

• Decisions decisions

Chris Scarcella contemplating future with Oakland Athletics after being selected in the draft

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• Listen to KAMU 90.9 FM at 1:57 p.m. for details on an assault in Bryan.

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



**Weather:**  
Mostly cloudy with a high of 88 and a low of 70.

# THE BATTALION

**WEDNESDAY**

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106 YEARS AT TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

**News in Brief**

**Bus Ops proposes bus replacements**

Bus Operations will be exhibiting three different styles of buses Wednesday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Rudder Fountain.

Rachael Howe, executive director of student services, said the proposed new buses would replace the current buses.

Howe said buses will be transit style, similar to those in metropolitan cities. They will have a "metro-transit" look opposed to the "school-bus" look.

The three buses that will be on display are basic, medium and luxury style. The buses are compliant with the American Disabilities Act (ADA), have air conditioning and have handrails for students to stand.

Howe said the purpose of this event is to gain student input and feedback about features students want.

Bus Operations is trying to decide options like seating arrangement. For example, Bus Operations wants to know whether students want seats facing each other or one-behind-the-other.

Howe said the buses will provide the same services as the old buses, such as charter services for student groups, and could be driven as early as Spring 2001, but by Fall 2001 at the latest.

Information and refreshments will be provided at the event.

**Dallas inmate attacks guard**

KENEDY (AP) — A guard was stabbed at a South Texas prison Tuesday, the second attack in less than a week on an officer at the Conally Unit of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice.

Officer Scott Jendrzyk, 21, was escorting inmates to an eating area for the noon meal when he was stabbed six times by a prisoner carrying a 9-inch metal rod that had been sharpened to a point, said prison system spokesman Larry Todd.

"The officer was struck from behind, and as he turned to defend himself, that's when he received the superficial stab wounds," Todd said.

The guard, who has been on the job for about a year and a half, was treated at the prison infirmary and then was moved to a nearby hospital. The injuries were not considered life-threatening and Jendrzyk was expected to be treated and released, Todd said.

The inmate was identified as Raymond Ladon Tyner, 20, serving a 65-year sentence for aggravated robbery out of Dallas County. He was being held in administrative segregation and undergoing questioning by international affairs investigators.

The entire prison has been placed on lockdown, meaning all prisoners are confined to their cells.

**Judge orders stay of execution**

HUNTSVILLE (AP) — A convicted killer set to die Wednesday for killing a Waco shop owner more than 11 years ago won a stay of execution, but the Texas attorney general's office was moving to get the reprieve lifted.

U.S. District Judge Walter Smith ordered the state Tuesday to postpone the scheduled lethal injection of John Albert Burks because the judge said a reprieve he issued more than two years ago still remained in effect.

The Texas attorney general's office filed a motion of appeal to the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals and would work to vacate Smith's order, spokeswoman Heather Browne said. Texas prison officials said they would continue with regular preparations for an execution until the legal issues were resolved.

Burks, now 44, was convicted of killing Jesse Contreras, 63, owner of Jesse's Tortilla Factory, during a robbery attempt Jan. 20, 1989. Contreras was shot four times and died of his wounds 27 days later.

## Dorms may become substance free

JOSEPH PLEASANT  
*The Battalion*

Students living on campus in Fall 2001 may not be able to choose whether to live in substance free housing. The Office of Student Affairs is considering making all on-campus residence halls substance free next fall.

Current residence hall regulations state that students 21 and older are permitted to possess and consume alcohol in their rooms. If the proposal to make every residence hall substance free passes, it would be against school policy for students of any age to have alcohol in on-campus residence halls.

Dr. J. Malon Southerland, vice president for student affairs at Texas A&M, said alcohol use on campus has been a focal point for his office.

"Alcohol issues are a problem and have been a problem," Southerland said.

Southerland also said alcohol-related deaths on campus caused the University to investigate substance abuse on campus.

The Office of Student Affairs commissioned a University alcohol task force to study behavior on campus and make recommendations to the University. One of the recommendations was to make all on-campus residence halls substance free.

Susan Foster, assistant director of residence education, said substance-free housing reduces "secondary effects" on students in the hall.

Foster said secondary effects include disruption of sleep and study and damage to property that people influenced by alcohol may cause.

"People getting sick in the bathroom in the middle of the night is not good for the students that have a test the next morning," Foster said.

But some students say substance-free residence halls are not fair to all students.

Renee Edmiston, a junior environmental design major, said students of age have the right to have alcohol in their rooms if they choose.

"Students that are 21 should not have to live off campus to drink; that is not right," Edmiston said.

