

107 YEARS AT TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

## Senate approves resolution Off-campus bonfires strongly discouraged

By JEANETTE SIMPSON  
The Battalion

The Texas A&M Student Senate approved a resolution Wednesday that supports and commends the administration and A&M President Dr. Ray M. Bowen's decisions regarding the future of Bonfire.

"So much unwarranted criticism has fallen upon this administration," said Bobby Robbins, chairman of the academic affairs committee and a senior political science major. "From a group that is still only beginning to comprehend the difficulty of Dr. Bowen's decision, we are here to say, 'thank you.' Dr. Bowen is to be commended for his ability to lead a world-class university all the while with his ear open to the needs of the students."

The Texas Aggie Bonfire Resolution, authored by Robbins and six other senators, discourages student initiatives for an off-campus bonfire that are not in accordance with A&M's official position.

"Let there be no mistake: The student leaders do not support any off-campus bonfire," Robbins said. There was some debate among student senators about why the Senate should take the position of discouraging off-campus bonfires.

"We [in this resolution] are discouraging any off-campus bonfires, because Will Clark, speaking on behalf of the Keep The Fire

Burning (KTFB) group, said that 'if [KTFB does] not receive student and student leader support, [KTFB] would not hold an off-campus bonfire,'" Robbins said.

In writing the Bonfire Resolution, the authors consulted student leaders, including Student Body President Forrest Lane, Corps of Cadets Commander Mark Welsh, Memorial Student Center President Nathan Cray, Residence Hall Association President Josh Kaylor, yell leaders, class presidents and the Traditions Maintenance Council — a committee of former Bonfire leaders. All of these leaders fully supported the resolution.

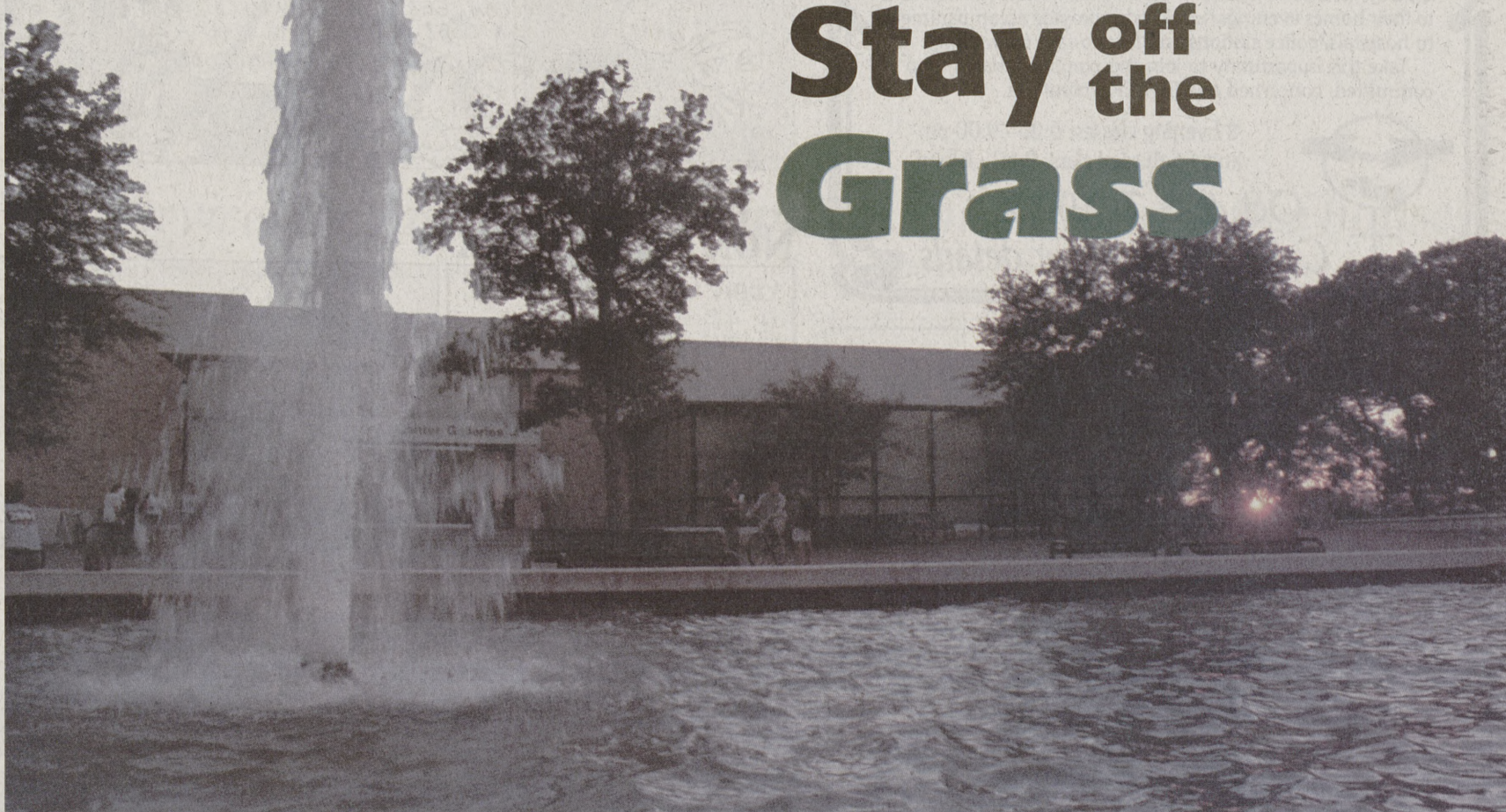
"It is time for student leaders to step forward; this resolution is representative of A&M student leaders doing so," said Lane, a senior political science major.

