

# THE BATTALION

106 YEARS AT TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

Friday • November 5, 1999

College Station, Texas

Volume 106 • Issue 50 • 8 Pages

## RHA rejects plan to make hall honors-only

BY KENNETH MACDONALD  
The Battalion

The Residence Hall Association (RHA) recently passed a bill officially disapproving of the University's plan to turn Clements Hall into a co-ed, upperclassmen honors dorm.

Julie Cast, RHA president and a junior marketing major, said RHA does not support the move because there is not enough evidence to show that there is a need for this kind of residence hall.

"We are not sure that there is a need or a demand for that," she said. "Eighty-seven percent of the Clements residents surveyed said that they did not want the change."

Cast said RHA has had little opportunity to give input toward the situation. "If they had worked with us from the

beginning we would not be so upset," she said. "They have not gotten input, nor solicited any input from RHA."

One part of the bill, passed Oct. 27, made a point to attempt the establishment of a committee with representatives from Residence Life, the Honors Program and RHA. The committee would then increase the communication between the groups for an understanding between the University and RHA on this issue, Cast said.

Cast said RHA will continue to sample the Northside population to get a better understanding of the sentiment of its residents.

"Some of the issues in this change will be if there will be any grand fathering for current Clements residents," she said.

"There won't be any male modular dorms on Northside, and will there be any female [modular dorms] going co-ed?"

John Chenault, Clements Hall president and a senior computer engineering major, said the news to him was a complete surprise and the change is not popular among the residents.

**"We are not sure that there is a need or a demand for that [a co-ed, upperclassmen, honors hall]."**

— Julie Cast  
RHA president

"We did a survey and got back 80 re-

sponses. Eighty-five to 90 percent of them were against [the change]," he said. "Of the 39 people living in the hall that would qualify for the Honors Program, 26 said that they did not like the idea. It was kind of sprung on us, and nobody gave us any reason."

Dr. Susanna Finnel, executive director of the Honors Program, said this change has not been kept secret from anyone. She said they have been in contact with RHA during the past year.

"We got the nod from the administration to explore the possibility late last spring," she said.

"We have been in communication with RHA for the past year. We tried to get on the docket to speak [at the last general assembly last spring], but we ran out of time. [Clements] will not be an instant honors hall overnight. We have

seen how popular Lechner is and we want to expand that community and get more people to participate in honors."

Ron Sasse, director of Resident Life, said there has been dialogue with last year's RHA president Michael Haughey throughout the summer. He said this change will be a gradual evolution.

"Probably it will change by attrition, as students leave and are replaced by honors upperclassmen," he said. "We don't know how long this process will really take."

Sasse said this change is part of Vision 2020, which is the University's initiative to make A&M one of the top 10 public universities in the nation, and creates specialized learning communities on campus where students of the same majors and academic interests live together. He said this in reference to Lechner Hall, where the freshmen honors students currently live.

### Yell yeah



BRADLEY ATCHISON/THE BATTALION

Jeff Bailey, senior yell leader, leads yell practice Thursday night at Cain Park to help send the Aggie Football team off to Nebraska on a good note. The game against the Cornhuskers starts at 2:30 p.m. Saturday.

## 'Formal' construction of Aggie Bonfire begins with Centerpole raising

BY JEANETTE SIMPSON  
The Battalion

Bonfire construction formally begins at 4:03 p.m. today with the raising of centerpole. Centerpole, the structural support of Bonfire, arrived at the polo fields on the northeast side of campus exactly a week ago.



After the erection of centerpole, the Bonfire "stack" surrounding the pole will be constructed in shifts and will be guarded 24 hours a day until it is ignited Thanksgiving night.

Travis Johnson, head stack and a senior finance major, said centerpole arrives in two pieces and is brought to the stack sight a week early so workers can join the two poles together.

More than 125,000 hours of work will go into the six-tier stack of logs before it is lit at "dark-thirty."

Johnson said there have been many visitors who have come out to watch centerpole being raised.

"Centerpole is an important part of Bonfire, because it is the backbone on which Bonfire begins," Johnson said.

