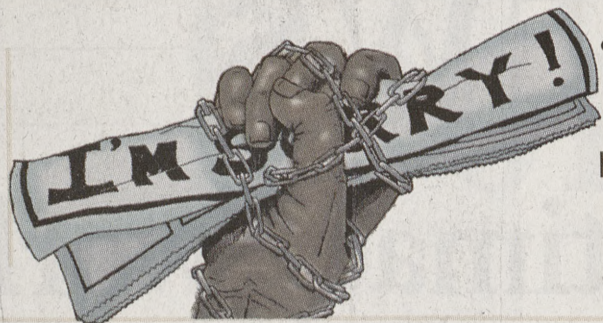


• Listen to KAMU 90.9 FM at 1:57 p.m. for details on a man convicted of failure to stop and render aid after hitting a child with his car.

• Check out *The Battalion* online at battalion.tamu.edu.



• The sins of the father

Apologies blur history of U.S. slavery

Page 5



Weather:

Sunny with a high of 98 and a low of 74.

THE BATTALION

MONDAY

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6 pages

106 YEARS AT TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

Preacher calls portrait's removal 'censorship'

KIM TRIFILIO
The Battalion

Since its removal, the Gibb Gilchrist portrait that hung in the entryway of the Texas Transportation Institute (TTI) Building has been an issue of concern for Dan Bates, a preacher and editor of the *Nothing but the Truth, So Help Me God* newspaper.

Bates held a press conference in the parking lot of the TTI building Friday to discuss the removal of the portrait.

In June, Herb Richardson, director of the TTI, removed the Gilchrist portrait, which displayed Gilchrist sitting in front of a likeness of Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee.

Bates, speaking from the bed of his pickup truck, said he wanted Texas A&M and the Texas Transportation Institute to hear what he had to say.

"I am very passionate about this issue and everything else I believe. I think some of the glass on the Texas TTI was even vibrating as I spoke," Bates said about the press conference.

Bernie Fetti, a spokesperson for TTI, said no one from TTI attended Bates' press conference.

In an earlier interview, Richardson said the portrait was removed after a student expressed displeasure with the portrait and the message it portrayed.

But Bates said the removal of the

portrait came after a political science professor conducted a survey to determine whether the Gilchrist portrait offended students. According to Bates, most of the students surveyed were offended by the portrait. A female representative was asked to approach Richardson, and he decided to take the picture down, Bates said.

Bates said neither the student nor the professor has been identified.

Bates said the portrait removal was censorship because the TTI building is not owned by the University.

In a statement regarding the Gilchrist portrait, Richardson said it was removed from the lobby after careful consideration.

"After the issue of the appropriateness of the picture of Gen. Robert E. Lee in the portrait's background was raised by a student, we became concerned this controversy would detract from a recognition of Mr. Gilchrist's many positive contributions," Richardson said. "Mr. Gilchrist was a giant in the field of transportation, and his contributions to Texas transportation and to the Texas A&M University System should be the primary focus of any exhibit describing his illustrious career."

Richardson said TTI continues to look for an appropriate way to honor Gilchrist in the Gilchrist building.

See GILCHRIST on Page 4.



Dan Bates protests Friday the removal of the Gibb Gilchrist portrait from the Texas Transportation Institute Building on West Campus.

STUART VILLANUEVA/THE BATTALION

Cowboy up!



Bull rider Kenneth Dequire of Liberty, Texas listens intently from the chutes as the national anthem opens the 29th annual PRCA Rodeo at the Tabor Road Arena in Bryan on Friday.

STUART VILLANUEVA/THE BATTALION

Code change has glitches

Switch from 409 to 979 affects more than B-CS area

ANNA BISHOP
The Battalion

Rebecca Austin, a University of Southern Mississippi-Hattisburg student, is still using the 409 area code to call College Station because the 979 area code has not yet gone into effect in Hattisburg.

"I call College Station fairly often to talk with my friends. They tell me to use the new area code (979), but it doesn't go through," she said.

Adrian Black of GTE headquarters in Dallas said the problem Austin is experiencing occurs when local service providers do not update switches on the local exchange routing guide (LERG).

"The problem is not associated with GTE or anything on our part," Black said. "The problem boils down to local phone-service providers. Not all local phone companies promptly enter the new codes into the LERG."

"While there is no penalty for not updating information, there will be a sufficient amount of repair work to be done after Aug. 5 and customer satisfaction is at its all-time low," Black said.

Word of the area-code change from 409 to 979 has been circulating through the Bryan-College Station area for nearly six months.

The "grace period," as Black calls it, allows long-distance users to dial both the 409 and 979 area codes until Aug. 5, when 979 will become the only usable code for the Brazos Valley.

Black said there are "glitches" in certain local phone service providers' systems that will cause problems, including the problem

Austin faces, when the new code goes into effect next month.

"Smaller, less technological communities, like Hattisburg, Miss., for example, will be a prime target for service repairs if local phone companies do not fix their problem promptly," Black said.

