

THE BATTALION

106 YEARS AT TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

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Senate holds decision on closing Joe Routt

BY ERIKA DOERR
The Battalion

The Texas A&M Student Senate postponed decision on the recommendation as to whether or not the University should close Joe Routt Boulevard to research the five options available.

Closing the street would implement a "mall" concept University officials have designed. The concept is to close off high-traffic, inner-campus areas to ensure student safety.

Elizabeth McKee, executive vice president of the Student Senate and higher education administration graduate student, said the Campus Access and Parking Task Force will review five options regarding the concept.

The five options are closing Clark Street and Joe Routt Boulevard, closing Joe Routt Boulevard and leaving Clark Street and Houston Street open for vehicles, closing Joe Routt Boulevard and keeping Clark Street open while creating a new street immediately behind J. Koldus parking garage, having no bus travel through Joe Routt Boulevard, and finally not doing anything to Joe Routt Boulevard or any other street.

Sen. Lisa Woods, a junior speech communication major, said the Joe Routt "mall" concept bill will close a portion of Joe Routt Boulevard and help make A&M campus a "mall" environment.

"As an employee of the visitor center, I feel that many incoming students will see this enhanced

aesthetic view and pedestrian friendly campus as very impressive," she said. "The elimination of motor vehicles through this boulevard will increase bus efficiency. The bus corridor cuts the time it takes to get from West Campus to the MSC area."

"I feel that many incoming students will see this ... as very impressive."

— Lisa Woods
Student senator

In other business the Senate:
•Recommended that the Texas Legislature make the Permanent University Fund (PUF) a "total return" fund which provides new funds for higher education with no increase in taxes.

Ellyn Perrone, vice president of governmental affairs, said this proposition will bring in several million new dollars to Texas A&M. "This proposition is very important to Texas A&M University and to present and future students."

•Discussed posting class evaluations of professors on the Internet.

Sen. Scott Davison, a senior biomedical science major, said a joint committee of the Faculty Senate and Student Senate has recommended five evaluation questions, called "global questions."

1. I believe this instructor was an effective teacher.

2. The exams were presented and graded fairly.

3. Help was readily available for questions and/or homework outside of class.

4. I would take another course from this professor.

5. The amount of reading and/or work was reasonable for the credit hours received.

"These five global questions will evaluate class courses," he said. "The student's responses will be better served if the ratings were available on the Internet. Three academic colleges, College of Agriculture, College of Architecture, and College of Liberal Arts, currently provide their ratings on the Internet."

Dr. Joe Templeton, representative for the Faculty Senate, said an overall feeling among professors is one of honesty and trust.

"We have to trust in the University that honesty will not be punished," he said. "If you have something honest to say about a professor or a course, why be anonymous?"

The bill requests all academic colleges at A&M provide the results of their student ratings on the Internet, and that a disclaimer be provided on all ratings forms to ensure anonymity and encourage students to be honest in their class evaluations.

This bill was referred back to the Academic Affairs Committee for further discussion.

Train accident



CODY WAGES/THE BATTALION

A Union Pacific official inspects the reconnection of a train that was involved in a traffic accident with an automobile at 1 p.m. Wednesday afternoon. The wreck, involving one car, did not result in any injuries. The train stopped traffic at all campus crossings. The University Police Department and the Department of Parking, Traffic and Transportation Services responded to the accident.

Friends, family reflect on lives of crash victims

BY ERIKA DOERR
The Battalion

Friends, roommates and parents continue to mourn the loss of five Aggies killed last Saturday night when a Cessna model 182A plane crashed into a private pasture by Coulter Field in Bryan.

The plane was the property of Ags Over Texas, a College Station business that provides skydiving experiences. Brandon Schumacher said his former roommate, Rob Puryear, Class of '99 and the pilot of the plane, was an experienced, devoted pilot.

