

## Center reaches out to victims

BY BROOKE HODGES  
The Battalion

Sara kicked off the weekend at 3:00 Friday afternoon with more than a few glasses of wine at a local bar.

"Later that night we decided to go to another bar," she said. "We stopped at a gas station and met two guys, so we invited them to our house because we were having a party."

Around 2:00 a.m., Sara, who wishes to remain anonymous, went upstairs to go to sleep.

"One of the guys came into my room and I was passed out," she said. "I woke up once and didn't know what was going on and passed back out."

Sara's friends helped her piece together what happened after she passed out. After completing the puzzle, she went to the police and filed sexual assault charges against her attacker.

Initially, Sara's attacker claimed innocence, but both parties agreed to a plea bargain after a taped confession was misplaced by police. As a part of the plea bargain, the attacker had to meet with Sara face to face.

Sara said by the time she met with her attacker, she no longer had anger toward him.

"He apologized three times for what he had done, even though he pleaded innocent," she said.

It took Sara a year to begin to heal from the trauma. She attributes her ability to cope with the assault with her growing faith in God.

"I put [the experience] on the back shelf," she said. "When I came to know Jesus, I realized I had to deal with it."

Most victims of rape believe they can handle the trauma by themselves and are reluctant to get help through counseling, said Sherry Hostetter of the Brazos County Rape Crisis Center.

"There is no shame in getting counseling when you are trying to get through a life altering trauma," she said.

The Student Counseling Service (SCS) on campus is available to help any student facing psychological problems resulting from an attack, said Dr. Andy Smith of SCS.

SCS also directs students to the Gender Issues Education Services (GIES) for further assistance.

The staff at GIES assists the students by referring them to appropriate agencies for medical care, relocating them if their attacker lives in their residence hall and even call new apartment complex and helping them submit a statement that defines the experience, said Shaun Travers, Coordinator of GIES.

"We help students get absences excused, facilitate class changes if they need them, accompany them to meetings to change their majors if they want to," Travers said. "If a student chooses to withdraw, we help them with that process and help them if they decided to return [to the University at a later date]."

To put the experience behind her, Sara began seeing a counselor on a weekly basis. The counselor helped her place the blame where it belonged, she said.

"I was putting the blame on myself or getting so drunk, but I started putting the blame on him," Sara said.

See RAPE on Page 2

**UPD 4 rape cases**  
**BSP 71 CSPD 20**  
**BRAZOS COUNTY RAPE CRISIS CENTER 298**

Don't destroy evidence by bathing, douching, washing hands, brushing teeth, changing clothes or linens, eating or drinking.  
Notify someone immediately.  
Seek medical attention at an emergency room.  
Have the hospital perform a rape test, even if you choose not to press charges.  
Call police as soon as possible, even if you choose not to press charges.  
Bring a change of clothes with you to the hospital or police.  
Write down details about the rapist and circumstances of rape.  
Call Brazos County Rape Crisis Center if you need someone to talk to or answer questions.

RUBEN DELUNA/THE BATTALION



# Bonfire Benefit Concert

BY CHRIS CARTER  
The Battalion

There they sit on opposite sides of a sleek leather sofa looking you straight in the eye and asking your name.

One is a slender man completely adorned in black from his trademark hair to his worn jeans, with the exception of a tan pair of pointed cowboy boots. He cocks an awkward yet familiar grin in your direction as you greet him.

The other is sitting with his legs casually crossed, as if to expose the tops of his Red Wing boots from under his dark slacks. He also greets your response with a congenial grin that produces a squinty stare.

These two products of Texas A&M, and treasures of Texas, are two humble figures sitting 3 feet apart. And now, after two decades of touring, albums and awards, these entertainers are back at A&M to support the school that gave them so much.

Lyle Lovett and Robert Earl Keen have long been Texas music mainstays and crowd favorites at shows around the nation, each building their own distinct fanbase. On Sunday, Keen and Lovett will headline a concert at Reed Arena to benefit the Bonfire Relief Fund. Both Keen and Lovett are performing free of charge with all proceeds from ticket sales directed towards those left in need because of the Aggie Bonfire collapse.

Keen and Lovett each said the collapse affected them in a personal way.

"It's one of those things where you can't believe it has happened," Keen said. "It's something so solid and traditional in your mind. I'm still not settled with it — it's a terrible thing that has happened."

Keen said he hopes the message of this show is not lost in the arena.

"We acknowledge this tragedy and we are deeply saddened by it," Keen said. "We want to send our deepest condolences to the families who are affected by this and we all [want to] come together in the Aggie spirit and move on from there."

Keen, a Class of '78 English major (and '80 graduate), first met Lovett while living in a house on Church Street.

"We became acquainted through proximity, really," Lovett said. "I lived in an apartment on College Main, and there was a really convenient parking space right in front of Robert's house."

Keen said he discovered his love for music during his time at A&M.

"I found out at an early age that I could write rhyming poetry," Keen recalled. "It was once I started playing guitar in college that I realized that I could make these poems into songs."

And so a true Texas troubadour was born.

In an industry that depends primarily on radio exposure, Keen and Lovett have enjoyed considerable success despite their unconventional mix of folk, country, rock and bluegrass that is not commonly heard on radio.

"If I were to stretch to the point where I'm playing music for radio play or record company executives where I hope they'll be happy — even if I were successful — I wouldn't be happy," Keen said. "I would only be working in a job that I had no say so in it."

"Right now, I'm at the helm of my ship."

