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Capsized

A&M students lobby for 170-hour cap bill clause

BY AMANDA SMITH
The Battalion

Texas A&M students have spent the past two weeks lobbying members of the Texas House of Representatives in Austin, after the Senate 31-0 vote Monday for a bill that would grandfather the 1997 law that cuts off state funding to undergraduates earning 170 hours or more at state higher-education institutions.

Sen. Teel Bevins, R-Amarillo, sponsored the bill challenging the 1997 law permitting universities to charge out-of-state tuition rates to those exceeding the allowed number of credit hours.

If the revised version of the bill passes, the new cap will apply to freshmen entering in Fall 99. State funding, in most cases, would be capped for undergraduates receiving 45 hours or more than their degree plans as required.

Legislative Relations, a division of Student Government Association, sent two committee members yesterday and three Tuesday to urge house representatives to pass the concurrent bill.

Ashli Simpson, Legislative Relations chair and a sophomore agribusiness major, said the new bill, SB-345, provides incoming freshmen with enough room for flexibility in creating their schedules.

"I feel it gives students adequate room, with a few exceptions, for students to graduate without exceeding the cap for those with transfer hours and those changing their major," Simpson said.

Alicia Esslinger, a student senator and a senior political science major, said the consideration for current students is an improvement over the 1997 law.

"The [Texas] Legislature has a different concern than the students, and we are looking out for our concerns as students," Esslinger said. "Had they decided to make this a law affecting students currently enrolled, the bill would have been unfair."

Under the 1997 law, students with 170 hours in Fall 1999 would pay nonresident tuition, \$254 per semester credit hour, compared to \$38 per semester credit hour for residents.

Rep. Fred Brown signed on as a joint sponsor of SB-345 when it entered the House for debate.

"It is just not fair to change the rules on students halfway through their education," Brown said, in a press release. "Students at Texas A&M and across the state should not be held accountable for laws that are implemented once they have already started their degree plan. Some were concerned that they would not be able to finish their education if the rules were changed on them this late in their education."

Black Awareness Committee to present traditional entertainment at festival

BY RICHARD PADDACK
The Battalion

MSC Black Awareness Committee (BAC) will sponsor traditional African-American program from 7 to 9 p.m. at Rudder Theater.

"Harambee Unity Festival," which began in 1993, will provide the audience with an array of presentations and entertainment based on African-American culture.

The central theme of the festival is "Lifting the Veil: Black Collegiate Leadership," and the objective is to promote unity within the African-American community through discussion. The pro-

gram will increase awareness of African-American culture and celebrate diversity.

Entertainment will include choreographed step performances and the Miss Black and Gold participants.

Representatives from traditional black organizations from Texas A&M, Texas Southern, Prairie View A&M and the University of Texas will provide further information on the purpose of their organizations and discuss issues plaguing the black community.

Until this year, BAC has not included organizations from other universities in the Harambee festival discussions.

BAC has been a University-recognized organization for 30 years.

"The MSC Black Awareness Committee strives to build unity through education," Valerie Edwards, BAC director of marketing, said. "The committee will provide the campus and community with an educational and entertaining program that is synonymous with its goals."

The program is free and open to the community.

BAC will collect canned goods at the door for charity organizations. Those who attend are encouraged to wear Afro-centric colors but casual attire is acceptable.

Climb time



SALLIE TURNER/THE BATTALION

Kendra Wilson, a sophomore general studies major, climbs up to the Wild Woosey at the challenge course Wednesday. Each semester more than 500 students run the challenge course for venture dynamics.

Vail's organs donated

BY SAMEH FAHMY
The Battalion

Five people, including a one-year-old girl, were given a second chance at life after receiving the organs of Barry Joseph Vail II.

Vail, a freshman ocean engineering major, died Saturday, Jan. 30, after falling three stories in the southwest stairwell of the Southwest Parking Garage.

Vail's sister, Lorie Vail, a sophomore education major, said if people understood the benefits of organ donation, more people would donate.

"My brother died," she said, "and yet there were five miracles that day."

The United Network for Organ Sharing (UNOS), a non-profit organization to advance organ availability and transplantation, estimates that more than 3,500 Texans are waiting for organ transplants and more than 200 Texans will die this year before finding an organ.

Vail said her brother indicated he wanted to be an organ donor on his driver's license, and his family supports organ donation.

According to UNOS information, families must agree to donate the organs of their relatives, regardless of what a their driver's license indicates.

SEE VAIL ON PAGE 2.

Eating Disorders Awareness Week hosts panel discussion of experts

BY PING-YA HSU
The Battalion

Eating disorders among college students were discussed yesterday at a panel sponsored by the Department of Student Health Services, the Student Counseling Service, Aggie Representatives Educating About College Health (EACH) and the Student Dietetic Association. As part of Eating Disorders Awareness Week, the panel featured a group of health professionals and a student who recovered from an eating disorder.