Rusty Thompson, Bonfire adviser, said the two poles that make up centerpole are chosen by eight people; two senior red pots, two junior red pots, two senior centerpole pots and two junior centerpole pots, and size is the most important criteria.

"The four redpots and four centerpole pots went to the Lufkin Creosote Company, which donated the two pieces which will make up center pole," Thompson said. "There they selected two poles which would fit together, poles that were the right length and were straight."

Thompson said in preparation for the raising of centerpole, perimeter poles have been constructed to support the stack until it is large enough to support itself. Perimeter poles also hold lights and other electrical equipment, and the two poles which will make cen-

SEE CENTERPOLE ON PAGE 2.

## A&M chosen to study Gulf of Mexico

U.S. Department of the Interior awards University \$4.2 million contract

BY CHRIS CARTER  
The Battalion

Texas A&M University has been awarded a contract worth \$4.2 million, from the Minerals Management Service (MMS) of the United States Department of the Interior. The money will fund a four-year research project to study the ecosystems of the deep-sea floor of the Gulf of Mexico.

The research is part of an effort to assess the impact of deep-sea oil and gas exploration and production on the fragile ecosystems of the Gulf

of Mexico. The basic objective of the project is to evaluate these ecosystems and predict how they will respond to future industrial activity.

Dr. Gilbert Rowe, program manager and professor of oceanography, said this project may lead to the discovery of new life forms and further realization of the complexity of the ecosystems.

"The margin of the continent in the Gulf of Mexico is one of the most complex in the world's oceans," he said. "The geophysical processes that produced its varied topography have given rise to unique environments

where sub-seafloor fossil fuel deposits are being sought and where new species will no doubt be encountered.

"We will be exploring ecosystems that may be functioning in ways that are far different from anything we have observed so far."

The program will consist of several separate phases including reviewing data collected from past studies of the Gulf of Mexico, actually observing species diversity and composition of the deep-sea floor and putting together conceptual

SEE CONTRACT ON PAGE 2.

**\$4.2 million contract to fund a 4 year research project studying the ecosystems of the deep sea floor of the Gulf of Mexico.**

**Will assess the impact of deep-sea oil and gas exploration and production on the sea floor.**

GABRIEL RUENES/THE BATTALION

## Ag fraternities, sororities fight alcohol together

BY JULIE ZUCKER  
The Battalion

Texas A&M fraternities and sororities are coming together to fight against alcohol mismanagement in Greek houses.

The sororities at A&M which are members of the National Panhellenic Council (NPC), passed a resolution stating that "no NPC sorority will co-sponsor a function at any fraternity house if that house is not substance-free."

Suzanne Tate, A&M Panhellenic president, a member of Zeta Tau Alpha sorority and a senior journalism major, said for the future of the Greek community, it is important that all Greek councils support one another.

"What this resolution does is show our support to the fraternities," Tate said. "The groups that have already decided to be alcohol free have made the best decision for their future at Texas A&M and [sororities at A&M] want them to know that we are behind them 100 percent."

Scott Blackwell, Interfraternity Council Greek Life adviser, said the Phi Delta Theta fraternity passed a resolution to ban alcohol in the fraternity house three years ago.

"The resolution says that by Jan. 1, 2000, every Phi Delt house in the US and Canada will be alcohol free," Blackwell said. "Their decision to maintain a substance-free house gives the men a chance to take control."

Blackwell said alcohol-related incidents may have pushed the resolution along.

"The negative part of chapter life is the accidents caused by alcohol abuse," he said. "Ninety percent of the accidents involved alcohol and cost the chapters a considerable amount of money in lawsuits and things of that nature."

Blackwell said the benefits of fraternity life unrelated to alcohol gives the men a chance to focus on networking, friends and increasing membership.

Meg Manning, Coordinator of Greek Life, said the resolution, which has gone national, lessens the risk students have over each other.

"This resolution helps promote mature management of alcohol and other risk-related areas," Manning said. "If the party is now moved to another location, it will help spread the responsibility like checking IDs."

Tate said sorority houses have always been alcohol-free, and this transition should not be a big change for them.