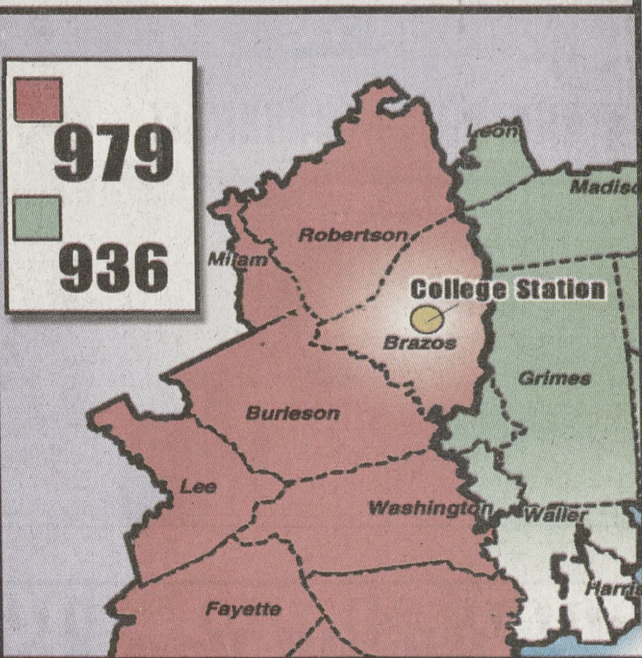
Black said GTE is currently introducing five to 10 new area codes throughout the state, all of which must be followed through by local phone service providers by the end of the grace period.

Barb Blackwell of the North American Numbering Plan of America (NANPA) said the Public Utility Commission of Texas (PUCT) approved a three-way geographic split of the 409 numbering plan area (NPA), commonly known as an area code, in February.

Blackwell said the 409 area code had too many users and the NPA code needed to be expanded.

The NANPA Website lists local communities at risk of being unable to dial the new 979 area code after Aug. 5.

AREA CODE CHANGES — Aug 5 become permanent



RUBEN DELUNA/THE BATTALION

Gig 'Em Week helps new students to adapt to A&M

JOSEPH PLEASANT
The Battalion

Senior management major Mechelle Ryland said she felt out of place when she started her first semester at Texas A&M, but she said a program the University has begun should help freshmen make a smooth transition into the University.

"When I first moved here I was lost and it felt really awkward," Ryland said. "I wish they had [held Gig 'Em Week] when I was freshman; it would have made me feel better about moving here and starting school." Welcoming new students and helping them feel at home in Aggieland is the mission of Gig 'Em Week, sponsored by the Department of Student Life and the Office for Student Orientation.

Vanessa Diaz Clark, coordinator for Student Life Orientation, said the first days after a new student moves to A&M can be the most difficult, but Gig 'Em

Week provides a chance for new students to adjust to their new surroundings.

"[New students] move here and a lot of times they feel lost. They are away from home and their family — it can be a really tough time," Clark said.

Clark said Gig 'Em Week also provides an opportunity for the department to provide information that was not given to students during their new student conferences.

"There just is not enough time during new student conference to give students all the information they need. This gives us another chance to communicate with them," Clark said.

Laura Wimberley, assistant coordinator for Student Life Orientation, said Gig 'Em Week is an opportunity for new students to meet each other so they can avoid feeling out of place like Ryland did.

See GIG 'EM on Page 4.

Bryan preacher gathers people with money

BRYAN (AP) — Subtlety is not a part of one Southeast Texas preacher's plan to gather more people around his flock.

Every Sunday morning, the Rev. Rick Sebastian cruises around the missions, cheap motels and housing projects of Bryan in a big blue bus emblazoned with this plea: "We will pay you \$10 to come to church on our bus."

Sebastian, minister at New Life in Christ, admits the message is a gimmick but feels strongly about his cause.

"It gets them into church, and if we can get them into church where they can hear the word of God, their lives can be changed," the reverend told the *Houston Chronicle*.

When someone accepts his offer, Sebastian drives them to his small, non-denominational church where the choir is made up of his wife, Patricia, and two other women. They are backed up by the

church orchestra: a youth minister on the guitar and one drummer.

Sebastian, who is from Detroit, said he has been preaching most of his life. A few years ago, his ministry duties took him to Jacksonville, Fla., where the idea of paying people to attend church was

"It gets them into church, and if we can get them into church where they can hear the word of God, their lives can be changed."

— Rick Sebastian
New Life in Christ minister

first born in his mind. Back then, he paid \$5.

In Bryan, most people turn Sebastian's offer down. But since he started a few months ago, some come forward as takers.

"I'm looking for a blessing," said Bernie Kindred, 49, as he climbed into the air-conditioned bus one recent Sunday. "Oh, I can use the \$10, but I'm looking for a blessing, too."

Jimmy Allen, 43, has become a regular on the bus and said his life has changed since he started going to church. "I don't drink no more. I've stopped that partying," Allen said.

Sebastian has even used the bus idea as a sort of religious roundup. One Sunday, Allen directed Sebastian to a cheap motel where they picked up Patricia Gamble and her five children for a trip to his house of worship.

As promised, Gamble and her children each got a \$10 bill.

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June 5th & 9th
June 19th-23rd
June 26th-28th
July 10th-14th
July 17th-21st
August 21st-23rd

N (Brazos Center)
June 14th & 21st
July 19th
August 2nd & 9th

(Townshire Campus)
June 8th
July 13th & 27th

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