Dr. Mary Ann Moore, a psychologist for the Department of Student Health Services, said Texas A&M has a team to provide accurate diagnosis and treatment of eating disorders. Moore, Dr. Ann Reed, a physician for Student Health Services, and Dr. Jane Cohen, health educator and nutrition specialist, serve on the team and offer evaluation from the three medical fields.

"I rarely see people who [become] bulimic because they [have become] college students," Moore said. "People start as early as junior high, or even elementary school."

Tammy Akerman, a member of Aggie EACH and a junior nutrition major, said nearly five million American women suffer from eating disorders, and 50 percent of fourth-grade girls diagnosed with eating disorders die from them.

"Fashion images of the look in the 1990s are the most recent expression of what has be-



TERRY ROBBERSON/THE BATTALION

(L to R) Dietician **Dr. Jane Cohen, R.D.**; **Courtney Pickens** a junior biomedical sciences major; psychologist **Dr. Mary Anne Moore** and physician **Dr. Ann Reed** speak Wednesday as part of a panel discussion on eating disorders.

come an obsession with thinness," Akerman said.

Aggie REACH, one of the sponsors, is a group of student volunteers trained to give presentations about health-related issues. Akerman said the organization's main goal for sponsoring the panel was to enhance awareness of eating disorders and provide a clinical explanation to help students understand the issue.

Cohen said while it is true women suffer from eating disorders more often, men are not an exception. She said the majority of men who have the problem are athletes monitoring their weight and physical-fitness level.

Residence Hall Association discusses parking garage, McInnis Hall bills

BY RACHEL HOLLAND
The Battalion

The Residence Hall Association (RHA) discussed two bills last night, one recommending that the Texas A&M University Board of Regents vote against the proposed West Campus parking garage, and the other addressing McInnis Hall residents.

The parking garage recommendation which will reduce the corresponding parking fee increases and further researching the placement of the garage was adopted and will be referred to the Board at its March meeting.

The proposed site for the parking garage is Parking Area 56, near the Student Recreation Center.

Sam Keen, author of the garage bill and a freshman chemical engineering major, said the proposed garage is not located near future residence halls or academic building

sites, and it would not benefit the students, staff and faculty it is designed to serve.

He said on-campus residents are the primary users of contract parking on campus, and they would be affected by large parking-permit-fee increases if the Board approves the existing proposal.

"What the parking garage would mean for residents is worse spots for more money," Keen said.

Heather Sizemore, an RHA member and a sophomore biological science major, opposed the RHA garage bill. She said she disagrees with implications of the recommendation's wording.

"The [RHA] bill complains about the garage and the fees, which are separate problems," she said. "The RHA needs to address these separately, not in the same bill."

RHA postponed action on a bill giving McInnis Hall residents priori-

ty in selecting a new hall for the Spring 2000 semester, when the hall will be closed for renovations. The bill would also give priority to prior McInnis residents when returning to the hall in the Fall 2000 semester. The bill will be addressed at the next RHA meeting.

The guidelines outlined by the bill would be followed for residents of other balcony-style halls, the FHK complex and Shumacher Hall if the halls undergo similar renovation procedures.

Collin Brogile, an author of the McInnis Hall bill and a sophomore electrical engineering major, said students who live in McInnis deserve preference in selecting a different hall.

"Many of us live in McInnis because of the price," he said.

"We don't want to be forced into more expensive halls during the renovation."

Conference to review effects of Hopwood

BY ANDREA BROCKMAN
The Battalion

A University-wide conference today at Rudder Theater will unite students, staff and faculty to discuss effects of the Hopwood ruling and efforts to enhance diversity in the community.

In March 1996, the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals declared race-based practices in admission procedures unconstitutional in Texas, Louisiana and Mississippi. The Texas legislature and attorney general applied the ruling to all state universities.

Steve Murdock, professor and head of Texas A&M's Department of Rural

Psychology, concluded in a recent study that the Hopwood decision may be leading minority students, particularly African-Americans, to attend colleges outside of Texas.

Nancy Sawtelle, director of administrative services in the office of the provost, said minority groups are progressively becoming the majority in Texas, and A&M is not as diverse as other universities.

"We are trying to get people across campus to talk individually and collectively how we can offer the benefits of a Texas A&M education to minorities," she said.

Murdock will begin the conference

giving the keynote address on the impacts of Hopwood on students, employees and the Texas population.

The conference will feature panel discussions on successful diversity projects and perspectives from A&M leaders, including Jerry Gaston, vice president for administration, and Dr. J. Malon Southerland, vice president for student affairs.

Sawtelle said the conference will conclude with discussion sessions to allow students, faculty and staff to brainstorm together.

"Sometimes students have great ideas no one on the faculty or staff has thought of," she said.