

Commission needs \$1 million hike

STAFF AND WIRE

The investigation into the 1999 Aggie Bonfire collapse will cost Texas A&M an additional \$1 million and will take another month to complete.

A letter sent by the Special Commission on the 1999 Aggie Bonfire to the Texas A&M Board of Regents and A&M President Ray Bowen March 1 outlines the need for additional funding and an extension.

The commission originally planned to release its report on the cause of the collapse March 31. The commission now expects a final

report May 1, a month later than Bowen's proposed date for the report to be released.

Jon Zagrodsky, a liaison between the com-

consulting firms conducting the investigation.

"Our team has been quite frugal in their approach to this when you look at the complexity of the task," he said. "We all wish this investigation could be completed faster. But our goal is to find the truth of what happened, and we cannot jump to conclusions."

In the letter detailing the request, Linbeck again commented on the commission's work.

"We understand the importance and sensitivity of our investigation. We will continue to maintain careful stewardship of the resources you make available to us and complete our work

"... the A&M system remains dedicated to supporting the commission's work at the direction of our regents."

— Howard Graves
Texas A&M System Chancellor

as expeditiously as possible. We thank you for your continued support of our endeavor."

Chairperson for the Board of Regents Don Powell said the board will address the commission's requests within the next two weeks.

A&M System Chancellor Howard Graves responded to the request in a written statement released Wednesday.

"As the Special Commission on the 1999 Bonfire requests additional funding ... the A&M system remains dedicated to supporting the commission's work at the direction of our regents," Graves said.

The commission will meet again March 14. If the request for more funds and time is granted, a formal public meeting will be held May 1 to present the commission's findings.

AGGIE BONFIRE

mission and the consulting firms, said the entire \$2 million might not be necessary.

At the commission's last meeting Feb. 22, commission chairperson Leo Linbeck Jr. commented on the status of the four engineering and

Senators support student fee raises

BY JEANETTE SIMPSON
The Battalion

The Student Senate approved two pieces of legislation Wednesday to create a student referendum for the upcoming spring elections. The Recreational Sports Center Fee Referendum Bill supports the increase in the current fee, making it \$78 per year. The amount included in the Student Services fee — about \$20 — would be allocated in the Rec Center fee. The actual Rec Center fee increase totals about \$7.

Since the fee is an increase of more than 10 percent in a single year, it requires a majority vote by the student body.

"Without the approval of this bill, the Rec Center will be strained financially and be

forced to cut back on the services they provide," said Brian Minyard, speaker of the Student Senate and senior biochemistry and political science major.

David Kessler, off-campus senator and a senior English major, voted against the bill.

"I have spoken with a number of constituents who feel that they will be paying a high fee for something that they do not get use out of," Kessler said.

Dennis Corrington, director of recreational sports, said if this fee is not implemented by Fall 2001, the Rec Center will be operating in deficit.

Student Senate also approved the International Education Fee Increase Bill. This bill increases the International Education fee to \$4 in order to provide more money for scholarships for students wishing to study abroad. This bill will also be voted on by the student body in the spring elections.

Two new bills also concerning fee increases were approved for revision by committee. The Computer Access/ Instructional Technology Fee Disapproval Bill calls for the Texas

A&M Board of Regents to disapprove the \$1.25 per credit hour fee increase. The bill also disapproves the broadening of the definition of the Computer Access fee by changing the title to the Computer Access/ Instructional Technology Fee.

Kessler, author of the bill, said that if the title of the fee changes, students will see fewer direct benefits, because the University will be able to use the money for things other than maintaining the computer equipment and facilities used by the students.

The second bill, the Proposed Fee Increase for 200 Approval Bill, approves the increase of the International Student Fee, the University Authorized Tuition and the Equipment Access Fee.

A bill enabling the Student Senate to call themselves into special session was also approved for revision by committee.

Justin Strickland, student services chair and junior political science major, said this bill is important because it grants the Senate control over themselves.

"The reason this bill is crucial is because it allows the Student Senate to represent the student body at all times, such as in emergency cases," Strickland said. "For instance, if a fee increase is coming before the Board of Regents prior to the next Student Senate meeting, the only way for the voice of the student body to be heard is if the Senate has the power to call themselves into session, and express the students' opinion."

Under the Student Government Association's constitution governing the Student Senate, only the student body president can call the Senate into a special session.

The Improved Lighting Bill, which calls for better lighting between the Beasley Labs and the Floriculture Growing Facility, was also approved by the Student Senate.

