

# THE BATTALION

106 YEARS AT TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

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## Shows of support for victims of tragedy continue

### Groups to preserve memorials placed at Bonfire site

BY BRADY CREEL  
The Battalion

Texas Aggies have shown the world what their spirit is capable of in the face of adversity, and although they are slowly piecing their lives back together after the Bonfire collapse, Aggies will never forget what happened in Aggieland on Nov. 18.

For most Aggies, their outlook on life may never be the same, but to many, the knowledge that something lies deep within the heart of Texas A&M is comfort enough.

Bill Anderson, MSC Council president and a senior mechanical engineering major, was one of many to recognize the need to preserve each artifact at the Bonfire site and make them available for viewing by generations of Aggies yet to come.

"When I walked out there, I saw the heart of Texas A&M poured out onto Bonfire site, and those things need to be preserved," he said.

A team at A&M is doing just that. This joint effort between the MSC Council, Traditions Council, Department of Anthropology, Physical Plant and the office of the Vice President for Student Affairs will make sure each piece of memorabilia will be collected and preserved.

"This is a University-wide effort to preserve all of those things," Anderson said.

Indeed, all of the items will be preserved. Literally everything, including flowers, cards, letters, notes, posters, rosary beads and handmade crafts will be taken from the site for permanent preservation beginning today.

Anderson said he expects items will continue to be placed at the site for months to come, but every artifact left at the Bonfire site will eventually be kept and preserved. The operation will be an on-going process.

"We don't want to lose anything," he said.

Schuyler Houser, program subchair for the Traditions Council and a junior industrial engineering major, said Aggies do not need to worry about seeing their memories of the Bonfire lifted by the hands of others.

"We know there is going to be a lot of concern," she said. "We are not forgetting, by any means, but this is our effort for people in the future to remember."

Dr. Sylvia Grider, a folklorist and associate professor of anthropology, said the team's concern is to gather each individual artifact for safe keeping.



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"We are treating all of the artifacts with a great deal of respect, and as professional archaeologists and anthropologists," she said. "We have a procedure in place for gathering artifacts from a cultural site."

Anderson said the students involved with this rigorous operation will receive training in handling delicate artifacts.

Grider said the most critical type of artifact is cloth and paper, especially pieces with poems or letters written on them. She said they will be temporarily housed in a storage freezer in Cushing Memorial Library until the staff there is organized to handle such a large project.

"We will make sure we gather the paper separately so we can turn that over to University Archives," Grider said.

Grider said they were waiting for the spring semester before attempting to make a definitive decision concerning the location of the display showcases in which the artifacts will be eventually placed.

"What is critical is to gather the material and preserve it for what ever use is determined in the future," she said. "It is important to clear the Bonfire site so that the formal investigation can get underway, and [the removal] is also part of the University-wide attempt to get the campus back to normal so that students can turn their attention to final exams and going home for the holidays."

### Counseling services helps students entering 'moving on' process

BY AMANDA SMITH  
The Battalion

The grieving for the 12 Aggies who lost their lives as a result of the Bonfire collapse did not end with the Thanksgiving holidays or with the Aggies' defeat of the Longhorns. The grieving continues, even as students have returned to classes, facing the looming deadlines of the semester's end.

While the memory of those lost continues to burn in the hearts of those inside and outside of the Texas A&M community, Wade Birch, director of Student Counseling Service (SCS), said moving on is an integral part of the grieving process.

"There is something therapeutic about [moving on]," he said. "It is like an anchor and helps us get through the grieving process. This whole tragedy has cast a dim light on the Texas A&M campus."

In the two weeks since the Nov. 18 collapse, SCS has received more than 285 calls related to the collapse, compared to the 400 calls SCS received in a typical year.

The SCS Helpline is operated by

more than 40 graduate and undergraduate students trained to handle calls from students needing psychological assistance. The students chose to keep the Helpline open Thanksgiving day, the following Friday and weekend to field calls from students.

Birch said the 15 SCS counselors, 10 full-time counselors and five administrative counselors, have made every effort to comfort students since the collapse.

Birch said their efforts began with a call from Dr. J. Malon Sutherland vice president for Student Affairs, around 3:45 a.m. with word of the collapse.

"By 5 a.m., an associate director and I were out at site," Birch said. "Our job was to mix and to mingle with the onlookers to get a sense of the reaction and to determine what we needed to do."

SCS kept four counselors onsite, three counselors in the MSC Flagroom and two counselors in MSC 145, where the parents of those students killed or injured in the collapse were told to wait.