"As his peers in aviation would all agree, his abilities and dedication as a pilot were well beyond his years," he said. "He was highly intelligent and thoroughly experienced in flying jumpers, especially at Coulter Field. For more than a year, he had flown jumpers at Ags Over Texas, exercising the utmost concern for the safety of his passengers and aircraft."

Schumacher said Puryear had a reputation for outstanding character and professionalism.

"Rob positively impacted every person he met, and continues to inspire us even today," he said. "He had a fire and passion for life itself, never giving less than 110 percent in anything he did. His accomplishments were many, and his friends were countless."

Former student Mark Woodings, owner of Ags Over Texas, also died in the crash.

While Mark attended A&M, he was president of the skydiving club. He received his bachelor's and master's degrees in electrical engineering. For the last seven years, he was involved with Ags Over Texas and became the owner two years ago. He had more than 3,000 jumps to his record.

Bruce Woodings, Mark's father, said his son wanted to own Ags Over Texas because he knew the only way students could participate was if the program stayed in College Station.

He said he did not think his son made much money from the business, but he was devoted to keeping it open for students.

"One thing he always had was safety first, in rigs and aircrafts," he said. "All equipment was meticulously kept,



CODY WAGES/THE BATTALION

Five Aggies died last Saturday when the Cessna model 182A they were in crashed into a private pasture in Bryan. and if there was ever the chance of a problem, he would ground the plane. His number-one principle was safety," Bruce Woodings said.

Woodings lived in The Woodlands, worked at the Houston Area Research Center during the week and operated Ags Over Texas on weekends.

"He had a lot of friends there and on campus, and we'd like for them to know [about the memorial service] in case they'd like to join us," Bruce Woodings said. "He was special to us and used a lot of tender loving care to make sure they [his students] had an enjoyable time."

The memorial service will be at the Hillian Funeral Home at 2301 E. 29th Street in Bryan today at 6 p.m.

Mark McHam, a senior industrial distribution major, said he will continue to skydive even though he lost his cousin and best friend, Jonathan Warden, in the accident.

McHam said he can remember he and Warden's first jump together, Dec. 10, 1995, out of the plane Duct Tape. McHam said he and Warden have done 800 jumps together, and Warden's favorite was the "sunset load" — the last jump flight before the sun goes down.

"We would get up in the air, and Jonathan would look out the window and say how beautifully God had decorated the sky at that time of day," he said.

SEE VICTIMS ON PAGE 2.

Discussion to focus on civil rights

BY RICH BRAY
The Battalion

Women's studies is sponsoring a discussion of women's roles in the Civil Rights Movement and will present a video *Eyes on the Prize*, a PBS documentary about the Civil Rights Movement from 1954 to 1963, which will be followed by an open discussion, today at 11:30 a.m. in 205 MSC.

Jennifer Powis, an assistant at the Women's Studies Programs office and a senior political science major, said the details of the Civil Rights Movement are not always discussed in history classes, therefore discussions like this are needed.

"We will be discussing a time that is sometimes glossed over in American history," Powis said. "Everyone can name Rosa Parks, but we're going beyond that."

Barbara Finlay, the adviser for the Women's Studies Program, said today's event is just a piece of a series of events.

"Many of them [programs] are about gender issues at A&M, but we have a whole series occurring

Women in the Civil Rights Movement

MSC 205
Today 11:30 a.m.
Pizza Provided

ROBERT HYNCEK/THE BATTALION

every other Thursday," she said. "We hope to get people coming to them regularly."

Eyes on the Prize focuses on the roles of women in the Montgomery Bus Boycott and the Student Nonviolent Coordination Committee and will show video from the children's march in Birmingham.

"During this movement, Bull Connor, the sheriff of this town, sent dogs on children, little 8- and 9-year old boys and girls, because they were singing a song called 'Freedom,'" Powis said. "I hope that afterwards we can have a discussion about the emotions brought on by this video."

