

Students voice opinions

Leaders back Bowen's postponement of Bonfire

By MARIUM MOHIUDDIN
The Battalion

The Texas A&M student body will take an official stand on the future of Aggie Bonfire and A&M President Dr. Ray M. Bowen's decision to postpone Bonfire until 2002 tonight at the Student Senate meeting.

Acting as the voice of the student body, the Senate, composed of 58 senators and six officers, will meet at 7:30 p.m. in the Governance Room of the Koldus Student Services Building to discuss the Bonfire Resolution.

The resolution states that the Senate, representing the student body, fully supports and commends the administration and Bowen and does not support and strongly discourages any other student initiatives not in 100 percent accordance with A&M and Bowen's position.

"It is really just time for the students to

take a firm stand and make our opinion known to the entire outside world and say that, yes, we do support the administration and that any other student initiative is unacceptable," said Bobby Robbins, one of the seven authors of the resolution, chairman of academic affairs committee and a senior political science major.

A five-person commission investigating the cause of the 1999 Aggie Bonfire collapse released a report on May 3 stating that the cause of collapse was due to structural complications. Bowen decided on June 16 that Bonfire would be on hold until at least 2002 with modifications to the structure, development and leadership.

Vice President for Student Affairs Dr. J. Malon Southerland and Student Body President Forrest Lane, a senior political science major, will co-chair a task force consisting of 15 to 20 students, faculty

and staff, that has been charged with designing a safe Bonfire. The committee will oversee the work of several subcommittees that will tackle individual issues such as safety, construction design and student leadership.

"The Student Senate, along with Forrest Lane, is the official elected voice of the student body, and A&M has the highest student voter turn out, which says a lot about our student body and this resolution," Robbins said.

Against admonitions by several student organizations against an off-campus bonfire, a student-initiated organization, Keep The Fire Burning (KTFB), is continuing with its plans to construct a bonfire.

"They have a statement with 20 people on it, but I see my email box with 1,000 statements [in support of an off-campus bonfire]," said Will Clark, board member

TEXAS A&M STUDENT SENATE
AGGIE BONFIRE RESOLUTION
OPEN SESSION
WEDNESDAY, 7 P.M.
GOVERNANCE ROOM
KOLDUS BUILDING

BRANDON HENDERSON/THE BATTALION

for KTFB. "I doubt that they have talked to 1,000 people. I am not trying to pass judgment on them. I understand that they have to work with the University."

However, Speaker of the Senate Chad Wagner, a junior political science major, explained that the authors of the resolution have spoken with several students and student leaders.

"The Student Senate has gone to several organizations to come up with this opinion," he said. "[The authors] have judged from [their inquiry] that this is best for A&M."

"The true voice of the constituents is on the Senate floor. The student senator

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Walton Hall reprimanded in Commons

By BRADY CREEL
The Battalion

The Food Services Department did not allow residents of Walton Hall to enter the Commons Dining Hall Friday because of problems with Northside residents the previous weekend.

To combat unacceptable behavior of students in dining halls, Associate Director of Food Services Cynthia Zawieja issued a letter to students on Friday. The letter was distributed to students at the Commons, and it outlined appropriate student behavior and accountability in the facility.

"To respect the rights of all of our students who buy meal plans ... we feel it is our responsibility to maintain the dining halls so that every student has the opportunity to come in and eat," Zawieja said.

Zawieja's letter said that, on Sept. 8, many regular customers "left the dining center without the opportunity to eat." Residents of Schumacher, Moses and Crocker halls and the FHK complex held a "Viking Yell" in which residents wore their grodes — clothing worn for work related to Bonfire that is intentionally left unwashed — when they went to the Commons to eat. A food fight began during Viking Yell.

Zawieja said the Northside residents were easily recognized because of their grodes. Food Services was expecting their arrival on Sept. 15 and would not admit them because it was suspected they would hold Viking Yell — and a food fight — again.

"Students who do not comply with student rules may be refused entrance into the dining center or be removed with follow-up of dis-

ciplinary action and forfeiture of dining meal options on campus," the letter stated.

Josh Kaylor, Residence Hall Association president and a junior agricultural development major, said the Viking Yell was held in place of "Sbisa Yell," a version of Yell Practice held in the dining facility, because Sbisa is currently closed for renovation. Sbisa Yell often includes throwing Sbisa balls — napkins shaped like a ball with food inside — and food fights.

Viking Yell is considered a Bonfire-related activity, Zawieja said. She said Food Services felt that since there will be no Bonfire this year, students should not participate in behavior that is normally associated with Bonfire, such as groding.

She added that the Food Services Department has chosen to "clamp down" on this type of behavior because it will not be tolerated in Sbisa after it reopens.

Zawieja said Food Services attempted to control Sbisa Yell before Sbisa was closed in December 1999. Activities that were tolerated in the past will not happen in the new Sbisa.

"It is an added burden to our staff to have to stay and help clean up this mess," Zawieja said. "It is really not appropriate for the dining center. We respect the fact that students want to go wild and crazy and have fun, but there are other people in the dining center who don't particularly want to participate or be involved."

In her letter, Zawieja cited section 34.1.5 of the Student Rules, which reads "Students participating in or

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Sununu appears at Bush Center

Former chief of staff praises Bush's term

By KRISTIN ROSTRAN
The Battalion

Former Chief of Staff for the Bush administration John H. Sununu spoke Tuesday about his challenges in the high-ranking government position and about the Bush administration that has not gotten the recognition he feels it deserves.

