

# AggieLife

THE BATTALION

Monday, September 9, 2001

## Planes, trains & automobiles

*Despite a reduced number of parking spaces, students have several options for getting to, from and around the A&M campus*

By MEREDITH HENSLEE  
THE BATTALION

It is 9 a.m., hot and sweltering. The humidity is a miserable 100 percent, and the 40,000-plus students at Texas A&M are the lucky participants in a scramble for one of three coveted prizes: a spot on the bus, a rectangle of cement they can call their parking space or a bike route to class — one preferably not crowded with cars, pedestrians or other bikers.

However, it is not easy for students to attain one of these things.

Katie O'Reilly, a junior finance major, compared parking on West Campus to vultures circling their prey.

"You can't even walk to your car without hearing the rev of an engine behind you following you all the way to your parking spot," she said.

According to Parking, Transportation and Traffic Services (PTTS), there were 11,296 student parking spaces available on campus during the 2000-2001 academic year. With an estimated 43,000 students, the parking spot-to-student ratio was about one to four.

About 900 spaces were annihilated because of construction for the new parking garage, directly on what used to be Fish Lot. This has caused major traffic congestion on and around campus

and serious parking mayhem.

Riding the bus to campus provides a way out of the parking trap. The buses have been re-routed this year, which may prove confusing at first but will hopefully be benefi-

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classes also can be a hassle. For this reason, on-campus biking has some advantages. The long wait for the shuttle can be avoided, and it saves the time spent walking if the destination is across campus. However, bikers on their way to class sometimes speed past pedestrians, causing some accidents.

If at all possible, staying away from campus while in a car is a good idea. It can aid in keeping traffic congestion low and can save valuable minutes of time.

"There was so much traffic on the way to the [Student Recreation Center] that it took me 25 minutes to get there," said Elyse Ackley, a junior elementary education major, who lives two miles from campus. "It took so long that I had to wait for the train to pass twice; It was ridiculous."

Taking advantage of the bus system is also a good idea. As long as students are aware of the changes in routes, this mode of transportation is like a free chauffeur service and a good way to avoid the frustration of crowded parking lots.

Buses also are available for on-campus traveling. A map of the new routes can be obtained at the PTTS office located in the John J. Koldus Student Services Building or on the PTTS Website at [www.ptts.tamu.edu](http://www.ptts.tamu.edu).

All students need to get around campus, and there are several options available if students take the time to discover what works best for them.

cial in the end.

Cory Talley, an A&M bus driver and a graduate agricultural education major, described the benefits of the changes.

"It's much quicker, and we are now able to run a dinner-and-movie night," she said. Talley believes that the buses will become more appreciated and widely used because of the hard work of the bus system employees.

Getting to campus is not the only problem. Traveling across campus between

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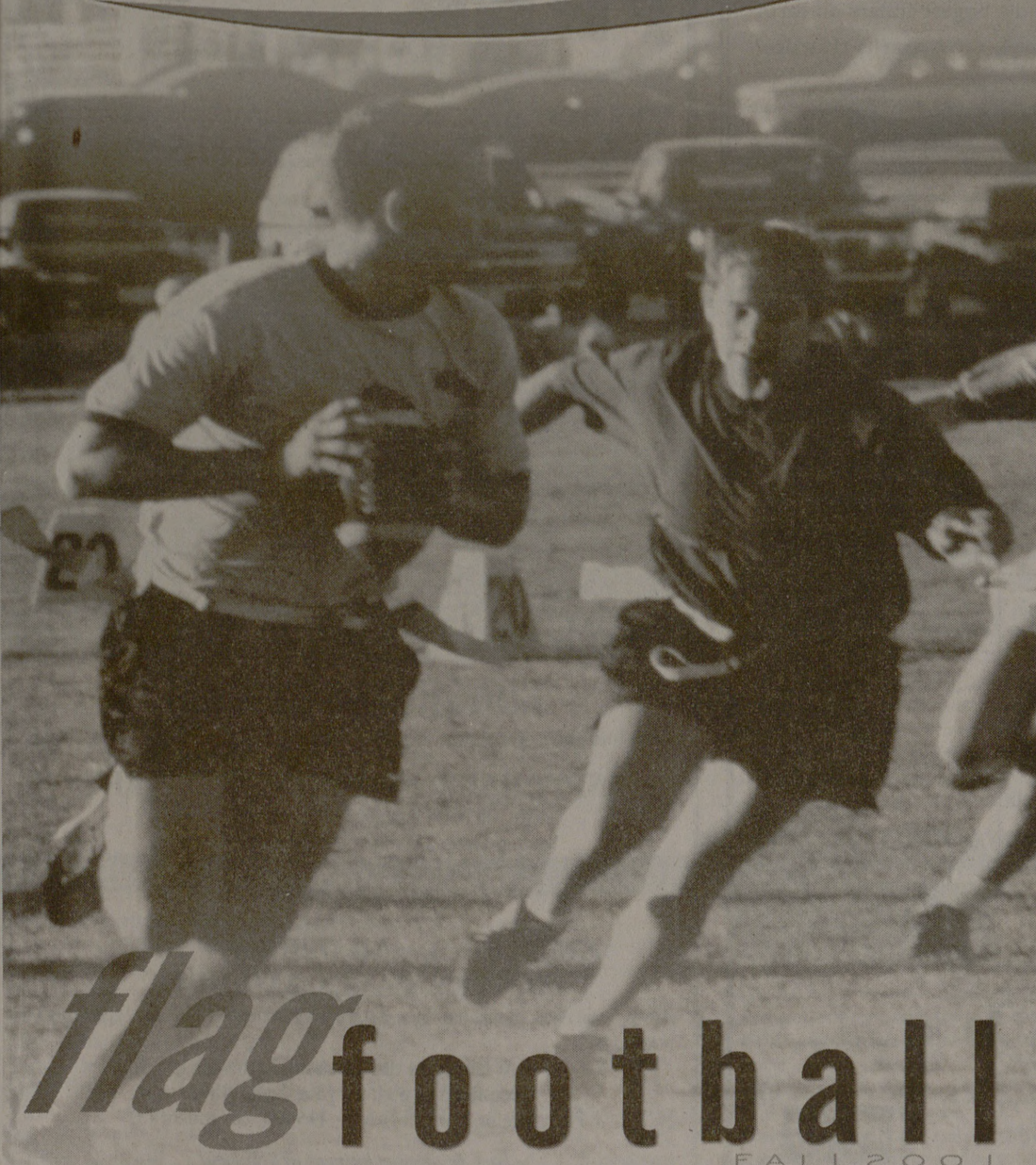
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