Roshawnda Little, a senior journalism major, said, if adopted, this rule would cause more problems for on-campus students and staff members.

"It will just be another hassle for students to find ways to get around the rule, and resident advisors to enforce the rule," Little said.

Southerland said one problem with initiating the change is that the University does not have the manpower to ensure underage students are not in possession of alcohol while on campus.

The option for students living on campus to live in substance-free residence halls is being offered for the first time this fall. Those students choosing to live in these residence halls signed an agreement that they will not, among other things, consume alcohol, tobacco or other controlled substances; that they will not return to the dorm under the influence of those substances; and they will not disturb the other residents as a result of using those substances.

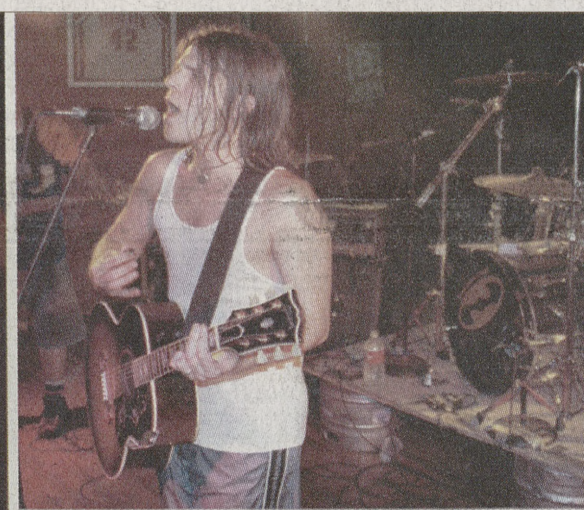
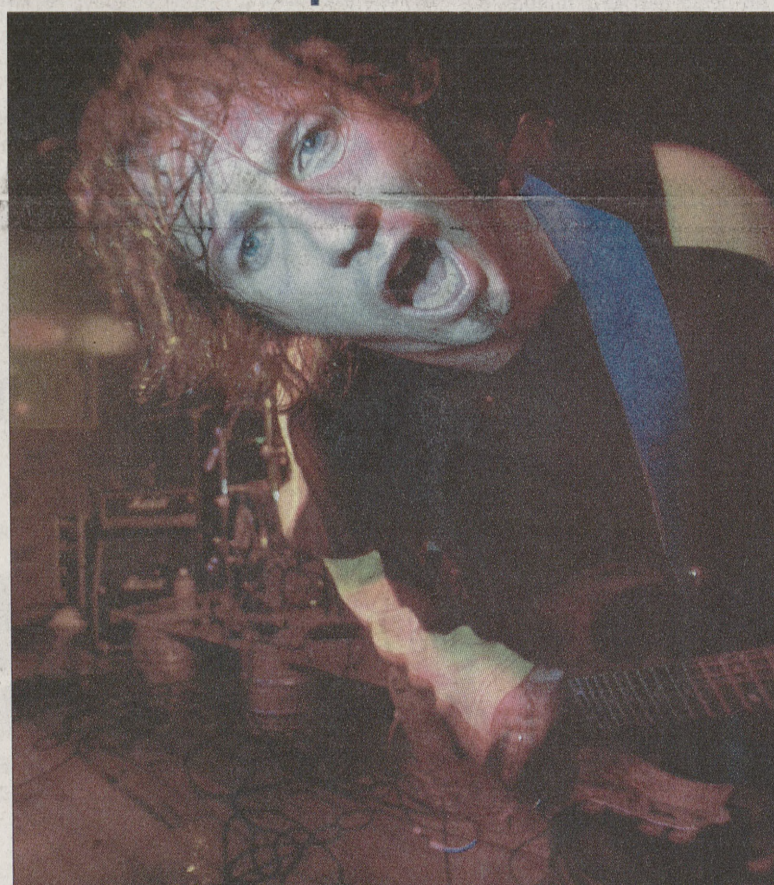
Southerland said he is waiting on formal recommendations before he makes a decision

on whether it is feasible for the University to institute substance-free housing. The proposed policy change will not affect students living on campus during Fall 2000, but may affect on-campus residents in 2001.

Substance-Free Floor Community Agreement	
	Do not possess, use, or be under the influence of any alcohol, tobacco product or illegal drug within the living environment.
	Do not participate in any behavior that disrupts the community and/or life of the residents as a result of substance use.
	Share the responsibility of confronting and/or reporting any inappropriate behavior within the community as related to substance abuse.
	Participate in healthy communication with community members and staff members, and promote a spirit of civility through my interactions with others.
	Ensure that a resident's guests will adhere to all of the above expectations while visiting the floor.

