



BRADLEY ATCHISON/THE BATTALION



PATRIC SCHNEIDER/THE BATTALION

Firefighters and city officials gather at the Doherty Building to evaluate and stop the fire that began in an underground tunnel Wednesday afternoon.



PATRIC SCHNEIDER/THE BATTALION

## Campus fires erupt Smoke fills the Doherty Building

BY BRADY CREEL & JEANETTE SIMPSON  
The Battalion

Two fires — one in Krueger Residence Hall and one in the utility tunnels adjacent to the Doherty building — broke out on the Texas A&M campus yesterday.

Both fires caused minor damages and involved no injuries. The College Station Fire Department was dispatched to campus at 1:57 p.m. for what was suspected to be a structure fire in the Doherty Building.

Fire trucks arrived on the scene at 2:03 p.m. "This is something we have run into before," Bart

Humphries, public information officer for College Station Fire Department, said.

"The smoke was from a small grass and leaf fire outside the building."

Humphries said it is suspected that the fire was started by a burning cigarette, which was dropped into one of the grates alongside the building.

The smoke was drawn into and spread throughout the building by its ventilation system.

Once it was ablaze in the underground tunnel, the smoke filled the utility tunnels, and eventually backed up and infiltrated the chemistry building before the fire was extin-

guished.

The underground tunnel system and vents are prone to accumulating dried leaves and grass, and it appears this is where the fire began.

Chad Kocurek, a freshman nuclear engineering major, was leaving the Civil Engineering Building's lab when he saw smoke.

"As we walked down the street, smoke started pouring out of the vent in the street," Kocurek said. "We pulled the [Doherty Building] door open, and the hallway was filled with smoke."

Kocurek said he held the door open while another student ran into the building to make sure it was empty.

Kocurek was able to stop a police car going southbound on Ross Street. The officer got out and immediately checked the building to make sure it was unoccupied. Fire trucks arrived shortly thereafter.

"I ran out and flagged the fire truck down," Kocurek said. "They got an ax and busted the lock on the access panel and went into the room."

See DOHERTY on Page 2.

## Clothes hamper starts fire at Krueger

BY BRADY CREEL  
The Battalion

The College Station Fire Department was dispatched at 11:29 a.m. and arrived at Krueger Hall at 11:33 a.m. in response to smoke on the second floor of the building.

Bart Humphries, public information officer for the College Station Fire Department, said a dry cotton towel had been heated in a microwave oven and placed in a closed clothes hamper, where it began to smolder.

"I was in my room about to take a nap, and the alarm started going off and everybody walked out in a daze," Kristen Laefield, first floor resident of Krueger Hall and a freshman English major, said. "Everybody was annoyed because we all thought it was a fire drill."

See KRUEGER on Page 2.

## Bowen holds forum about fee increase

BY ANN LOISEL  
The Battalion

President Dr. Ray M. Bowen held an open forum Tuesday to discuss his upcoming recommendation to the Board of Regents for a \$2 increase in University Authorized Tuition (UAT) to \$40 per credit hour, to take effect next fall.

The Texas Legislature has also increased the state-mandated tuition by \$52 for Fall 2000.

"The fees, along with other proposed fall semester fee increases, would amount to a total fee increase of \$89, a drop from the average increase of \$107 per year," Bowen said.

The estimated \$2.2 million generated from the UAT fee increase would be used primarily for a faculty salary increase of three percent, William B. Krumm, vice president for Finance and Controller, said at a forum held Monday to discuss the proposal.

"It's very important to the value of an A&M degree that we have the best faculty," Krumm said.

"And in order to get the best faculty, we have to pay competitive salaries," he said.

In a salary comparison with the University of Texas-Austin, Krumm said A&M professors, associate professors and assistant professors are paid less than their UT counterparts on average.

"If the Board of Regents approves it, it's official," Bowen said. The Board of Regents will consider the matter at their March meeting.

UNIVERSITY AUTHORIZED TUITION Salary Comparison 1999	
UT Austin Prof.	\$84,400
TAMU Prof.	\$78,400
UT Austin Assoc. Prof.	\$54,600
TAMU Assoc. Prof.	\$54,500
UT Austin Asst. Prof.	\$50,600
TAMU Asst. Prof.	\$47,500

RUBEN DELUNA/THE BATTALION

## Hurd's agenda includes extensive recycling program

BY JEANETTE SIMPSON  
The Battalion

That soda can tossed in the trash after class may have a second chance if Will Hurd, student body president and senior computer science major, has his way.

Hurd's preliminary agenda for the spring semester includes a recycling program which will expand upon the current program.

"The main goal of this program is to make people aware of the positive affects of recycling, and what can be recycled," Hurd said.

Some recycling receptacles are already in place on campus.

The residence halls on campus have recycling receptacles throughout each hall, but recycle only aluminum products, Dan Mizer, assistant director

of the residence life, said.