Northside Student Sen. Micah Belden, an author of the resolution and a junior history major, agreed with Lane.

"Bonfire, as we knew it, is dead," Belden said. "The 100-percent student-led, student-built Bonfire is a thing of the past. Through the passing of this resolution, we send a message to all the world of the strength, unity and camaraderie of the A&M student body."

Members of KTFB, which is planning an off-campus bonfire, attended the meeting and expressed

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BERNARDO GARZA/THE BATTALION

## Stay off the Grass

## 50 years ago, the MSC was born and became a part of Aggieland

By JOSEPH PLEASANT  
The Battalion

Costing \$2 million, furnished with \$300,000 and called a joke in an article in the University of Texas-Austin Daily Texan, the Memorial Student Center (MSC) opened its doors as the campus living room in 1951 and changed the flow of Texas A&M student life.

Until then, the YMCA Building, Guion Hall and the Aggieland Inn served as meeting places for the A&M student body.

The classes of '35 and '36 were the first to raise money to establish the new student union.

The new facility had a ballroom, a hotel, a post office and a number of meeting rooms.

In 1950, the year before its official dedication, the MSC began to be used by students and offered activities such as tours of the building and an art exhibit sponsored by the Texas Fine Arts Association.

"The original MSC was only about one-fourth of the size of the current one; also, when it opened, it had only three committees. Now we have 26," said James Reynolds, director of the MSC. "The MSC was made to provide programming to enhance life here on campus."

This year the MSC will celebrate its 50th anniversary by sponsoring MSC Awareness Days on the 21st of each month until April 21, the day the MSC opened.

Jenny Balaze, executive vice president of assessment and finance and a junior accounting major, said the MSC hopes to raise awareness about its services through the many events that will be held to celebrate the its anniversary.

Along with the dedication of the MSC, other events made news at A&M during the '50s.

In the '50s, when the student body was composed of only male Corps of Cadets members, Marion T. Harrington, Class of '22, became the first former student to be inaugurated as president of A&M.

In February 1951, A&M head football coach Harry Stiteler came under investigation because of an attack on him in Houston in December 1950. Stiteler was physically attacked on his way to a banquet honoring the A&M football team.

The incident led to controversy in the press as A&M officials and Houston Chronicle employees commented about the identity of the attacker.

Stiteler resigned after admitting that he provided false information to the press and that the attack was not

as serious as he had made it seem. He was replaced by former assistant coach Ray George later that year.

A decision to replace Reveille I faced the student

See MSC on Page 2A.

## Awareness Day kicks off

The first Memorial Student Center (MSC) Awareness Day will be today. The Awareness Day is intended to heighten campus awareness about the MSC and the 50th anniversary events planned throughout the year.

Jenny Balaze, MSC council vice president for assessment and finance and a junior accounting major, said the first Awareness Day will not have a committee-organized event.

"There will be no special programming because the committees are still selecting new members," Balaze said.

Future Awareness Days, however, will have programs geared toward a particular decade.

Different committees within the MSC will organize programs for each month leading up to the re-dedication of the MSC in the spring.

## TIMELINE OF AMERICAN HISTORY THROUGH THE '50s

President Truman announces U.S. intervention in Korea; the Peanuts gang premieres in a comic strip by Charles Schulz.	U.S. surgeon John Gibbon Jr. creates the first heart-lung machine.	Dick Clark hosts the first "American Bandstand." The birth control pill is introduced, unavailable to the public for eight years.	20 million households nationwide have television sets, up from less than 1 million in 1949.	Supreme Court votes that racial segregation violates the 14th Amendment in Brown vs. Board of Education.	Disneyland opens in Anaheim, Calif.; The polio vaccine is declared safe for use; Rosa Parks refuses to move to the back of the bus.	Martin Luther King Jr. organizes a bus boycott in Alabama; Mickey Mantle leads in home runs, runs batted in and runs scored.	The Soviet Union launches Sputnik 1, the first artificial satellite; Jimmy Hoffa is elected president of the International Teamsters.	The United States launches the Explorer 1 satellite; American Express credit card debuts.	Alaska and Hawaii become the 49th and 50th states in the Union; Fidel Castro establishes a communist dictatorship in Cuba.
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RUBEN DELUNA/THE BATTALION



PATRIC SCHNEIDER/THE BATTALION

Josh Rowan, a student senator, speaks at the Bonfire resolution meeting supporting Bowen's decision to postpone Bonfire.

