

THE BATTALION

THURSDAY

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10 YEARS AT TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

The heat is on



STUART VILLANUEVA/THE BATTALION

Firefighting recruits **Scott Howard** of Plano and **Chad Dismukes** of Brenham crouch under the smoke while extinguishing a fire during a drill at the Brayton Fire School on Wednesday. Temperatures in the house reach up to 800 degrees.

A&M, Verizon offer discount DSL deal

By RICHARD BRAY
The Battalion

In order to provide off-campus students with faster Internet access, Computing and Information Services (CIS) and the Telecommunications Department have signed a contract with Verizon to provide off-campus students, faculty and staff with digital subscriber line (DSL) service.

DSL differs from cable modems because DSL uses telephone lines as opposed to cable television connections, said Chris Noynaert, an associate research engineer for CIS.

"Basically, it's a method the phone company has to put data communications over your regular telephone line," he said. "On the cable modems, the data is multiplexed with your television service, and in the case of DSL, the data is multiplexed in with your voice."

Noynaert said the advantage to using DSL is that cable con-

nections slow down when many people use the network at once, but DSL will remain at a consistent speed regardless of how many people are online.

"The main difference between the two is that the DSL is essentially a private line, whereas the cable data service is more like a party line where you are sharing the bandwidth with a number of other users," he said. "On cable, if everyone else is using the connection real heavily, you are essentially sharing that bandwidth with those other people. If everyone else is asleep, it will go just as fast as the DSL link."

Through the contract with Verizon, students will be able to receive the service at a lower price and will be able to use DSL with the A&M network rather than having to pay for a separate Internet service provider (ISP) to provide access, said Walt Magnussen, associate director for telecommunications.

"What the contract really allows for is a student or faculty or staff member who wants to get DSL service at their home, to first, get a slightly better rate because they are going through the contract, and secondly, to have a link come directly through campus instead of an ISP," he said.

Magnussen said A&M approached Verizon in order to offer students, faculty and staff with an alternative to a cable modem connection.

"Anything that makes sense for our students, faculty and staff, we want to be able to support," he said. "Since Verizon is really the only company in town that can provide DSL service, and since we knew people would want DSL service, we went to them and put together a contract that would provide some benefit to the students."

Verizon will provide asymmetric DSL (ADSL), which is

See DSL on Page 6A.

A&M athlete graduation rate behind others

By ROLANDO GARCIA
The Battalion

Student athletes' accomplishments on the field can lead authorities to the change for immunity on for himself and his as part of a search team into a remote area via d Mark Latti, spoke

aine Department of and Wildlife. The ne at least five miles away on tips from former police searched for several times last year.

These are the most recent available figures because graduation rates are determined six years after a class enrolls according to NCAA procedures. In some cases, when individual sports are examined, the gap widens even more. The graduation rates for football players and men's basketball players are 38 percent and 33 percent, respectively.

The data reflects the graduation record of students enrolled in the 1993-'94 school year and counts student athletes as those students who received athletic scholarships.

Bart Childs, chairman of the Athletic Council and a computer science professor, said the failure of many athletes to graduate is partly the result of different priorities. "There's too many people that came here to play and never really intended to be students," Childs said. "It's easy to get caught in the hoopla and forget the student part of 'student athlete.'"

Although the NCAA requires athletes to make some progress toward graduation each year to remain eligible, compliance with the guidelines does not guarantee enough hours to graduate, even after six years, Childs said.

The grades of student athletes tend to be lower than those of other students. In Fall 1999, 63 percent of athletes posted a grade-point ratio of 3.0 or lower, according to the Athletic Department, compared to 49 percent of all students, according to the Registrar's Office.

Childs said the main factor behind the lackluster academic performance of many student athletes is the lower admissions criteria set for athletes.

Athletes must meet minimal NCAA standards, and not the more stringent standards that A&M applies to other students. High school students graduating in the first quarter must have at least a 920 on their SAT. According to NCAA requirements, student athletes can get into A&M with a score as low as 820. As a result, many athletes' academic skills lag behind those of the rest of the student body.

