

# THE BATTALION

SERVING THE TEXAS A&M COMMUNITY SINCE 1893

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**NEWS IN BRIEF**

**Blue tag owners get new parking option**

Students with blue commuter parking tags may use the University Center Parking Garage for no charge from 5:30 p.m. to midnight most Monday through Thursday evenings starting Oct. 29, according to Parking, Traffic and Transportation Services (PTTS) officials.

Angela Newman, PTTS information representative, said the time has been changed to benefit students with commuter tags.

"Previously, students with commuter permits could park in the University Center garage after 6 p.m., but that time now has been changed for the remainder of the fall semester and again during the spring semester from 5:30 p.m. to midnight," Newman said. "The decision to allow students to park in the garage at an earlier time was made to accommodate commuter students and members of student organizations who have early evening meetings."

Special events, such as MSC OPAS performances and other events that fill visitor parking available in the University Center Garage, may interfere with parking at limited times during the semester, Newman said.

"Should this be the case, notification will be posted in advance of the events," she said.

For more information on coming events related to PTTS, visit the Website at <http://www.ptts.tamu.edu>.

**Public Eye**

**Cases of domestic violence reported in Bryan in 2000**

**594**

**TODAY**

**AGGIELIFE**

**Page 3**

**Ghost town**

Student groups celebrate Halloween by hosting haunted houses

**SPORTS**

**Page 7**

**Aggs upset UT, head to TCU**

Men's swimming and diving starts off season well

**OPINION**

**Page 11**

**Rock this country world**

College Station music should 'globalize' venues

**WEATHER**

**TODAY**

HIGH 77° F  
LOW 50° F

**TOMORROW**

HIGH 80° F  
LOW 48° F

FORECASTS COURTESY OF [www.weathermanted.com](http://www.weathermanted.com)

## Breen family files lawsuit

By ROLANDO GARCIA & BRANDIE LIFFICK  
THE BATTALION

### Administrators targeted, family claims Bonfire participation was encouraged

The family of Christopher Breen, one of the 12 Aggies killed in the 1999 Aggie Bonfire collapse, sued Texas A&M and five top administrators Wednesday, including A&M President Dr. Ray M. Bowen.

Filed in a U.S. District Court in Galveston, the suit alleges the University and the named administrators violated Breen's constitutional rights by encouraging participation in an activity they knew was dangerous and by refusing to correct safety

problems associated with Bonfire.

The other defendants are Vice President for Student Affairs Dr. J. Malon Southerland, Associate Vice President for Student Affairs Dr. Bill Kibler, Rusty Thompson, the Bonfire advisor and John Koldus, who was vice president for student affairs from 1973 to 1993.

Steve DeWolf, the Breen family's attorney, said the fam-

ily never has asked for financial compensation from the University. The Breen family took legal action only as a last resort because A&M officials refused to meet with them until after the two-year window to file a lawsuit expires Nov. 18, DeWolf said.

"All the family wanted was for someone to step up to the plate and take responsibility," DeWolf said. "It would be much easier to let it go, but this is

about honor and dignity."

The lawsuit asks for actual and punitive damages.

University spokesperson Cynthia Lawson declined to comment.

The Bonfire stack collapsed Nov. 18, 1999, killing 11 students and Breen, a former student, and injuring 27 others. Breen, 25, was a member of the Corps of Cadets from 1992 to 1996 and graduated in Dec. 1997.

DeWolf said the Breen family did not join the lawsuit filed in March by the family of Jerry Don Self, one of the Bonfire victims, because they did not want to include students as defendants. The Self case has not yet come to trial.

"It's the administrators, not the students, that should be held accountable, but all the University did was blame the students for the accident," DeWolf said.

The Breen family's lawsuit cites numerous internal documents and memorandums to argue that A&M administrators

See LAWSUIT on page 2.

## ESPN reveals direction of show

By BRANDIE LIFFICK  
THE BATTALION

ESPN officials said Wednesday they are attempting to comply with requests by Texas A&M officials to redirect the focus of "Sidelines" to A&M football without losing their creative independence in the process.

Athletic Director Wally Groff asked ESPN programming executive Mark Shapiro to reconsider the subject matter of the show, which in the second episode, focused on the behavior of two intoxicated Blinn students and in the third episode, focused on an apparent relationship between two former A&M athletes, both females — who are roommates.