SEE COUNSELING ON PAGE 2.

### Contributions to funds for injured, tributes to dead ongoing, surpass \$94,000

BY RICHARD BRAY  
The Battalion

Cyril Connolly once wrote in her book *Journal and Memoir* that "youth is a period of missed opportunities." Obviously, the author never met Caitlin Walker.

After hearing about the Bonfire collapse, the young girl decided to go door to door in her College Station neighborhood to collect money to donate to the families of the students killed and injured in the accident. Tuesday afternoon, Walker and her father donated the \$332 she collected from her neighbors to the Bonfire Memorial Fund at the Texas A&M Foundation.

Hundreds of people and organizations throughout the Brazos Valley have responded to the Bonfire collapse by creating funds to honor the students who were killed or injured.

The Association of Former Students has established the Bonfire Relief Fund, the Texas A&M Foundation has created the Bonfire Memorial Fund and Bank One has established the Aggie Bonfire Fund.

Rose Ann McFadden, manager of communications for the Texas A&M Foundation, said the Foundation has been affected by the tragedy because many of their employees are part of the Aggie family.

"We've been grieving with the rest of the campus," McFadden said. "A lot of our employees, including myself, are Aggies and even those who aren't have been affected by the situation."

The money raised by the Texas A&M Foundation will go to assist families with expenses resulting from the accident and will support permanent recognition, such as en-

**FUNDS RAISED**  
so far for victims of the  
**BONFIRE COLLAPSE**  
AND THEIR FAMILIES

- Over 600 individuals have donated more than \$ 94,000
- Southwestern Bell has donated \$ 100,000

RUBEN DELUNA/THE BATTALION

dowed scholarships, in honor of those who died in the accident.

As of yesterday afternoon, more than 600 individuals had given and pledged more than \$94,000.

McFadden said the Texas A&M Foundation has received some particularly large donations, among them a \$100,000 donation from Southwestern Bell and a \$10,000 donation from an anonymous individual.

Texas A&M Foundation President Eddie J. Davis said there has been a national response to the funds because people want to do

whatever they can to help the tragic situation.

"The outpouring of sympathy and concern has been overwhelming," he said.

"People have sought to give in a variety of ways, so we've created two Bonfire funds [the Bonfire Memorial Fund and the Bonfire Relief Fund] to help focus the many ideas."

For information on how to contribute to any of the memorial funds, the Association of Former Students can be reached at 845-7514. The Texas A&M Foundation can be reached at 845-8161.

## Thousands participate in Elephant, E-Walk

BY JULIE ZUCKER  
The Battalion

About 3,500 elephants were seen walking around campus yesterday as part of senior Elephant Walk.

Junior E-Walk and senior Elephant Walk finally took place yesterday after being rescheduled three times. More than 5,500 juniors and seniors participated in the events.

Amy Todd, E-Walk director and a junior political science major, said she was worried about the turnout after the postponements.

"We had a great turnout [from juniors and seniors]," she said. "We were worried about who would show up after all of the confusion whether [E-Walk and Elephant Walk] would happen or not."

At Kyle Field, 3,500 seniors listened to Harris Pap-

pas, president of the Pappa's restaurant chain, before they began their tour through campus. Seniors waded through Fish Pond on Northside, had their last yell at the Commons and ended at Duncan Field for games and pictures.

Students could have pictures taken with live elephants, and a velcro wall, bungee run, rocky mountain climb and a gyro were available for students' enjoyment at Duncan Field. Juniors had a fajita lunch at noon.

Katie Dufour, Elephant Walk director and a senior health education major, said it was a good idea to postpone Elephant Walk.

"Participants seemed to be in high spirits, and more upbeat than they would have been if we kept Elephant Walk last week," she said.

"The whole event was

more positive, and it was obvious because there were lots of smiles and hugs."

Katy Lineberger, a junior journalism major, said she looked forward to E-Walk and was happy she had the opportunity to participate.

"It was a really neat experience to be with people I haven't seen since freshman year," she said. "There was a lot of spirit, and we all came together as upperclassmen to keep A&M traditions alive."

Lineberger said it is the responsibility of the entire senior class to keep the respect and Aggie spirit alive.

"It is up to us as seniors now, to teach and share our knowledge of Aggieland to those who are younger than us," she said. "We need to make sure freshman and sophomores know A&M means friends, memories and great traditions."



BRADLEY ATCHISON/THE BATTALION



Right: Students participating in Elephant Walk link arms as they walk through campus.

KIMBER HUFF/THE BATTALION

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