## Bryan residents to sue company for arsenic poisoning

By RICHARD BRAY  
The Battalion

Possible arsenic contamination of the city of Bryan's soil, water and buildings has led to a class action lawsuit against ATOFINA Chemical Co., formerly known as the Elf Atochem Co.

Residents who lived in Bryan between 1973 and 1995 or who owned property in Bryan between 1992 and 1995 can possibly join the suit against ATOFINA for releasing harmful chemicals, including arsenic, into the environment from its plant in Bryan.

According to the case's Website, the lawsuit Lillian Hayden et al. v. Atochem North America et al. is brought by people who lived, worked or owned property in the area around an old farm-chemical plant at 201 West Dodge Street in Bryan between Jan. 1, 1973 and April 30, 1995. Children whose mothers were preg-

nant in Bryan during the time period are also included in the suit.

The plaintiffs claim that the plant, which has since closed, released arsenic and other chemicals that contaminated soil, water and buildings. According to the plaintiffs, these

**"The attorney for the city outlined a counteroffer, listing all the financial damages as a result of arsenic contamination."**

— Dawn Lee Wakefield  
Bryan resident

chemicals increased the risk of some kinds of cancer and birth defects and caused anguish and property damage.

Under the proposed civil settlement, the defendants would pay \$41.2 million to a fund that will be used to pay for the damages to plaintiffs.

In accordance with a separate settlement with ATOFINA in 1996, the city of Bryan will receive approximately \$5 million in reparation for the \$23.6 million in damages to facilities, buildings, the sewer system, water and the Bryan Municipal Golf Course.

At the Bryan City Council meeting Sept. 12, the City Council voted 6-1 to allocate some of the money to the Traditions Golf Course.

Dawn Lee Wakefield, a Bryan resident who attended the council meeting and has researched the negotiations between Bryan and

ATOFINA, said the city was previously offered better solutions.

"In reviewing public documents, there's an interesting letter written to attorneys of Elf Atochem from attorneys representing the city of Bryan, dated March 23, 1995," said Wakefield. "[In the letter] the city of Bryan is refusing a prior offer of \$2 million that Elf Atochem made specifically toward construction of a new municipal golf course, one that would be open to the public. The attorney for the city outlined a counteroffer, listing all the financial damages as a result of arsenic contamination."

Bryan mayor Lonnie Stabler said the counteroffer entailed cleaning up the Bryan Municipal Golf Course, which was damaged from the ATOFINA chemicals.

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## Regents to meet at Tarleton State

By DANIELLE BREED  
Special to The Battalion

The Texas A&M Board of Regents is going to Tarleton. The board meets six times a year in College Station, but at times decides to meet at other colleges within the Texas A&M System.

The board consists of nine members who serve two-year terms. The board's main duty is to set policy for the System. This includes hiring executive officers, setting the standards for conducting business and making broad-based decisions for the System.

According to Cynthia Carter, of President Dennis McCabe's office, the meeting will start at 8 a.m. today. The board will discuss issues ranging from finance to student and academic affairs.

The Chancellor's Student Advisory Board (CSAB) and the president will represent Tarleton at the board meeting.

Those on the CSAB committee are Chairman Rob Ferguson, Vice Chairwoman of Administrative Affairs Jenny Rothe and Vice Chairman of Research and Assessment David Olvera. Tarleton's student body representative

on the committee is Student Body President David Sweeney. CSAB representatives will report to the board yearly goals, policies, and issues students have presented to them that have been approved by Chancellor Howard D. Graves.

McCabe will give a "State of the University Address" before the board. McCabe will also share with the board some of Tarleton's needs, including funds to renovate the current science building and tuition revenue bonds for an event and recreational center for students.

## Task force to reduce car traffic

By ROLANDO GARCIA  
The Battalion

The solution to the constant shortage of parking at Texas A&M is not more parking spaces, but fewer cars, according to the Campus Access and Parking Task Force, a panel charged with studying transportation problems on campus and finding solutions.

A&M President Dr. Ray M. Bowen has approved the task force's final report and its recommendations.

In the report released in early September, the task force included a list of recommendations to create a more pedestrian-friendly campus and a more efficient, widely used transit system. Over the next few weeks, the task force will meet to prioritize the recommendations, but Williams said some progress has already been made.

"There's a lot of recommendations," said Tom Wilson, director of Parking, Traffic and Transportation Services (PTTS). "Some we can implement, some we can't, but we need to make a list of priorities so we can fund them as funds become available."

See PARKING on Page 4B.