"Like every major university, athletes are admitted with lower academic standards than other students," Childs said. "Particularly for [football and basketball], many of the athletes we recruit were not great students in high school."

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Board to improve Wolf Pen Creek Plans include drainage, street extension and bridge connection

By KRISTIN ROSTRAN
The Battalion

From shabby to chic — development projects to improve the Wolf Pen Creek district are in the works. A proposal to add man-made lakes to the area has grown into plans for a recreational area focused on arts, parks and commerce.

A plan was developed in 1988 to take full advantage of the undeveloped area from Harvey Road to Colgate Circle and from Texas Avenue to the feeder on the Earl Rudder Freeway bypass. Since then, the area of Wolf Pen Creek has been growing, but at a slow pace.

Trails for jogging and biking were built, along with the first of the man-made lakes. However, bad drainage hindered further development.

Kay Henryson, chair of Wolf Pen Creek advising review board, said bad drainage caused large amounts of silt deposits to fall into the lake and cover trails.

"The lake around the amphitheater kept being filled with the silt deposits," Henryson said. "The water coming from campus and the rest of College Station got trapped in that area, and it didn't look nice."

McClure Engineering was hired to resolve the drainage issues and create the remaining lakes. However, the firm found that an area near the southwest corner of Dartmouth Street and Holleman Drive is a wetlands area. Building in a wetlands area requires special permits.

"We are looking at protecting the area and using it to educate kids about wetlands," Henryson said.

The first signs of progress will be drainage improvements and the extension of George Bush East. The city is still in the process of obtaining bids for

the George Bush Drive extension, but construction should begin by May.

A plan to extend Dartmouth Street to City Park was also proposed.

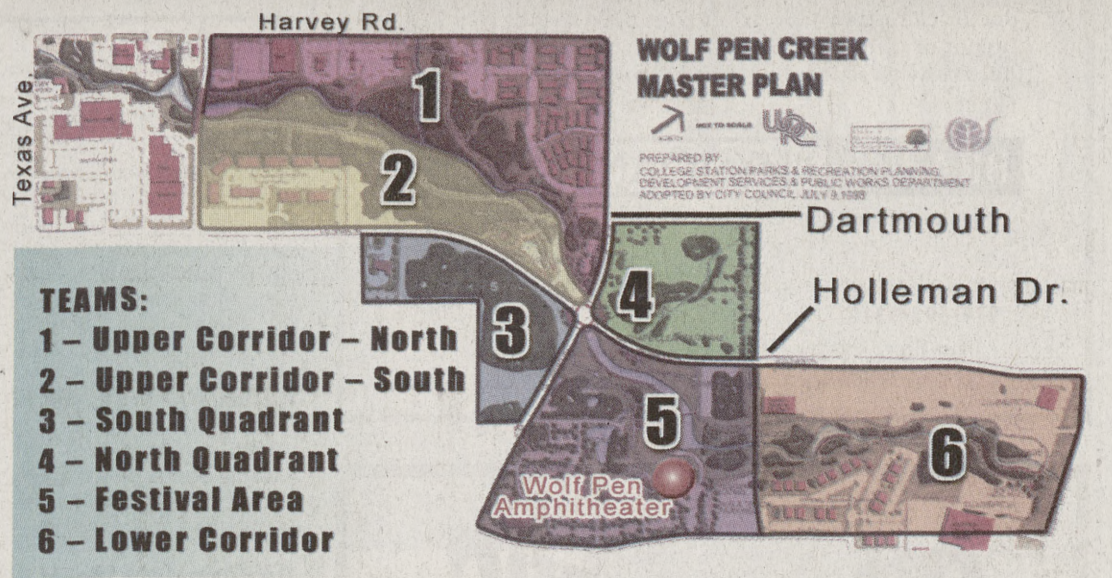
A bridge spanning the creek will connect Harvey Road to Holleman Drive, which is currently an undeveloped area.

Students from the architecture department, archi-

ects and architect interns presented several ideas for the future of Wolf Pen Creek Saturday. Business and private owners volunteered ideas to benefit the area.

