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members of various hall councils began discussing the idea of the residents attending the event together.

"We just want to help people deal with what is coming up — a visible extension of the Aggie Spirit," Schuster said.

Schuster said everyone is encouraged to join the group, which will gather at noon on O. R. Simpson Drill Field and will leave for Reed Arena at 12:30 p.m. After the Commission finishes its presentation, the group will walk from Reed Arena to the Polo Fields for a moment of silence.

"We came to the realization that this is going to be a big, important day for the University when they made the announcement," Schuster said.

"Regardless of what the findings are, we feel the University is going to need student support."

"I think it is great that students want to get together and support one another," said Forrest Lane, student body president and a senior political science major. "I don't see this as anything but positive."

Kenneth Elsbury, social chair of Moore Hall and a freshman civil engineering major, said that regardless of speculation field by members of the Aggie community about the cause of the collapse, the community will need to recognize the Commission's findings as the most probable cause.

"Tomorrow is going to be a day that is going to provide some closure for a lot of people," Elsbury said. "The Commission is well trained. They know what they are doing, and I put a lot of confidence in what they have to say."

"Even to go so far as to take the Bonfire part out of it, it's something that is going to affect every single person on campus in one way or another," Schuster said. "We would like to get as many people together as we can to show some support for the University."

Schuster said he did not know how the campus was prepared to accept the results of the Commission's investigation and deal with them in the here and now.

"If the way the student body and the Aggie family handled it in November is indicative of us as a student body and an Aggie family, then I think everything will be just fine, regardless of what is said," Elsbury said.

'Distinguished' awards celebrate faculty, staff

BY MAUREEN KANE
The Battalion

Students interact with faculty and staff every day. However, it is not every day that students get the chance to thank them for the time and effort they put into their jobs.

This Wednesday, at 1:30 p.m. in Rudder Theater, individual students, student organizations and fellow colleagues will have the opportunity to show them this appreciation through the Distinguished Achievement Awards.

Janis Stout, the dean of Faculties and associate provost, said anyone can nominate a faculty or staff member, and some departments have actual committees to deal with nominations for these awards.

"You get a sense of who's doing wonderful teaching. I don't think we have to have a formula to choose nominees — it's individual people's perceptions of special things that these staff or professors have done. They make a case for their nomination. It's these testimonials of extra good work that make those cases persuasive," Stout said.

Clint Bertrand, associate department head of engineering technology and industrial distribution, is a recipient of the award in the category of individual student relations.

Bertrand said he tries to treat each

student as an individual and give them as much attention as possible because "it sure makes a difference if a student feels she or he is appreciated in the eyes of the professor."

"I look with pleasure toward the awards ceremony. I deal with students and I'm here because the students are here. Anything that has to deal with students pleases me very much," Bertrand said.

The same sentiment of appreciation was expressed by two other recipients: Dr. Colin Allen, associate professor and assistant department head of philosophy and Humanities; and Dr. Frank Rauschel, professor of chemistry.

Allen said that he tries to get his students involved in class, rather than just lecture.

"I try to get them to think about the reasons for and against what they've read about and get into details of arguments — to get them to question their own reasons for what they believe is the truth," Allen said.

Allen has also been working on designing software for the class he teaches.

The software runs on the World Wide Web and enables students to take practice quizzes and do practice proofs. He hopes that he was nominated for the Distinguished Achievement Award because of the work that he does.

Rauschel is receiving the Distinguished Achievement Award because

of his work in his area of research. He said that he and the graduate students working with him are currently trying to develop existing enzymes to detoxify organic nerve agents in rapid fashion.

Rauschel said that, in the classroom, he tries to get students involved, and in the lab, he tries to get them to act independently and get them interested in the projects he is interested in.

Since 1955, more than 650 faculty and staff have won more than 1.8 million dollars through these awards.

Ann Pittman, the manager of faculty programs and services, said these awards are funded by the Association of Former Students and are presented in the categories of teaching, research, individual student relations, continuing education and extension, staff and administration.

"These are the most prestigious awards given by the University for faculty and staff. It's an almost year long process [to decide the winners] by colleges, student groups, different vice presidents — a large nominating group. The selection committee of 36 people consists of faculty, students, former students and staff. To win an award, a person must have been here for at least five years. After five years, a person can win an award in a different category, and after 10 years, they can win an award in the same category," Pittman said.

future of bonfire is expected to be announced in about five weeks.

Southerland has held meetings with student groups, including a meeting last week attended by about 80 students associated with bonfire, including the 1999 redpots.

Southerland said the meeting served as preparation for those involved with the pending May 2 release of the Special Commission's report.

A student who attended the meeting said Southerland sidestepped the issues of whether or not the tradition will continue. The meeting included a question and answer session, but did not include any details about the report, according to the meeting attendee.

"We have not seen the report," Southerland said. "Absolutely not."

CREW CHIEFS

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specifically asked that no one be appointed to a potential Bonfire 2000," he said.

Rusty Thompson, bonfire adviser, said at a Residence Hall Association (RHA) meeting that no plans for a future bonfire should be made.

"The University is asking that since we don't have [a] bonfire planned, we shouldn't have any bonfire positions," Thompson said at this year's February 23 RHA meeting. "We're basically asking you not to use the titles."

Thompson added that the only positions currently in place were senior redpots finishing up duties from 1999. University officials have said a decision regarding the

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