

## Bonfire memorial designs go on display

COLLEGE STATION (AP) — As the nation reels from the terrorism attacks in New York and Washington, Texas A&M Aggies, beginning Thursday, are being asked to consider a suitable memorial to those killed in another disaster when a huge stack of logs intended for the school's annual bonfire celebration collapsed almost two years ago.

Whether a large marble reflecting pool placed next to an eternal flame, a 45-foot-tall sculpture of a phoenix or a garden with fruit and oak trees, there is no shortage of ideas.

On display through Monday at the J. Wayne Stark University Center Galleries on the College Station campus are 176 ideas vying to be the one chosen as the design for the memorial to honor the 12 Aggies killed and 17 others injured when the bonfire fell Nov. 18, 1999.

All of the designs, which also can be viewed on the bonfire memorial Website, are displayed on two 36-inch by 24-inch presentation boards. Many have been professionally created with elaborate computer graphics or photographs while others have been hand drawn in black and white. Most entries are from professionals. Some are from students.

People can submit their comments on the Website but a nine-member jury will choose the four finalists and the eventual winner.

"I sure am glad I'm not on the jury," said George Rogers, head of A&M's Department of

Landscape Architecture and Urban Planning and one of the people coordinating the memorial design competition.

Many proposed designs are variations of walls, some curving in a half circle, and have the victims' names etched or engraved on them, or replicas or representations of the 59-foot-high, wedding cake-like log stack.

Some entries have veered from traditional designs for such memorials.

One proposes a sculpture of a phoenix, the mythical bird, that every 12 years will have a new protective glaze burned over its surface. Another is a 36-foot-high stainless steel structure that looks like the Roman numeral 12, in honor of those killed.

All entries are from the United States except for four from Canada, the Philippines, Switzerland and Turkey.

Four campus sites have been proposed for the memorial, including the bonfire site on the university's polo fields.

The jury will select four finalists on Nov. 18, the second anniversary of the collapse. The final design will be chosen March 7.

The four finalists each will receive \$10,000 as prize money plus another \$10,000 to further develop and refine their designs.

"There won't be a design that can satisfy everyone," acknowledged Chang-Shan Huang, director of the Office for the Bonfire Memorial Design Competition.

The designs of the finalists also will be reviewed by a committee comprised of family members of the victims as well as students, administrators, faculty and staff.

Other proposed designs include a memorial park that has an amphitheater, trees and sculptures; sculptures of 12 people raising up four logs; and a collection of 12 rings suspended on wires that are connected to five columns that have etched on them a poem by one of the victims, Jeremy Frampton.

Private donations are being used to pay for the design competition and the memorial's construction.

Hans Butzer, one of the designers of the Oklahoma City bombing memorial and an assistant professor of architecture and urban design at the University of Oklahoma, is among those on the jury.

Architect Richard West, whose son, Nathan Scott West, was killed in the collapse, is also on the panel, as well as a current student, a former student and a professor.

The 90-year-old bonfire tradition was suspended until at least November 2002 after a commission blamed the collapse on flawed construction techniques and a lack of supervision of students assembling the stack.

A steering committee is developing a revamped bonfire with greater school supervision and a professionally engineered design.

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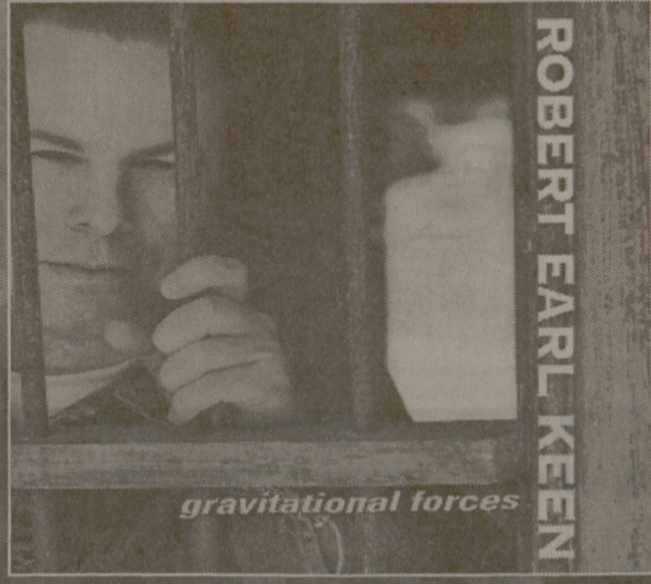
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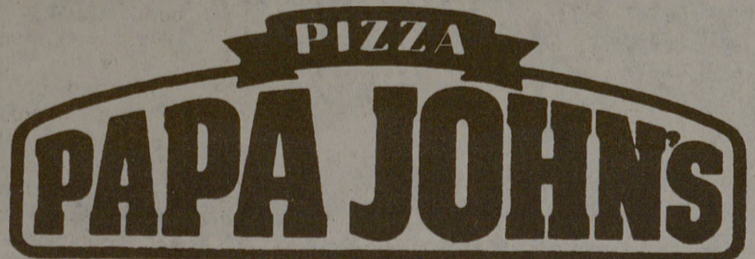
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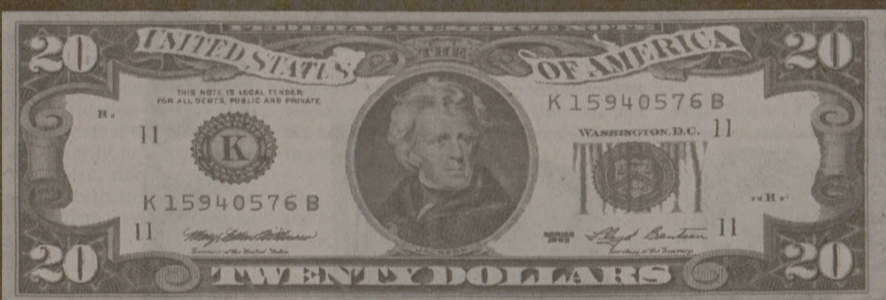
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