginger asked her friend where the clinic was, her friend said she could not find it.

Ginger thinks that was her friend's way of telling her that an abortion would not be right, knowing how it had hurt her (the friend).

"She has bad dreams," Ginger said. "She has black under her eyes. She's sad. When I look at her, I think I could have been in the same position."

SEE GINGER ON PAGE 2.

## Enrollment figures show overall rise

BY AMANDA SMITH  
The Battalion

Overall enrollment is higher this Spring than it was the same time last year, according to the Office of Admissions and Records figures.

This semester, 33,203 undergraduates are enrolled at A&M compared to 32,099 in Spring 1998. Freshmen account for 6,851 of the population compared to 5,829 last Spring.

Junior and sophomore enrollments increased from last year, with 6,821 sophomores and 8,526 juniors enrolled. The number of seniors enrolled at A&M dropped from 10,981 in Spring 1998 to 10,754 in Spring 1999.

The number of total graduate students increased from 6,347 to 6,410. Graduate students constitute 16 percent of the student population.

Karen Severn, an adviser in the Office of Professional School Advising (OPSA), said awareness of professional school programs has increased since the office was founded seven years ago.

"Aggies have never had bad records," Severn said. "We are big in helping students maximize their potential as undergraduates. It has always been the purpose of our office to see what life is really like as a professional."

Texas A&M University Medical School annually admits 64 new students to its program.

Severn said 10 percent of A&M graduates going to medical school attend A&M, and 90 percent attend other medical schools.

Undergraduates at A&M applying to medical and dental schools have the highest acceptance rates nationally and the second highest in law school admissions.

The enrollment of the Colleges of Agriculture, Business, Engineering, General Studies and Science increased from Spring 1998 to Spring 1999.

The College of Medicine showed the largest increase from Spring 1998 to Spring 1999, increasing enrollment from 300 to 335 students.

In minority enrollment, the number of African-American and Hispanic freshman students enrolled at A&M decreased by 1 percent, with 956 African Americans and 3,337 Hispanics.

Felicia Scott, interim director of the Multicultural Services Department, said A&M must remain committed to increasing diversity on campus.

"By virtue of the mission of the institution as a land-grant university, we must commit," Scott said. "As an institution striving to be in the top rankings, we are gradually preparing students to work in a diverse work force."

"As a department, we do not have an official function of recruitment, but we have been collaborating with the Office of Admissions and Records," Scott said.

White students make up 80 percent of the student body population, increasing from 25,678 students in Spring 1998 to 26,712 students in 1999.

Females make up 38 percent of the population, an increase of 1 percent from Spring 1998.

Enrollment of international students increased from 1,985 in Spring 1998 to 2,052 in Spring 1999, making up 32 percent of the population. Texas residents make up 47 percent of the student population, and nonresidents compose 21 percent.