

THE BATTALION

106 YEARS AT TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

Tuesday, August 31, 1999

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INSIDE sports

Scoring threat
A&M junior soccer player Nikki Thrasher has the knack.

Page 9

religion

Break Away
Program draws thousands each Tuesday to worship.

New Feature Page 5

opinion

Fish out of water
New policy of earlier move-in day for freshmen does not address possible consequences.



Page 13

new feature

The Battalion now has a daily crossword puzzle.

Page 10

Water main bursts

BY CARRIE BENNETT
AND EMILY R. SNOOKS
The Battalion

Bus routes and other traffic were detoured yesterday after a major water line broke on Ireland Street, a few yards north of Ross Street, when a large crane drove over a newly repaired water line.

Steve Harris, a private contractor at R.E.C. Industries hired by Texas A&M, said the water line originally broke last Friday at 2 a.m. Rust and old age caused the break, and water had to be shut off by a valve at the main loop of the A&M water system. He said by shutting off the water at the valve, the main water system around campus was not interrupted.

"To repair the line, a repair clamp was



ANTHONY DISALVO/THE BATTALION

A water line that burst on Ireland Street Friday broke again while undergoing repair Monday afternoon.

put on [the line], and crushed rock was put on top to cover the hole temporarily so cars could be driven on the street," Harris said.

He said a crane that had been used for repairs on the cooling towers at the corner of Ireland and Ross streets drove over the rock-covered hole, causing the line to break again yesterday at 3 p.m.

Harris said the Bus Stop Snack Shop was the only building to experience a loss of water. Other surrounding buildings received water from space in the main water loop.

Gary Jackson, Bus Operations manager, said the Rudder bus route, which usually runs from Ireland Street down Ross Street to the Langford Architecture Center, will be

detoured today and will travel down Spence Street instead of Ireland Street until repairs are finished.

"We will put signs out to let students know about the bus route change," he said. "The construction on the Physical Plant has been causing some problems in the flow of traffic, too."

Harris said repairs might include replacing the rest of the line to Ross Street and then repairing the old line that has cracked on the other side of Ireland Street.

"It is up to A&M to decide if the line will be completely replaced," he said. "They will probably decide tomorrow what will be done."

Student's attackers punished

BY STUART HUTSON
The Battalion

Three Bryan men and a youth accused of shooting a Texas A&M University graduate student with paintball guns last October have agreed after civil mediations to pay the victim more than \$500 in total compensation and to serve a total of 30 hours community service.

Pu Wang, a marketing graduate student, was shot at 10:30 p.m. while waiting to cross at the intersection of Wellborn Road and Joe Routt Drive on Oct. 2, 1998. Wang said the paintball struck his knee and wrist, leaving a scar the size of a dime on his wrist and damaging his watch. Both hits drew blood.

"This is my last semester before I graduate, and I just want to get this over with."

— Pu Wang
Assault victim

Wang and the four attackers agreed to meet for mediation by the Department of Student Life. Wang said he wanted to avoid a time- and money-consuming civil case, which all of the participants feared would attract undue media attention.

"This is my last semester before I graduate, and I just want to get this over with," Wang said.

One of the shooters, Richard DiZerega, a junior electrical engineering major, said he too was ready to put this incident behind him.

"We came forward and apologized for doing this to Mr. Wang," he said. "Now we just have to hope he can forgive us and try to move on the best we can. I didn't realize your life could get so messed up from one moment of stupidity."