SUSAN REDDING/THE BATTALION

**Bands on tap**



STUART VILLANUEVA AND ANDY HANCOCK/THE BATTALION

(left) Jesse Davis, lead guitarist of The Nixons, gets up close and personal with the crowd at The Tap on Monday night. (top right) Zack Maloy, lead vocalist, sings to a packed house. (bottom right) Scott Stephens and David Walsh of the California band The Exies open the show. The Nixons are on tour supporting their new album, *Latest Thing*.

## Bush to fund TSU, PVAMU

ADRIENNE BALLARE  
*The Battalion*

In an attempt to resolve civil-rights issues in Texas, Gov. George W. Bush made a promise to fund two historically black universities to help improve their recruitment and retention programs.

Bush promised to fund Prairie View A&M University (PVAMU), an A&M University System school, and Texas Southern University (TSU).

"I want all Texans to have an opportunity to enjoy the benefits of our state's higher education system," Bush said in a written statement.

Steven Rondeno, a graduate student at TSU, said he was confused by Bush's proposal on funding.

"Prior to this proposal, when called for help for assistance for funding, we didn't get any favorable response from him at all, which led to problems within the institution," Rondeno said. "It's hard to trust someone who is an authoritative position, who controls the duration of a historically black institution."

Rondeno said the lack of funding caused a decline in enrollment at TSU.

See FUNDING on Page 4.

## Graduation suffers from lack of student interest

### Administration seeking ways to improve attendance at commencement ceremony

KIM TRIFILIO  
*The Battalion*

Texas A&M graduates have started a new tradition that has opened the eyes of administrators and has them seeking ways to improve their current graduation system in order to keep graduates from leaving commencement ceremonies early.

Dr. Bill Perry, executive associate provost, said this could be happening for two reasons.

"I think one of the reasons this is happening is because of the length of the ceremony. Participating in something for two hours and 45 minutes is a pretty long time," Perry said. "Another reason is because of the change in venue. When graduation was held in G. Rollie White Coliseum, it was more noticeable when people left early. Now in Reed Arena, it is not as noticeable."

Don Carter, A&M registrar, said the problem of students leaving early has gotten worse.

"The administration and faculty were upset at all three recent ceremonies. Students receiving degrees left before the ceremony ended," Carter said. "It is disrespectful to fellow graduates and their parents to get up and leave."

Perry said the administration is thinking of ways to maintain the dignity of the ceremony without decreasing attendance.

"I think we should make the ceremony shorter," Perry said. "We still want to walk across the stage. This is a time of celebration for students and families. I think most people believe that for an occasion like this, it should be about one-and-a-half hours, but now it is two-and-a-half hours or more."

Perry said the ceremony is not prolonged by the length of the commencement speeches.

"The commencement speeches lately haven't really been that long. We have good speakers too, and they're being brief," he said.

Shauna Clark, a senior biochemistry major and December 2000 graduate, said it is obvious why students are leaving graduation early.

**"Students receiving degrees left before the ceremony ended. It is disrespectful to fellow graduates and their parents to get up and leave."**

— Don Carter  
Texas A&M registrar

"It is too long. That's it. There is no other reason," Clark said.

Perry said other universities have this problem, but they have found ways to shorten graduation ceremonies.

"There are some universities with two lines. Maybe the provost will shake hands with one line and the president will shake hands with the other. This would decrease the time to three seconds per person instead of five seconds per person," Perry said. "Some campuses come together for a shorter ceremony, and then they go to their own college ceremony. But then the problem with that is, you wouldn't be able to shake hands with the president."

Perry said the administration is always trying to attract well-known speakers to the ceremony to increase attendance.

"In the past we've had Governor Bush, former presidents and chancellors of different schools. We try to get someone with an academic connection or a state connection," he said.

Perry said the president's office is

always open to suggestions for speakers and speakers often have a connection to the University.

"For example, you might have a president of a university who was in a fraternity or sorority with someone who is now [well known]," Perry said. "On the other hand, the connection can be through the student, as long as it's someone to give an entertaining, but meaningful, speech."

Perry said Bill Cosby's appearance at First Yell in September might forge a relationship with the comedian that could make him a candidate for a commencement address in the future.

"He's a good person to speak at graduation," Perry said. "Assuming he has a good experience here and he develops a relationship with the institution, and it's within our commencement budget, I'd say it could be done."

Perry said the administration will brainstorm ideas to increase graduation attendance.

See GRADUATION on Page 4.