

- Listen to KAMU 90.9 FM at 1:57 p.m. for details on a shooting in Bryan Sunday morning.
- Check out *The Battalion* online at battalion.tamu.edu.



• Pay to pray

Pastor shows true compassion by paying congregation

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Weather:
Partly cloudy with a high of 92 and a low of 72.

THE BATTALION

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106 YEARS AT TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

Off-campus bonfire plans progressing rapidly

COLLEGE STATION (AP) — Students involved in a group working to keep the Texas A&M University Bonfire alive say plans are rapidly progressing to build a log stack off campus this fall, in spite of a two-year moratorium on the annual tradition after last year's deadly collapse.

Texas A&M officials are critical of the students' plans for an alternative bonfire and said they will not support their efforts, the *Bryan-College Station Eagle* reported in Sunday editions.

The 2-million-pound bonfire stack collapsed during construction on Nov. 18. It killed 12 Aggies and injured 27 others, some severely.

In May, a five-member commission appointed and funded by Texas A&M to investigate the deaths blamed flawed construction techniques

and a lack of adequate supervision of students assembling the stack. In June, A&M President Dr. Ray M. Bowen announced the 90-year bonfire tradition would continue, but not until at least 2002 and not without major changes, including far greater University supervision and a professionally engineered design.

Will Clark, one of the board members of Keep the Fire Burning, said students, former students and community members need to see a bonfire burn in order to heal and to move on.

"That's what is prompting us to do this: The Aggie spirit and love for bonfire can't be turned off," he said. "When Dr. Bowen released his findings, that was a challenge for us to come up with a safe plan. We still have much to do, but we think it can get done. If

the engineers tell us there are problems though, we will pull back and plan for 2001."

Members of Keep the Fire Burning say they have been meeting with professional engineers, lawyers, fire safety officials and security companies.

"We will not support any bonfire off campus now or in the future."

— J. Malon Southerland
Texas A&M vice president for student affairs

The group has chosen Nov. 22 as the event date.

Joe Dyson, one of the group's board members, said a professional engineer has been donating his time to design several options for a safe bonfire, basing his models on standards set by Bowen. He would not identify the engineer.

Students would cut their own logs, which would be contrary to Bowen's plan that no students be involved in chopping down trees, and the bonfire stack would be smaller, Dyson said.

The group hopes to finance the project through donations. Past bonfires have cost as much as \$70,000.

Dyson and other board members declined to release details about the exact designs under consideration or the location, saying only that several Brazos County

landowners have offered their property. They said an announcement will be made once those details are finalized.

Dyson said his group understands the administration's concerns and reasoning behind waiting for two years before continuing bonfire, but believes the tradition can be rebuilt in the meantime.

But the student group does not have an ally in the University's administration.

"We will not support any bonfire off campus now or in the future," said A&M Vice President for Student Affairs J. Malon Southerland. "We will not condone it. A bonfire off campus is not bonfire. I would hope anyone giving this consideration would think about all the people this would affect and think of the consequences."

Regents approve new curriculum Diversity classes required

ANNA BISHOP
The Battalion

Freshmen entering Texas A&M in Fall 2001 will be required to take six hours of international or cultural diversity courses. The Texas A&M System Board of Regents and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board approved the new curriculum requirement proposal.

"I think it is very important for all college graduates ... to have a sense of cultural diversity."

— Ronald Douglas
Texas A&M executive vice president and provost

all students today will be working abroad or interacting with other people, I think this will be useful."

The current 48-hour core curriculum will be changed to 43 hours by reducing the number of physical education and social sciences courses.

Douglas said that, in addition to taking a minimum of six hours of international or cultural diversity classes, students would take two intensive writing classes in their majors and one foreign language class.

Junior elementary education major Lindsey Ruthart said while the cultural diversity courses may benefit students in a competitive job market, the classes may not be received well by every student.

"Since these courses are mandatory, there is not much the student body can do, regarding likes and dislikes," she said. "However, I believe these courses are a good idea, because so many jobs today, especially business majors, require a knowledge of culture and international diversity."

Douglas said an initial core curriculum proposal requiring students to take a certain number of cultural diversity classes, such as African-American history, died after igniting a debate about whether it was politically correct.

See COURSES on Page 4.

Forest fire



A fire broke out Thursday afternoon on former NFL official Red Cashion's farmland. What started as a grass fire soon grew into a forest fire around 1:45 p.m. David Abernathy, regional fire coordinator of the Texas Forest Service, said that the fire was started by hay baling equipment. The combination of weather, dry conditions and lack of rain made the environment ideal for a fire. Abernathy estimated that 50 or more acres were burned in the fire.