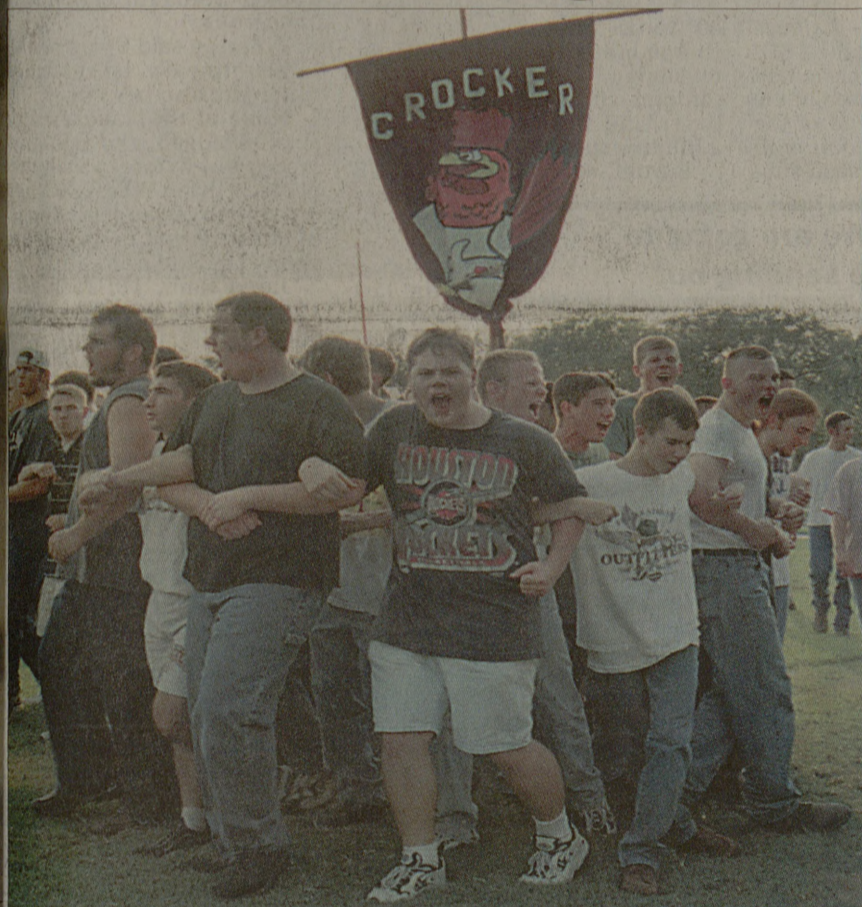
DiZerega paid Wang \$300 in compensation and agreed to a joint interview with *The Battalion* to discuss the incident.

"I felt it would be beneficial for everyone involved to openly discuss what happened," Wang said.

DiZerega said the paintball shooting incident was part of a shooting spree that pelted cars and store windows around College Station with what he thought

SEE PUNISHMENT ON PAGE 2.

All-U Night



ANTHONY DISALVO/THE BATTALION

Students from Crocker Hall band together during All-University Night Monday.

BY ERIKA DOERR
The Battalion

The first day of fall classes ended Monday with All-University Night, boasting of camaraderie among faculty, staff members and students of all ages.

A new addition this year was an All-University Walk that led students across campus to Kyle field.

Yell leaders, the Fightin' Texas Aggie Band and the Corps of Cadets left the Quadrangle to gather students from the Northside and Southside residence halls.

The ceremony at Kyle Field focused on welcoming students and encouraging support for Texas A&M fall athletic teams. The stadium Jumbotron played highlights from each sports team, and individual halls chanted their yells.

Dr. J. Malon Southerland, vice president for Student Affairs, said that when he was a student at A&M, he walked around campus with the band and the

Corps of Cadets before games, and it was a great idea for Monday night as well.

"Back when I was in school at A&M, we wouldn't think of entering Kyle Field until the Aggie Band marched on first," he said. "I marched behind the band tonight. It was a success, and I congratulate the yell leaders for accomplishing a new idea and bringing back an old Aggie tradition."

Student Body President Will Hurd, a senior computer science and international studies major, said All-U Night brought a sense of community and friendly rivalry to students and was better than last year's.

"A good mix of students participated in this event," he said. "The majority of people were freshmen, yet there were students from different sororities, dorms and Aggies of all ages who participated as well. All-U Night was definitely a good start in continuing the sense of community between the Corps and residence halls."

A&M slips to No. 18 in magazine's poll

STAFF AND WIRE REPORTS

Texas A&M slipped several notches in national academic rankings this year, moving from 15th in the 1998 U.S. News and World Report rankings to 18th in the 1999 rankings.

In a statement released last week, Texas A&M University President Dr. Ray M. Bowen said University officials are disappointed by the decline but are encouraged Texas A&M remains among the top 20 universities in the nation.

Lane Stephenson of University Relations said a university's selectivity can be an indicator in the rankings. A&M housed the nation's largest freshman class last year, which may have indicated a decline in selectivity.

The magazine ranks universities annually based on graduation and retention rates, faculty resources, alumni donations and academic reputation.

Last year A&M unveiled the Vision 2020 plan for the University, with hopes of becoming a top-10 university by the year 2020. The plan details campuswide improvements, including expanding graduate research programs and adding faculty members.

A&M leads in state research funding at \$83.7 million. Over the last 10 years, the University's research expenditures have increased by more than \$150 million. Graduate student enrollment totals 6,746 students. According to national rankings, A&M ranks ninth in research expenditures at \$36 million.

