

2002 Bonfire petition grows

Calls for increased student involvement

By SOMMER BUNCE
The Battalion

Dr. Ray M. Bowen's restrictions on the 2002 Aggie Bonfire have provoked more than 2,000 signatures, said Becky Bartschmid, the petition's organizer.

Since mid-October, Bartschmid has been collecting signatures in an effort to beseech Bowen to change the restrictions on Bonfire 2002.

Following the release in May of the Special Commission report on the 1999 Aggie Bonfire collapse, Bowen imposed a two-year moratorium on the blaze. He created special provisions for Bonfire's continuation in 2002, including the elimination of cut, the use of pre-cut lumber, a one-tiered teepee designed by professional engineers and increased University supervision.

The petition calls for the limited student involvement, cancellation of cut and two-year ban on the tradition unnecessary limitations on the future Bonfire.

"I'd heard a lot of people talking about what they'd like to see done and what should happen with Bonfire. And the one thing I wanted to do was work with the administration by sending a petition up to them, to really see something accomplished for the students who want Bonfire back," said Bartschmid, a sophomore journalism major.

Reinstatement of cut and maximization of student involvement and leadership is needed to make the next Bonfire a true Aggie Bonfire, Bartschmid said. Signers agree that there is adequate time to design and plan for Bonfire to be built in 2001, the petition states.

The purpose of the petition is to make clear to the administration that a number of current and former students do not agree with the stated limitations Dr. Bowen has placed on Bonfire, and to "encourage the administration to rethink their decision."

"Different people have different reasons for wanting this petition and for signing it," Bartschmid said. "For some, it's more important to see a Bonfire next year in 2001. And it seems like the only reason for waiting two years is to get rid of all the people who know what Bonfire is really about. But it's also about getting cut back, and even if it takes two years to get it, I will wait."

Luke Cheatham, a sophomore civil engineering major who is aiding Bartschmid's drive for signatures, loaded logs with Walton Hall last fall and would have been a crew chief this year.

The greatest bond an Aggie can feel comes from participation in cut, he said.

"No matter what we've supported in the past, whether we think we should follow Bowen's guidelines or we thought we should build our own bonfire, this is one thing we can all agree on," he said. "To preserve the spirit of Bonfire, we have to have more than the administration is giving us. Without cut, you take the entire spirit away."

After he participated in Bonfire and found out what being involved and taking a leadership role are about, Cheatham said, Bowen's proposal for

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FILE PHOTO/THE BATTALION

An agreement between A&M and Union Pacific Railroad will end trains stopping on campus unless it is an emergency.

Railroad agreement reached

Trains to continue through town, stop for emergencies only

By RICHARD BRAY
The Battalion

Texas A&M has reached an agreement with Union Pacific Railroad that will prevent trains from stopping as they move through campus, except in the case of an emergency.

The agreement was motivated by an incident in which a student tried to pass beneath a stopped train with his bike. He made it through before the train began to move, but his bike did not.

Mary Miller, associate vice president of administration, said another incident with Union Pacific that had not been revealed to the public served as a catalyst for reaching the agreement.

Miller said that about four weeks ago, two students approached the tracks at a location without a crossing when a train was moving through campus at about 30 miles per hour.

"The conductor said it looked like they were debating whether or not they could make it across the tracks in time, and they decided they could, so they darted in front of the engine to get across and the girl tripped and fell on the tracks," Miller said. "The conductor lost sight of the girl, and he panicked and called his headquarters and told them he thought he had run over a student."

The conductor stopped the train and walked back to check on the girl and found nothing.

Moving trains are not the only problem, said Bob Wiatt, director of the University Police Department (UPD). He said crossing the railroad tracks while a train is stopped can constitute criminal trespassing if Union Pacific decides to press charges against violators.

"The railroad and right-of-way belong to Union Pacific," he said. "If we have signs up

and students are caught by us, they could be charged with a criminal trespass. They are trespassing on property of Union Pacific that they are not entitled to do so."

Wiatt said trespassing on railroad tracks qualifies as a Class B misdemeanor, which carries a maximum of six months in jail and a \$2,000 fine, though it would be unlikely for students to receive the maximum punishment.

Miller said Union Pacific asked to meet with A&M representatives after it saw pictures of students breaking the law to get past stopped trains.

"They had initiated the meeting because they had seen the pictures on the PTTS Website, in which students were crawling over and under stopped trains, and that was of great concern to

See TRAIN on Page 5.

Close call



PATRIC SCHNEIDER/THE BATTALION

Linebackers Jarrod Pennright and Harold Robertson team up to break up a pass in Texas A&M's 21-16 win over Oklahoma State on Saturday. The Wrecking Crew shut down the Cowboys' passing offense and avoided a near-fourth quarter comeback for the win. See game coverage on Page 7.

A&M students designing peace sculpture for Jasper

By NOEL FREEMAN
The Battalion

When James Byrd Jr. was killed in June 1998, the town of Jasper was torn. The town will try to heal some of those wounds and unite the community with a little help from some Texas A&M landscape architecture students.

Proposed landscape architecture designs for the Circle of Peace Sculpture Gardens to be created in Jasper were unveiled Wednesday in the Langford Architecture Center Gallery. The project began this summer when Circle of Peace Foundation Inc., a private, nonprofit organization, devised plans for a

"circle of peace" to be created just south of Sandy Creek Park in Jasper.