ANDY HANCOCK/THE BATTALION

NNO aims to aware, fight crime

JOSEPH PLEASANT
The Battalion

National Night Out (NNO), a 10-year-old program that aims to foster neighborhood watch programs and increase crime awareness, will be held Tuesday from approximately 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. in College Station.

Sgt. Alan Baron, of the University Police Department, said NNO is based on the neighborhood watch program, which encourages neighborhoods to work together to prevent crime in their community.

"National Night Out is to let people know who their neighbors are so they can watch out for each other," Baron said.

Neighborhoods participate by organizing block parties or other activities that encourage interaction between neighbors.

Baron said officers who patrol the areas may participate in activities and visit with residents about crime-prevention programs.

Kristina Humphreys, a senior accounting major, said she likes the idea of NNO because it encourages people to get to know their neighbors.

"I think it's a good way of people finding out who they live close to and also to know someone is watching out for them," Humphreys said. "I would get involved in it if I lived in an active neighborhood."

LaKendrea Johnson, Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) instructor and crime prevention coordinator for the

See NIGHT OUT on Page 4.

Napster Inc. granted reprieve

Two federal judges allow music-sharing service to remain online

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Shawn Fanning emerged from Napster headquarters with his hands stuffed deep in his pockets, baseball cap pulled down tight, and the wide grin of an Internet wunderkind who just dodged a legal bullet.

came Friday when two federal judges granted Napster Inc. a stay, allowing it to remain online — at least temporarily.

Napster had faced a midnight deadline for shutting down the trading of copyrighted music on its computer servers after a judge sided with the recording industry, which claimed Napster's sole purpose is to foster an illegal Internet giveaway.

"I am happy and grateful that we do not have to turn away our 20 million users and that we can continue to help artists. We'll keep working and hoping for the best," Fanning said Friday as he peeked out from under his cap at reporters camped in front Napster's two-story office.

The Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) sued Napster in December for copyright infringement. The record labels claim they lost millions in profits because of music piracy made possible by the company's software.

"It is frustrating, of course, that the tens of millions of daily infringements occurring on Napster will be able to continue, at least temporarily," said Hilary Rosen, president of the RIAA.

A judge hearing the lawsuit had

See NAPSTER on Page 4.

Texas schools lack standardized sexual abuse programs

ANNA BISHOP
The Battalion

About one in four school-age girls and one in 10 boys in Texas have been sexually abused, according to a recent Texas A&M research study conducted by Dr. Danny Ballard, an A&M health professor, and Dr. Beth Lanning of Baylor University. The study surveyed 89 of the biggest school districts in the state — those with at least 5,000 students.

Ballard said the survey showed that Texas lacks a standardized sexual abuse prevention program and

that districts' budgets and training time vary greatly.

"There appears to be little consistency among districts about how they approach these problems," Ballard said. "Some districts regard the program as an important function and others give it little time, or money. As for a standard prevention program for all Texas schools to follow, there is none."

Ballard said only half of the state school districts surveyed received funding for abuse prevention programs.

"I feel funding had the greatest

variability of all the areas we surveyed," Ballard said.

"School districts of all sizes should offer sexual abuse programs in their schools."

— Suelma Contreras
chairperson of Chilifest, Inc.

By law, each district must have methods to report sexual abuse of children, Ballard said. Most school districts' faculties are informed of reporting procedures during in-service, conducted by counselors, police officers or psychologists.

The Goose Creek Consolidated Independent School District (GCCISD) in Baytown, Texas, has made an attempt to prevent sexual abuse of children by hiring family involvement coordinators (FICs).

FIC Suelma Contreras said the 13 involvement coordinators in GCCISD work with the parents of school-age

children to meet the physical needs such as food, clothing and shelter, and emotional needs, such as sexual abuse prevention.

"School districts of all sizes should offer sexual abuse programs in their schools," Contreras said. "Prevention efforts are the most effective way to reduce this devastating behavior."

Ballard said smaller districts lack the funds to support preventive programs such as GCCISD's FICs.

"In rural school districts, there are often not many resources available to deal with the problem," Ballard said.



Officer Russell, of the Bryan Police Department, is participating in National Night Out. This program is being coordinated by local police and neighborhoods, and it is designed to deter crime by allowing residents to get acquainted with each other.

STUART VILLANUEVA/THE BATTALION