

Big kisses



PATRIC SCHNEIDER/THE BATTALION

Nine-year-old Drew Nelson competes for a 5-pound Hershey Kiss during a timeout at the women's basketball game Tuesday.

# Free Internet kiosk comes to Post Oak

By MAUREEN KANE  
The Battalion

The Internet can be accessed through portable computers, desktop organizers, even cellular phones, and by the end of January 2001, students and residents of College Station will be able to access the Internet at the mall.

CBL & Associates Properties Inc., the company that owns Post Oak Mall, has signed an agreement with BigFatWow, a company that provides installation of free, high-speed Internet access kiosks, said Kelly Sargent, director of investor relations for CBL. Post Oak Mall in College Station will be one of 29 CBL malls to receive an Internet access kiosk.

BigFatWow generates income through advertisements that will be viewed on television screens near the kiosk, Sargent said.

Bryan LeBlanc, assistant general manager of Post Oak Mall, said the implementation project has been under way for about a year and there are a few more details to be worked out.

LeBlanc said the largest kiosk model available

has 12 Internet "wow stations," but Post Oak does not have that much space.

"There will be a 10-foot-by-20-foot kiosk that will have a couple of 42-inch plasma screens showing advertisements, and six to eight units with 27-inch monitors that you can actually use to get on the Internet," LeBlanc said. "It is a pretty impressive unit."

LeBlanc said the kiosk should be installed and available to customers by the end of January 2001. The kiosk will be in the food court.

LeBlanc and Sargent said they have seen free Internet kiosks in other malls and they think the project will be successful.

"I've seen an Internet kiosk at another mall and it was a busy place," Sargent said. "Especially with the holidays coming, I think it will be successful."

LeBlanc said the Houston Woodlands Mall has an Internet service station that has benefited customers.

"We are doing this as a convenience to our customers," LeBlanc said. "The Internet is a big part of society now. This is another way to enhance our properties and services."

Shoppers will be able to check email, visit store Websites and access the Web in general. Proper security measures will be exercised, LeBlanc said.

Neither LeBlanc or Sargent anticipates any problems with misuse of the Internet kiosk.

"In every location, there may be a person who uses this as their primary Internet," Sargent said. "As far as using it for negative or destructive purposes, with a full-time BigFatWow attendant there, it will prevent some of that."

One Post Oak Mall shopper, Ashkan Moghaddam, a junior electrical engineering major, said he thinks that free Internet access at the mall might make shopping easier.

"It would be cool, but I don't know if I would use it at the mall because it is kind of busy and there would probably be a long line," Moghaddam said. "If I forgot my Christmas list at home, I could check my emails to see what people want."

Sargent said the service will benefit customers and stores.

"It's only a net positive for everyone," he said. "Hopefully it will keep them at the mall and they will spend more money."

## ENROLLMENT

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we need to at least be getting 5,000-plus minority applications."

Jocelyne Aviles, executive director of multicultural services for the Student Government Association (SGA), said minority figures have declined because of less grant money coming to A&M.

"Since [the Hopwood decision], we can't recruit minority students for the sake of recruiting minorities to A&M," said Aviles, a sophomore business major. "Instead we have to use terms like 'at risk' or 'socioeconomic levels.'"

The Hopwood decision mandates that universities cannot consider race for the admissions process.

Arekere said African-American students do not receive as much aid from A&M because they have to compete with students of other backgrounds.

"The end result makes A&M get relatively less-qualified minority applicants," Arekere said. "The better students get larger scholarships and go elsewhere."

Reports have indicated that minor-

ity students who are admitted to A&M but choose not to enroll have above-average SAT scores and class ranks.

Historically, African-American students have preferred attending African-American-dominated colleges, or they choose schools that are cheaper and closer to home, Arekere said.

"They tend to choose schools where they feel more comfortable, maybe University of Houston downtown or Prairie View A&M," Arekere said.

The departmental breakdown of the African-American students has also declined. According to A&M reports, although there has been a 7.2 percent decline in African-American enrollment campuswide, individual colleges have been hit harder.

There has been a more than 25 percent drop in the business college, a 40 percent decline in geosciences and an 18.2 percent decrease in the college of veterinary medicine.

Arekere said African-American enrollment in the engineering college and departments like computer science have increased because minority students are now realizing the importance of the economy and where the larger demand for jobs is.

A campus climate study indicated that the primary reason fewer minority students attend A&M is that incoming freshmen do not receive enough financial aid. Arekere said the problem of reaching out to minorities

**"We can definitely benefit from more outreach programs."**

— Jay Arekere  
Race and Ethnic Studies Institute member

via financial aid, perhaps even more than the stigma of A&M's "country school image," is keeping minority enrollment low.

"We can definitely benefit from more outreach programs," Arekere said. "African-American and Hispanic students are actually more competitive than their white and Asian counterparts. Since they generally have less resources and lack of exposure, they have to put in the extra effort to excel. Many inner-city minorities haven't even seen computers until they get to college."

According to University reports, there are 43 percent more African-American females than African-American males at A&M. Arekere said the number of men and women is fairly even in the freshmen class. He said the unbalanced ratio is probably due to more African-American men dropping out.

"The Corps of Cadets and athletic programs are two major minority recruitment devices," Arekere said.

Arekere said a 1999 study showed that 33 percent of minority students admitted to A&M choose to go out of state.

"States in the south, such as Mississippi, attract a lot of the African-American students," Arekere said. "They hand out more race-based scholarships, which we cannot do directly from A&M's public funds, since the Hopwood decision."

The admissions office created a target-school approach to inner-city schools last year. Although a significant difference cannot be seen in African-American enrollment, since then, University reports show a significant increase in Hispanic enrollment. Arekere said minority enrollment will increase in the future if similar efforts are taken.

ELECTION

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id, therefore, the winner of the presidential election. And to stretch it out, Vice President Gore is doing ... is really unprecedented and it's going to create some problems."

Secretary of State Katherine Harris, a Bush partisan, certified the Texas governor's 537-vote victory Sunday. If the totals stand, Bush would be awarded the state's 25 electors, putting him a single vote over the 270 electoral votes required to win the presidency.

An NBC poll showed the country divided.

With a fraction of those polled having watched Gore's Monday night plea for patience, half said he should concede and half said he should fight.

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