"Without the approval of this bill, the Rec Center will be strained financially and be forced to cut back on the services they provide."

— Brian Minyard
Speaker of the Student Senate and senior biochemistry and political science major

Shack-a-delic



BRADLEY ATCHISON/THE BATTALION

John Cataway, member of Squadron 16 and a freshman journalism major, inspects a support beam on their (Squadron 16's) shack for Wednesday's Shack-a-Thon. The event raised money for Habitat for Humanity.

Luv Lines creates forum to discuss sexual issues

BY KIMBERLY OLSON
The Battalion

Texas A&M hosted its own version of MTV's Love Line Wednesday.

Aggie Luv Lines, part of Sexual Responsibility Week 2000, was held to give students the opportunity to openly inquire about sexual issues and relationship problems and receive honest answers from knowledgeable sources.

"Dr. Buzz" Pruitt, professor of human sexuality, and "Maggie the Aggie" Margaret Griffith, health education coordinator and Student Health Services, gave professional advice relating to sexual health.

A student panel included Will Hurd, student body president and a senior computer science major; Dusty Bassell, senior yell leader and a senior construction science major; Jeff Schiefelbein, creator of CARPOOL and a senior management major and Courtney Pickens, chair of Aggie Representatives Educating About College Health (REACH) and a senior biological science major.

The student panel heard questions from the audience on a variety of

topics, from Internet relationships to safe sex.

Griffith stressed to the audience that the only way to stay away from sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and pregnancy is to abstain from sex. "Safe sex is abstinence. Anything less is safer sex," Griffith said.

Many questions were about health concerns related to sexual activity.

Griffith strongly encourages students with concerns to visit A.P. Beutel Health Center on campus.

"Go to Beutel. It does not cost anything — except lab cost — and is completely confidential," she said.

Schiefelbein expressed the need for everyone to be open with their questions, because that is the only way to become educated.

"Going to Aggie Luv Lines and listening to the questions and answers was an event that educated me and reminded me abstinence is the only way," said Corey Carothers, a sophomore biology major.

Sexual Responsibility Week 2000 continues with "Don't Let the Bed Bugs Bite." The event, addressing STIs, will be held Thursday in 510 Rudder from 4:00 to 5:00 p.m.

A&M sees donation increase

Foundation receives money for organizations, scholarships

BY DANA JAMOUS
The Battalion

The bond that ties Aggies together after they leave to pursue their careers seems to continue to grow along with their donations to the University.

The Texas A&M Foundation collected \$77.3 million in 1999 in the form of gifts donated to the University, a raise of \$22 million from 1998.

The increase is attributed to "a strong fundraising year as well as good returns on investments," said Rose Ann McFadden, communications manager of the Texas A&M Foundation.

Donors usually choose which programs they want their gifts to benefit, she said. Some even decide that their gifts

should become permanent funds to produce long-term income for A&M.

When gifts are unrestricted, the University president or college deans decide how these funds should be allocated, McFadden said.

Approximately one-third of the gifts given to the foundation are from individuals' contributions. Another third comes from corporations and the final third from private organizations and foundations, she said.

The foundation gave \$8 million in student scholarships between Sept. 1, 1998, and Aug. 31, 1999, McFadden said.

A scholarship for minorities was created by the foundation and received \$1 million in support from 12 corporate and charitable organizations.

The foundation is now offering 144 four-year scholarships to minority groups, said Eddie J. Davis, the foundation's president.

"Former students play a huge part," McFadden said, by either donating the gifts themselves or influencing their companies to do so.

"Even graduates from the decades of the 1980s and 1990s are making major gifts," she said. However, most endowment-level gifts are contributed by older Aggies.

Willy F. Bohlmann Jr., Class of '50, and his wife, Mildred, have been contributing to the Texas A&M Foundation since the late '70s, Mrs. Bohlmann said.

The family contributes to the foundation as a form of gratitude to the University for what it has helped them become, she said.

Bohlmann said she thinks people want to thank the University for helping them succeed, and the foundation has been very professional in the way it has raised and distributed money.

1999: A&M Foundation collected \$77.3 million in form of gifts donated to the University (1998: \$55.3 million)

- 1/3 of gifts to foundation are from individual contributions
- 1/3 from corporations
- 1/3 from private organizations and foundations

**Foundation gave \$8 million in scholarships
Total assets of foundation: \$537.9 million**

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