The meeting will also provide information on the performance by the Grammy award-winning acappella ensemble "Sweet Honey in the Rock," a group the *Boston Globe* called "America's most riveting acappella group."

Dr. Bernice Reagon Johnson, founder and artistic director of "Sweet Honey in the Rock," will also be at the performance on Nov. 15 at 8 p.m. in Rudder Auditorium. Johnson is also the curator at the Museum of American History at the Smithsonian Institution and was awarded the MacArthur Fellowship in 1989 for her work as an artist and scholar of African-American culture. Tickets are expected to go on sale Oct. 1.

Marshall rules cause of fire undetermined; department closes case

BY CARRIE BENNETT
The Battalion

The investigation into the fire that destroyed the Delta Chi fraternity house at 6133 Chick Lane on Sept. 9 has been closed by the state fire marshal and no charges were brought about in the case.

Harry Bowers, the state fire marshal, said the cause of the fire was ruled as undetermined.

"[The fire] came from an outside source, from the grass somewhere, but that is really all we could determine," he said.

Jeff Hilliard, Interfraternity Council president and a senior management information systems major, said because of the dry terrain, the fire spread rapidly over approximately eight acres. He said the fire burned four acres of land owned by the Delta Chi fraternity and four acres of neighboring property.

"[It started] as a grass fire 50 to 100 yards from the house," Hilliard, a member of Delta Chi, said.

Hilliard said the Delta Chi fraternity vacated the house at the beginning of the summer in order to sell the house. He said the fraternity is considering moving into the proposed University Greek Housing.

"The house had been occupied [by Delta Chi fraternity] for about six years," he said. "We were in the midst of moving someone in to act as care taker and keep the house clean while people came to look at it."

Hilliard said the diesel fuel tanks, which were originally thought to be on the Delta Chi property, were, in fact, not on the property belonging to the fraternity.

The Brazos County Precinct 4 Volunteer Fire Department had

SEE FIRE ON PAGE 2.

Noah's Ark program plans lab, theme park for scarce animals

BY MATT LOFTIS
The Battalion

The Noah's Ark Project at Texas A&M is working toward constructing a theme park and research lab in Mesquite, Nev., to house endangered and wild animals for safekeeping and study; and to reduce the overcrowding of other zoos and preserves.

The plan is to build the park next to Interstate Highway 15 in Mesquite, Mesquite is north of Las Vegas and on the road between Los Angeles and Salt Lake City.

The Noah's Ark Project has been affiliated with A&M for nine years. Although the University will not finance the estimated \$120 million cost for building the park, it will still be available for school use.

Dr. Duane Kraemer, head of the Noah's Ark Project and professor of veterinary medicine, said the facility will be open to students and re-

searchers for use as a resource and learning tool. The Noah's Ark Project is focusing on having some sort of lab or research facility operational before the 2002 Olympics.

"It will be a place where animals can be used for teaching and for research projects," Kraemer said.

"Students from A&M will be able to do externships to learn about the reproductive technologies and the management of wildlife. This whole program was driven by student interest. I think it's important that students realize they can have an impact on the way this university goes."

The park is expected to house approximately 5,500 animals and will cover an estimated 2,700 acres. The area will be centered around a 460 foot ark set on a 560 foot mesa lit at night to make it appear to be floating at sea.

The ark will contain a restaurant, art galleries, educational ex-

hibits and gift shops. It will be visible from 20 miles away.

Animals will come from excess populations at zoos throughout the country and will be held for public visitation and viewing and for research into preserving animal genetic information to keep up the population.

"The main idea is to assist the preservation of wildlife species through the use of reproductive technologies," Kraemer said.

"It's likely to be able to help in preserving genetic diversity through the use of stored cells."

The construction of the park still depends on the investors' response to the plan and acquiring the necessary land, but the original proposal was received by the Mesquite City Council.

The government currently owns the desired land, and paperwork for the purchase could take two years for approval and finalization.

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