Jody Naderi, professor of landscape architecture, said the project was designed to create a place where the community can come together and reinforce the unity that existed prior to Byrd's murder. Naderi said the landscape and construction design offer was extended to A&M landscape architecture students at the beginning of the fall semester.

Dr. Michael Murphy, professor of landscape architecture, said the land was donated to the organization with community plans in mind, specifically

See JASPER on Page 5.

Local, national races approach

B-CS residents prepare to vote in local elections

By COURTNEY STELZEL
The Battalion

As Election Day approaches, eligible voters everywhere eagerly wait to see whether their favorite presidential candidates will be chosen to lead the United States into the 21st century. However, the presidential elections are not the only topic of political discussion in Brazos County.

Registered voters in the Brazos Valley area will vote for local positions, such as county commissioner, and a special election bond proposition for a new coliseum. These issues and positions are just as important as the presidential elections, despite the lack of emphasis placed on campaigning within the county, said Mary Anne Ward, Brazos County clerk.

"The local elections are not being run by the city of Bryan or College Station, but it is a general election and is therefore run by the county clerk's office."

Positions on the ballot of particular concern to Brazos Valley citizens

See LOCAL on Page 10.

Governorships, House and Senate seat races in the air

By KRISTIN ROSTRAN
The Battalion

The presidency is not the only position up for grabs Tuesday. Several seats in the House of Representatives and Senate are open, along with 11 governorships.

Democrats hope to gain control of the Senate, which is a possibility considering the number of close races.

The most publicized senatorial contest is that of first lady Hillary Clinton (D) and Rep. Rick Lazio (R) for the New York Senate seat. Debates between the two have been labeled "rowdy" by the media. Lazio has not shied away from calling Clinton untrustworthy and a public policy disaster waiting to happen.

Clinton's spokespeople have characterized Lazio as a bully and use Vice President Al Gore's slogan for presidency, "You can trust me to fight for you." In most polls Clinton has held a slight lead over Lazio since the beginning.

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State Representative Positions	United States Senator
	Kay Bailey Hutchison Republican Gene Kelly Democrat Mary J. Ruwart Liberal Douglas S. Sandage Green
United States Representative, District 5	
Pete Sessions Republican Regina Montoya Coggins Democrat Ken Ashby Liberal	
County Tax Assessor-Collector	Countywide Positions
Art King Republican Gerald L. "Buddy" Winn Democrat Scot B. Adams Liberal	
County Commissioner, Precinct No. 1	
Tony Jones Republican Wm. (Bill) M. Wilder Liberal	
Sheriff	
Chris Kirk Republican Christopher A. Olsen Liberal	
Special Bond Election (all local)	
Proposition 1 - The issuance of \$18,500,000 coliseum bonds.	
Proposition 1 - Abolishing the office of elected county public weigher	
Proposition 2 - Abolishing the office of county surveyor of this county	

RUBEN DELUNA/THE BATTALION

Texas thunderstorms expected to continue

AUSTIN (AP) — Weather officials said an approaching storm system could bring more flooding to Central Texas, where high waters already have contributed to at least five deaths since Thursday.

Don Rogers, a spokesman for the Texas Division of Emergency Management, said more storms were expected to rage along a line from Del Rio to Austin and continue to Bryan and Lufkin by noon Sunday. Flooding was anticipated by evening, he said.

"It's similar to what we already have," Rogers said. "But when this started a couple of days ago, the ground wasn't saturated. Now it is."

On Saturday, the Llano River in Junction was receding after

See WEATHER on Page 2.

Weather

Bryan and College Station streets were closed periodically. Bryan schools opened late on Friday.

Forecast:
Rain and thunderstorms throughout the state through Thursday, with the exception of a few cloudy days in between.

After Thursday, cloudy and sunny.

***Local and state rainfall records broken since Thursday**

RUBEN DELUNA/THE BATTALION

Aggie TV adds free programming

By RICHARD BRAY
The Battalion

Following the College Television Network's (CTN-TV) failed bid this summer to provide student programming to Texas A&M-owned stations, Aggie TV has stepped up to the camera to try to become the first successful student-run television station at A&M.

For years, the Residence Hall Association (RHA) has tried to begin a student-run station, but it has been unable to do so in the past because it lacked resources.

Last year, RHA assigned the responsibility of organizing such a program to Cameron Cushman, a junior political science major. After receiving information from a variety of compa-

nies offering to provide A&M with programming, Cushman said, he decided on CTN-TV, which would provide television and programming in all of the residence halls and dining halls.

"When I assumed this job, I received materials from several different corporations that help students start their own television stations, and one of them was CTN," he said. "They would provide MTV-style programming to campus, but the beauty of it was that it was free."

Cushman said the proposal for CTN-TV failed over the summer during contract negotiations.

"I left it over the summer with a lawyer from the contract department, and all I ever heard was that it was a 'no

go' because they didn't allow the commercialization of campus, meaning they wouldn't allow us to show commercials on campus," he said.

Ron Sasse, director of Residence Life, said the contract negotiations broke down when A&M realized it would have no control over the advertising content.

"The University really has a prohibition on commercial advertising on this campus," Sasse said. "Except for the football stadium, commercial advertising is not permitted on campus."

Annabell Cortina, the Aggie TV program director and a junior speech communication major, said Aggie TV will not have the outside advertising that

See AGGIE TV on Page 2.