



CODY WAGES/THE BATTALION

Spread of word of Bonfire collapse sparks calls from concerned family; students grieve, help comfort others

BY MATT LOFTIS
The Battalion

Mark Micer, a junior mechanical engineering major, woke up early yesterday morning to phone calls from his grandparents, parents and several others. Everyone wanted to know that he was OK and had not been hurt during the collapse of Bonfire.

"It's really just shocking," Micer said. "It's unexpected."

Micer's experience was common at Texas A&M Thursday morning after the nearly-finished Bonfire collapsed killing students and injuring many others.

Parents, relatives and friends clogged telephone lines shortly after dawn with their hurried calls to locate students.

The rescue work began early yesterday morning, and after the initial amazement had somewhat faded, the student body was forced to consider other questions.

Reagan Springs, a sophomore general studies major, said he didn't know how the student body would deal with this.

"I couldn't believe it happened, it was just crazy," Springs said. "It's not going to be the same no matter what. It's going to be a long time before things are back to normal."

Any doubt over the student body's ability to cope was met shortly yesterday morning with students turning out before sunrise to help at the Polo Fields moving logs that were trapping Aggies and preparing for larger-scale memorial services for the victims of the accident. A television was set up in the MSC Flagroom, and students sat and watched the rescue efforts together with others concerned with the progress.

Throughout the area, Aggies comforted one another and watched together as logs were removed from the pile.

Angela Pena, a sophomore biomedical science major, said the good part of the whole thing was seeing the Aggie spirit as everyone helped one another.

"I think just by [the students] coming together, we are getting past this," said Pena. "I see a lot of people comforting each other."

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SEARCHING



Clockwise from top right: Students share sense of loss after the trapping fellow Aggies under the structure; (center) members of the search team and wait for news about the students who were injured during the collapse; (left) Senior linebacker, Sean Cong with his family away from the fallen Bonfire yesterday afternoon.

10:30 p.m.
Bonfire Adviser Rusty Thompson and senior red-pots inspect stack

12:00 a.m.
FHK, Moses, and Aston Halls, Companies D-2, K-2, C-2, and Squadrons 16 and 17 begin their shifts

2:28 a.m.
Bonfire falls within seven seconds

2:49 a.m.
Rescue units arrive on the scene

4:00 a.m.
Over 400 volunteers gather to assist in rescue efforts

Heavy equipment arrives to dismantle bonfire

8:30 a.m.
First official press conference held announcing progress on current fatalities; Ray Bowen announces cancellation of 1999 Bonfire

10:00 a.m.
Results of detector search announced; tapping of caskets heard

10:00 p.m.

12:00 a.m.

2:00 a.m.

4:00 a.m.

6:00 a.m.

8:00 a.m.

10:00 a.m.

12:00 p.m.

GRAPHICS BY RUBEN DELUNA & ROBERT HYNCEK

8:35 a.m. 4 students are confirmed dead

12:05 p.m. 10 more confirmed