Experts gauge Texas hurricane threat

BY STUART HUTSON
The Battalion

Meteorologists warn that the destructive landfall of Hurricane Bret may be the beginning of an active hurricane season for the East Coast, but the likelihood of another hurricane striking the Texas coast is small because hurricanes seldomly strike the same area twice.

"We can't rule it out," Jeff Jamison, a meteorologist for television station KBTX-TV, said, "but a hurricane striking us twice in the same year is against the statistics."

John Nielsen-Gammon, Texas' interim state climatologist and an associate professor of meteorology at Texas A&M, said the peak hurricane season begins in mid-August and extends through September. He said this year there are between 10 to 15 major storms expected to develop in the Atlantic. As many as 10 of these may turn into actual hurricanes, he said.

"The hurricane season had been relatively weak until Bret struck," he said. "Since then, we have had four major storms."

Nielsen-Gammon said Hurricane Bret had the power to cause a lot of damage along the Texas coast but hit the relatively unpopulated Kenedy County causing little destruction. He said a change of just a few degrees in the hurricane's path could have sent it hurtling into Corpus Christi.

Fred Schlemmer, a professor of marine sciences at Texas A&M University at Galveston, said a tropical storm is officially deemed a hurricane when the wind speeds in the storm exceed 74 mph. The storms are then categorized by their wind velocity.

Schlemmer said Hurricane Bret was labeled a Category 4, with wind speeds between 131 and 155 miles per hour.

Nielsen-Gammon said a hurricane is formed when a large area of thunderstorms develop over warm tropical waters. The storms heat the atmosphere, causing the surface air pressure over the water to fall.

Strong winds that develop from this low-pressure area pick up heat and moisture from the water below and carry them into the thunderstorms.

This extra heat and moisture adds to the strength of the storm, causing even more heat and moisture to be carried up into the storm. This cycle continues until the thunderstorms reach the tropical storm or even hurricane level.

Nielsen-Gammon said there are several key global meteorological factors that help to predict the level of hurricane activity for a season.

One of these factors is a low level of wind shear over the Atlantic. The wind shear can dissipate thunderstorms before they get the chance to develop into hurricanes.

HURRICANE SEASON

—Peak hurricane season lasts from mid August to late September

—This year 10-15 major storms are expected to develop in the Atlantic Ocean

—Of those, 10 are expected to become hurricanes

MARK MCPHERSON/THE BATTALION

Nielsen-Gammon said La Niña, a strong cooling trend in the waters of the eastern Pacific Ocean, is moving air currents that normally would cause the wind shear.

Other factors that strongly affect hurricane activity are a strong jet stream across Africa, warmer-than-usual sea surface temperatures and low atmospheric pressure over the Atlantic Ocean and Caribbean Sea.

"All these elements are present this year and indicate that we may have a highly active year for hurricanes," Nielsen-Gammon said.

FREE REGISTRATION & IDENTIFICATION

• Every Wednesday in September

• @ Rudder Fountain

• 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

JEFF SMITH/THE BATTALION

Organizations to offer free bicycle registration

BY JEANETTE SIMPSON
The Battalion

The University Police Department (UPD) and Parking, Traffic and Transportation Services (PTTS) are providing free bicycle registration to Texas A&M University students, faculty and staff to increase the chances a lost or stolen bicycle will be returned to its owner after it has been recovered.

Beginning tomorrow, UPD officers will be available every Wednesday in September from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. at Rudder Fountain to engrave

the owner's driver's license number on the bicycle. Personnel from PTTS will complete the paperwork required for registration, which includes the phone number and address of the owner.

When a lost or stolen bicycle is found, UPD will use the license number on the bicycle to reference the phone number and address of the rightful owner.

Sgt. H. Allan Baron, an officer on the UPD crime prevention unit, said he expects the program to be popular among students.

"We are hoping to get as many registered as possible to try and increase the awareness of this problem," he said.

Baron said the dollar value of bicycles stolen on campus increased almost \$30,000 last fiscal year.

He said that in the past an average of \$70,000 in bicycles was stolen each year. According to last year's preliminary reports, 14,820 bicycles, \$114,188 worth, were stolen, and only 1 percent of those were recovered.

Once a bicycle is registered, it

remain registered in the PTTS computer databank permanently.

Baron said that if the registration program is able to successfully return recovered bicycles, UPD will continue the program as long as possible, with the registration program continuing to be available every Wednesday.

If students have any questions about the program, they can call the UPD at 343-3333.