## Ansel Adams' work on tour, makes stop at Stark Galleries

BY JEANETTE SIMPSON  
The Battalion

Patrons of the J. Wayne Stark Galleries will have the opportunity to view 48 of Ansel Adams' dramatic photographs of structures throughout the United States. The collection includes pictures of various Native American ruins, churches, and New York skyscrapers.

Adams, whose photos are primarily in black and white, photographed extreme views of the world, capturing the art of environment—forests, mountains, rivers, valleys and architecture.

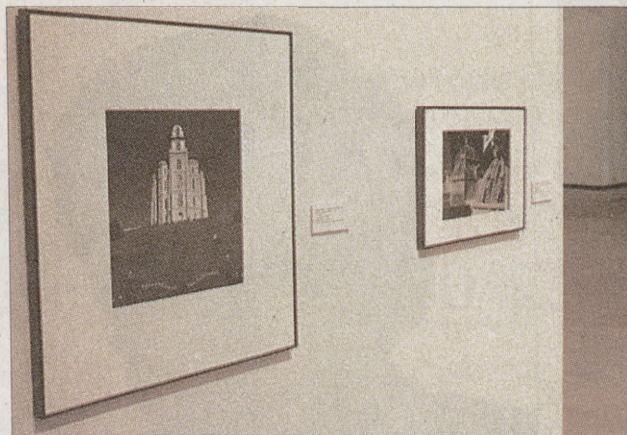
He used straight photography, featuring simple but detailed portraits.

Adams and other photographers collaborated in the 1930s to promote this type of art.

According to the Center for Creative Photography at the University of Arizona, which donated the photos, Adams' changed the fields of photography and architecture through his vision of the man-made world and his ability to capture the essence of art and nature.

Catherine Hasted, Stark Galleries curator, said A&M chose to have Adams' photographs brought to the gallery because his work is so widely known.

"Many of the people who come to see this exhibit come



BRADLEY ATCHISON/THE BATTALION

A touring exhibit of Ansel Adams' work, featuring works primarily depicting structures of the Southwest and the Yosemite area, is on display at the J. Wayne Stark Galleries.

because they are familiar with his photos," she said. "We have already brought two other shows of his work to the gallery—one was a few of his landscapes, the other his close-up works. That is why when this one, which focuses on architecture, came around, we wanted to bring it here."

Hasted said the diversity, evolution in style and historical context of Adams' work makes him one of the most prolific and historically significant photographers of our time.

For the next few weeks, visitors to the exhibit will see photos of structures primarily from the Southwest and the Yosemite area.

The exhibit currently on display will be at the Stark Galleries until Dec. 18.

**INSIDE**

**Aggielife**  
• Husk it, Ags  
Tips for enjoying a safe road trip at away-game against Nebraska. Page 3

**Sports**  
• Aggies travel to Lincoln for showdown  
Football team prepares to face Huskers — and their fans. Page 5

**Opinion**  
• Are drowsy drivers delinquent?  
Columnists debate whether drowsy drivers should be prosecuted. Page 7

**Batt Radio**  
Listen to KAMU-FM 90.9 at 1:57 p.m. for details on a garage sale in Rosebud.

ember  
ent

Li Hong  
former soldier  
government  
Eastern China  
un Gong from  
he has never  
Chinese govern  
the deaths of  
washing them  
cal care.

traditional slow  
philosophies  
annel unseen  
through the bo  
ends concepts  
ddism and  
practices are  
alth and moral

AP/Wid

under

have been pat  
nd southern  
in Gulf War. Th  
ds and Shites  
addam Hussein  
a violation of  
ntly challenge  
ember.

We Acc  
Aggie Bua

ADAS  
on"

2 a.m.

HOOR  
9c Margaritas  
-7pm

made  
ches,  
Desserts

DRINK  
ch

Expires 12/31/99

ation  
'6  
available. \$20 mini

Northgate  
University Dr  
Papa John's & Subway  
268-7668

Groger Center  
Star Gold's Gym  
2416 Tx Ave. S  
696-5464

ie Thing"  
othie  
smoothie  
not valid on  
Expires Nov. 30

ADADA  
s "Nutritional Sp  
ngover Formulas