Shapiro said ESPN crews are not on campus to "sensationalize."

"We're here to cover the central and peripheral characters involved with football, college living and the area," Shapiro said. "We can't and won't compromise our editorial rights. But Wally asked that we try to find a

See SIDELINES on page 2.

## Hoop dreams



STUART VILLANUEVA • THE BATTALION

Amber Roberts (shadowed), a sophomore special education major, watches as junior molecular and cell biology major Mike Yost goes to the hoop for a shot at the Rudder Fountain area on Wednesday. Students were given the opportunity

to experience what it is like to be disabled by participating in wheelchair basketball. The demonstration was presented by NETWORKS, a student organization that provides services for disabled students.

## MPO will decide the future of railroad track alterations

By ELIZABETH RAINES  
THE BATTALION

If the railroad that divides West Campus from main campus is not moved to an alternate route, construction still will be required to provide grade separations for the tracks at every street intersection, officials say.

A grade separation currently exists at the intersection of Wellborn Road and University Drive, where University cuts under Wellborn and the railroad. Leaders of Bryan-College

Station Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) talked to students on campus Wednesday about the Local Rail Economic Feasibility and Location Study and the four alternate routes explored in the study.

Moving the railroad to the median of State Highway 47 would cost \$131.4 million, said MPO Director Michael Parks. Routing the railroad through Burleson County would cost \$181.1 million, and moving the tracks to the Bryan bypass is estimated to cost \$98.7 million. The fourth

alternative, called the "no-build," would leave the existing track but at some time in the future allow for grading of all street-railroad intersections as a safety measure, Parks said.

"We are hoping to gain some more insight on public opinion of this study," Parks said. "We want students to know that there is this process, and if they choose not to speak up, someone else's voice will be heard."

Federal, state and local funding would cover the costs of rerouting, Parks said.

The campus meeting is the fifth in a series of public meetings for the study, intended to maximize the amount of resident participation in the proposals, Parks said.

The meeting began with a brief presentation by Carter and Burgess, the contract firm involved in the rail study.

The audience was divided into groups to discuss the layout and location of the railroad

## Track-shift construction begins next summer

By TANYA NADING  
THE BATTALION

Next summer, workers will shift a 1,200-foot section of railroad track to the west to allow for construction on the underground passageway, Texas A&M officials said.

The passageway, which will be 60 feet wide, will run under Joe Routt Boulevard, the railroad tracks and Wellborn Road and emerge near Kyle Field and the to-be-built parking garage, said Vice President for Administration Charles Sippial.

See TRACKS on page 2.

ALTERNATIVE	TOTAL LENGTH OF MILES	TOTAL ADDED MILES	TOTAL PROJECT COST
EXISTING CONDITIONS	28	0	\$0
STATE HWY. 47	31	17	\$131.4 MILLION
BURLESON COUNTY	31	22	\$181.1 MILLION
BRYAN BYPASS	30	10	\$98.7 MILLION

ADRIAN CALCANELO • THE BATTALION

See MPO on page 12.

## PTTS in search of new director

By AMANDA SMITH  
THE BATTALION

Following the replacement of Parking, Traffic and Transportation Services' (PTTS) director Tom Williams this month, Vice President for Administration Chuck Sippial has begun the preliminary stages of choosing a new director for the department.

Assistant Vice President for Administration Bobby Bisor is serving as the interim director of PTTS, which had been under the direction of Tom Williams since the department's inception more than a decade ago.

Sippial said he sent out one letter Wednesday appealing to various organizations, including student organizations, to appoint a person to serve on the screen-

"I will be looking for strong management and leadership skills, as well as a strong background in customer service."

— Charles Sippial  
vice president for A&M administration

ing committee for the University's search for a director. As vice president for administration, Sippial oversees PTTS operations.

The committee will be responsible for narrowing down the list of applicants that will stem from a nationwide search, Sippial said.

"The screening committee and an outside firm will narrow the list of candidates to three to five individuals," Sippial said.

The list will be submitted to Sippial and Bisor, who will make the final selection. Sippial said he will be looking for the most qualified individual to serve as the director.

"I will be looking for strong management and leadership skills as well as a strong background in customer service," Sippial said. "Parking has a set of goals that are reviewed and revised each year. In addition to those, I am concerned with customer service, especially with students, and changing the image that the customers have of PTTS."

See PTTS on page 12.