The receptacles are emptied once every two weeks by a student who has signed a contract with the residence hall promising to maintain the receptacles, Mizer said.

When new residents move in every semester, containers for recycling the cardboard boxes and other cardboard products are placed throughout the halls.

Hurd said he hopes that through his program, recycling efforts in the residence halls will grow to include all recyclable products.

Hurd's plan is to first assess the capabilities of the physical plant to support the development and expansion of the current program.

"We want to start out basic, such as making recycling containers available in all food service outlets, and all departments," Hurd said.

"These receptacles will be for aluminum, paper, and plastic," he said.

In order to get both on-campus and off campus students involved, Hurd hopes to create a site where students who collect recyclables can drop the products off at their convenience.

"I want to make recycling resources available to everyone," Hurd said. "If you know the importance of recycling, but don't have the resources, it is hard to make it happen."

If Hurd is able to put his recycling plan into action, he said he will make sure the program goes through the environmental issues committee of the Student Government.

"Not only do I hope to see this program put into action, I also want to make sure that incoming administration understand the importance, so that the future of the program will be secure," Hurd said.

**STUDENT BODY PRESIDENT**  
*Will Hurd's*  
**PROPOSED RECYCLING IMPROVEMENTS**

- Extend recycling in dorms and offices to include aluminum, paper, and plastics.
- Create a central on-campus recycling location for off-campus students.
- Create new recycling locations in MSC, dorms, and food service areas.

RUBEN DELUNA/THE BATTALION

## Sbisa construction causes crowding, annoys students

BY MATT LOFTIS  
The Battalion

Katherine Obenhaus, Northside resident and a freshman business major, routinely ate at Sbisa Dining Hall or the Underground Food Court last semester.

Obenhaus still has a meal plan, but has to go to the Memorial Student Center to eat at Hullabaloo or Rumours Coffee House, where lunch lines are long.

"It's annoying," Obenhaus said. "It's not the food that takes a long time, but checking out."

After a full week of classes with Sbisa closed, meal plan sales are up, along with the numbers of students eating at on-campus locations, according to the Department of Food Services.

However, some students and food services employees said problems with crowding and complaints still exist.

Food services workers have made changes to accommodate the demands of students who normally would eat at Sbisa, but now eat at other on-campus locations.

Gena Monroe, a cashier at the MSC 12th Man International Food Court, said the crowds are difficult to deal with at times, and the new meal options were confusing to students who did not know where to enter or exit the line or where they could get food from.

"It's a big change because we used to be just a cash facility," Monroe said.

Workers formerly at Sbisa, the Underground



MELISSA SACKETT/THE BATTALION

Students gather at "Sbisa Hut". The Outbound Dining facility was added to Northside to accommodate students who usually eat at the Sbisa cafeteria.

Food Court and Market and Bernie's Place were relocated to Hullabaloo and the 12th Man for the semester. However, Monroe added that since the 12th Man is keeping different hours, things are more confusing.

Sean Smith, a junior political science major, lives off campus, but enjoyed joining friends to eat at Sbisa. Smith now eats at the Commons, but said he preferred the selection at Sbisa.

Jim Smith, a service board manager for Sbisa, said the Sbisa Hut operations have gone smoothly since opening. Smith said there was a lot of computer work done to prepare for the hut, but operations are running smoother every day.

"There have been a couple of bumps, but that's

because the number of meals we're doing is about double what we expected," Smith said.

Cindy Zawieja, associate director of food services, said Sbisa Hut was serving an estimated 150 students at breakfast, 400 at lunch and 200 at dinner. Zawieja added that total meal plan sales are not final.

No Sbisa employees have had their workload reduced or dramatically changed because of the construction at Sbisa. A few employees were released to other departments but most, including student workers, are filling in shifts at the MSC. No employee was forced to take fewer hours than they previously had.

Zawieja said that meetings would be held in the near future to decide whether or not the Wheels to Meals bus routes will continue. After analyzing student response, the outbound program will be evaluated to see if it will continue in future semesters.

"I haven't received really any complaints," Zawieja said.

Margaret Mayfield, a freshman theater arts major, said that she and her friends got tired of having to go to the Commons or the MSC when they were hungry, and she has reduced her meal plan considerably since last semester.

However, she is excited to see Sbisa after the renovations — the reason for the closing — are complete.

"Hopefully Sbisa will turn out as expected and hopefully it won't take longer than they expected," Mayfield said.

**INSIDE**  
Aggielife

- Comic book Wednesday Big day for comic book buyers.
- Page 3
- Sports
  - Aggies travel to face Cyclones
  - Men's basketball team goes to Iowa Page 9
- Opinion
  - Now more than ever How media conglomerates control people.
  - Page 13
- Batt Radio
  - Listen to KAMU-FM 90.9 at 1:57 p.m. for details on a musical showcasing Bryan's heritage.