Instead of contracting a company to develop these ideas, the city uses the volunteers and donates the saved money to scholarships for A&M students. This year,

See WOLF PEN on Page 6A.



RUBEN DELUNA/THE BATTALION

RHA proposes resolution to clear hall Bonfire closets

By SOMMER BUNCE
The Battalion

Hart Hall representatives presented a resolution to Residence Life to clear Bonfire closets in residence halls. The resolution, presented at the Residence Hall Association (RHA) General Assembly Wednesday proposed donating the Bonfire items to the Department of Anthropology.

The closets contain Bonfire equipment — such as axes, machetes and other gear — owned by each hall. Residence Life originally planned to clean out the closets during the summer and give the items to Dr. Sylvia Greider, who had been overseeing the collection of other Bonfire memorabilia, including items placed along the fence at the site of the 1999 Aggie Bonfire collapse.

RHA President Josh Kaylor, a junior agricultural development major, requested that Residence Life delay the action until the residence halls have time to consider the action. Residence Life originally set the deadline for 5:30 p.m. today for halls to contact Kaylor to have a hold placed on the donation of closet items.

Hart Hall Council President Stephen Blaskey asked the assembly of hall council presidents and voting delegates to consider giving halls more time to review their closets.

"Right now, in our hall, a 5:30 deadline coming up is not enough time to look at something this serious in that short an amount of time," Blaskey said. "I'm coming up here to ask for a little more time to deal with this."

Proposed by Blaskey, the Hall Closet Resolution was not on the agenda. Hart Hall representatives handed out

"And, there's the axes and machetes and everything else in the closet."

— Josh Kaylor
RHA president and a junior agricultural development major

copies of their resolution to attendees and requested that it be considered before the assembly. Representatives of Schumacher Hall seconded the motion. The majority of halls do not have Bonfire closets, Kaylor said, explaining that most house their supplies off campus. The proposed resolution would affect no more than 10 halls. In the view of Residence Life, those hall closets are departmental

closets now because Bonfire leadership no longer exists within the halls.

Removing the equipment from the closets would give each hall's closet back, Kaylor said. The basic reason the decision was made by Residence Life and not the hall councils was lack of proof of ownership, he said.

He said that, even though he bought items for his hall's Bonfire closet, he could not prove which equipment was his without a receipt.

"And, there's the axes and machetes and everything else in the closet," he said. "If you were the department of Residence Life, you wouldn't want to put that back in the hands of everyone who says he owns it and have it in the residence halls, because it's now considered a weapon. There's no need for it."

"It's not like you're going to use [the weapons] for any hall council activities," Kaylor said, referring to the programs and different events each hall sets up for its residents.

"But it doesn't matter," he said. "It's a good idea."

All halls voted to pass the Hall Closet Resolution, making inventory of the closets the responsibility of each hall council

See RHA on Page 6A.

Gramm, Hutchison support Bush record

WASHINGTON (AP) — Texas Sens. Kay Bailey Hutchison and Phil Gramm took to the Senate floor Wednesday to defend the Lone Star State and GOP candidate George W. Bush from criticism by Sen. Edward Kennedy of Massachusetts.

Kennedy, using time set aside for personal business, discussed a host of issues including health care and education but focused his remarks on Texas.

He cited a recent study released by Rand, a California-based think tank, that said Texas students' progress on national tests was about as good as other students. And he criticized the state's record on providing health insurance for children.

He had hardly finished his comments when Hutchison took the floor to defend Texas and Bush.

"I am not going to stand here, and I am not going to sit in my office and listen to anyone else that uses Texas as a whipping boy," Hutchison said. "It is absolutely unconscionable to trash Texas to get an advantage in the presidential race."

GRADUATION RATES

- 71% student body
- 63% student athlete
- 38% football athlete
- 33% men's basketball athlete
- 63% student athletes GPR ≤ 3.0
- 49% other A&M students (1999 figures)

According to '93-'94 (most recent figures available)

RUBEN DELUNA/THE BATTALION