Sununu spoke at the George Bush Presidential Conference Center. "Being chief of staff was certainly one of the most, if not the most, rewarding and gratifying periods of my life," Sununu said, adding that thick skin is required in order to take all the criticism that comes with the job.

Sununu served three consecutive terms as the governor of New Hampshire and co-hosted CNN's nightly "Crossfire" from 1992-'98. Keeping on top of information has been a part of Sununu's life for a long time, but, in the chief of staff position, being informed was necessary to keep the president aware of the consequences his decisions.

"The chief of staff is whatever the president the chief of staff is serving wants it to be," Sununu said. "It changes to suit the maturity of the administration. If you are going to be a good chief of staff, you are to fulfill the

president's agenda without any nuance of your own built into the process."

Sununu described Bush's presidency as a success not yet realized by the news media.

"I am absolutely convinced that, when history starts to do the score card, this president's accomplishments on the domestic side will be seen to be as significant as what he was able to accomplish in leading the free world to respond in exactly the right way to the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the international changes. He was the leader of during one of the most critical international periods," Sununu said.

He cited the ignored domestic achievements of Bush as an example between the reality of politics and the public's perception of them.

Sununu said he thinks Bush's foreign policy was not his only success as president. Under his administration, domestic contributions included the Clean Air Act Amendments, child care amendment put on the budget bill, budget reform, energy deregulation, agricultural reforms and the American Disabilities Act rewritten the way Bush wanted it.

"George Bush did all of that in four years," Sununu said. "At the risk of

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KEVIN BURNS/THE BATTALION

Former Chief of Staff John Sununu spoke at the Bush Presidential Center Tuesday about the Bush administration.

Bryan expo center to be placed on Nov. ballot

By MAUREEN KANE
The Battalion

Following a meeting of the Brazos County Commissioners Court Tuesday morning, commissioners announced a possible new exposition center to be built in the city of Bryan.

A bond will be placed on the ballot Nov. 7 that will allow citizens of Brazos County to voice their opinions on the proposed exposition center, said

County Judge Al Jones at the post-meeting press conference. He added he is convinced the facility will be benefit Brazos County.

"Routinely, events cannot be held because the current facility is not big enough for some activities," said Mervin Peters, a member of the exposition committee. "This is something that will pay great dividends to those who use it."

According to Randy Sims, a member

of the exposition committee, if a new exposition center is built, many different types of entertainment could be brought to the Bryan-College Station area.

"Off-shoots of the Houston Livestock show; purebred auctions; automobile, boat, home and craft shows; concerts are all possibilities for the new exposition center," Sims said. "There is not enough room at the Brazos Center. This is going to be a tremendous facility."

Sims mentioned the possibility of bringing a minor league hockey team to Brazos County, stating that it could draw large crowds to Bryan and College Station.

Jones said several sites for the exposition center are being considered, and the committee is looking specifically at the accessibility of each site to restaurants and hotels.

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University of Texas to increase faculty

AUSTIN (AP) — The University of Texas-Austin will work to hire 300 professors within 10 years, encourage students to graduate in four years, increase staff workers' pay and lobby the Legislature for control of setting tuition, President Larry Faulkner said Tuesday.

Faulkner addressed the issues in his annual "State of the University" address. "I believe that expanding the faculty is critical to

our success. As we proceed, however, we must make a conscious effort to build a faculty reflecting the diverse population of our students. We have made a great deal of progress during the past several years, but we must do better still," Faulkner said.

On Monday, the university announced its fall enrollment was 50,010 — the state's and nation's largest.

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UT professor speaks to Aggies about racism

By SOMMER BUNCE
The Battalion

"It's the white people in this country who need to hear this, because we're the ones with the privilege, and as it is often pointed out, privilege is often invisible to those who have it," said University of Texas (UT) journalism professor Robert W. Jensen Tuesday about the roles of caucasians and affirmative action in America.

Dr. Mitchell Rice, director of the Texas A&M Race and Ethnic Studies Institute, arranged for Jensen to address students and to initiate a dialogue about affirmative action among caucasians.

"What I'm trying to do is be honest about the privilege [that white people have], and I'm here because, at some point in my life I decided those privileges of race, gender and culture had to be pointed out," said Jensen, adding that affirmative action — which requires a quota of minority students or employees in an institution — already exists in a comparatively caucasian-dominated society for its caucasians citizens.

Jensen, co-editor of Freeing the First Amendment: Critical Perspectives on Freedom of Expression and co-author of Pornography: The Production and Consumption of Inequality, also writes opinion and analytical articles of media outlets. Rice said Jensen's work has raised a need for discussion.

"Racism is alive and well," Rice said. "I think we all know that, and we all have our experiences with that. You can hear me talk of affirmative action, and you can expect me to be because I'm African-American. But we're hearing from an Anglo who readily admits that he has benefited from being white in this culture."

Jensen, who refers to himself as "a dumb-ass white boy from North Dakota," admits to not being a race expert or a man who earned his degree researching race. He said he is, instead,

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MELISSA BARNES/THE BATTALION

Robert W. Jensen, an associate professor of journalism at UT-Austin, gives a lecture on racism Tuesday in Koldus.

Food Services enforce:
from the Student Conduct Code

Students participating in or encouraging disturbances in the dining halls will be subject to disciplinary action. Students will be billed for the total cost of replacing items broken, damaged or destroyed as a result of mischievous conduct, carelessness and wanton destruction.

Members of the faculty and staff have the authority and responsibility to maintain responsible standards of student dress and grooming within their respective classrooms, laboratories, offices and other areas of public presentation for which they are responsible.

BRANDON HENDERSON/THE BATTALION