Lovett has made headlines across the nation for over a decade. From the four Grammy Awards he won between 1989 and 1996, to numerous appearances on talk shows and benefits, Lovett

"The highest points in my career are when something happens for me musically," Lovett said. "It is when everything comes together, and there is just this moment that is completely indescribable."

Lovett said he began playing guitar in Klein, Texas when he was in second grade. During his time at Texas A&M, Lovett continued playing music around town in coffee shops for his own enjoyment.

After his graduation in 1980 (on the same day as Keen), Lovett moved to Nashville in 1984 to continue his musical career.

After his arrival, he sang backup vocals on Nanci Griffith's third album, *Once in a Very Blue Moon*. While in Nashville, Lovett signed a record contract with MCA/Curb Records.

Since his self-titled debut album in 1986, Lovett has picked up four Grammy Awards, including Best Male Vocalist for 1989's *Lyle Lovett and his Large Band* and Best Country Album for 1996's *The Road to Ensenada*.

Keen's music, like Lovett's, is a whirlwind of Texas culture with a thematic human touch.

"Dreadful Selfish Crime" is an autobiographical song which recounts Keen's coming to grips with his own ambition and dealing with pessimism and apathy.

Through a career that spans twenty years, Keen has proven able to evolve through his music and explore many different styles of music and storytelling.

Lyle Lovett (L) and Robert Earl Keen (R) will perform at the Bonfire Benefit Concert on Sunday, February 6, 2000. The concert in Reed Arena is sold out and all proceeds go directly to the victims of the 1999 Aggie Bonfire collapse.

See CONCERT on Page 5.

JP BEATO/THE BATTALION

## Bonfire funds raise thousands

BY ROLANDO GARCIA  
The Battalion

The Bonfire Relief fund has raised over \$230,000, with the benefit concert this Sunday featuring Lyle Lovett and Robert Earl Keen expected to add at least \$100,000 more, organizers say.

The relief fund, established immediately following the 1999 Aggie Bonfire collapse, directly helps the 27 injured and their families with accident related expenses.

"We are still getting a lot of support and donations are coming in every day," said Amy Glass, communications director for the Association of Former Students.

Glass said money has already been distributed to help pay for funeral costs, hospital bills and ongoing medical rehabilitation expenses for some of the survivors.

"The University will identify a need, and we'll disburse the funds accordingly," she said.

Donors have included corporations, former students and even the student chapter of the University of Texas Ex-Students' Association, which raised \$4,000 from the sale of the Nov. 22 Hex Rally t-shirts.

Glass said although no specific goal has been set, the Association of Former Students will continue its active fundraising efforts, adding that another fundraising event may be in the works. Also, Texas Monthly magazine has donated a full page ad for the relief fund in its next issue.

Tina Evans, the communications director for the Texas A&M Foundation, said the Bonfire Memorial Fund has also raised a considerable sum. While the Foundation has not undertaken any active fundraising

**Bonfire Relief Fund**  
\$230,000 raised so far

Benefit Concert expected to raise \$100,000

All proceeds go to relief fund

**AGGIE 99 BONFIRE**

**Memorial Fund**  
\$520,000 raised so far

BRANDON HENDERSON/THE BATTALION

efforts, it has collected \$520,000 to date.

"We just established a fund because so much money was coming in from all over the state and nation," Evans said.

Texas A&M Vice President for Student Affairs Dr. J. Malon Southerland will appoint a committee this month to decide what form a permanent monument to the Bonfire victims will take.

"We're going to develop the criteria for the memorial and sift through the dozens of suggestions we've received," Southerland said. "They're all very interesting and come from the heart, so it'll be a wonderful project."

Southerland said that aside from the two funds, \$650,000 will be raised to fund 13 endowed scholarships: 12 in memory of the students killed in the collapse, and one for those students who were injured.

Stephen Norman, Class of '82 and a donor to the scholarship fund, said establishing memorial scholarships would ensure the students who died will not be forgotten.

"If you read about them, those kids were top-notch people, and I wanted to make sure they were remembered," Norman said.

## Students deal with traumatic stress disorder

BY STUART HUTSON  
The Battalion

James Allen Brown was enjoying a morning off from the emergency medical service (EMS) when he received a call to report to the Bonfire site. What he saw that morning still haunts his nightmares.

"I was working as an EMS technician at the bonfire site right after it fell," said Brown, a junior biomedical science major. "I can't really talk about what we did and what we saw, but I really haven't been the same since."

Brown, like so many other members of the A&M community who witnessed the 1999 Aggie Bonfire collapse, has experienced post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

PTSD is a psychological disorder which causes people who have experienced an extremely traumatic event to show signs of anxiety and depression.

"I've had horrible nightmares and flashbacks along with a loss of appetite," Brown said. "Day-to-day life is sometimes really hard."

Steven Straum, a staff psychiatrist with Student Counseling Service (SCS), said students who have PTSD may have difficulty readjusting to college life.

"Something this traumatic can result in a person becoming introverted, make them have nightmares and just generally can result in anxieties that may keep them from doing what they need to do to for school and, more importantly, for themselves," Straum said.

See STRESS on Page 2

### INSIDE

**AggieLife**  
• Conversations with the Battalion  
Jenny McCarthy talks about life in *Scream 3*. Page 3

### Sports

• Sports Extra  
The 2000 Texas A&M Baseball season begins.

### Opinion

• Sin & Redemption  
Jim Bakker returns to evangelism. Page 11

### Batt Radio

• Listen to KAMU-FM 90.9 at 1:57 p.m. for details on Groundhog Day events.

### Batt Online

• Check out *The Battalion* online at [battalion.tamu.edu](http://battalion.tamu.edu)