

## EDITORIAL

### PRO BONFIRE

#### Survey should lay foundation

The results of the Bonfire 2002 Student Feedback Survey are in, and they speak loudly in favor of Bonfire 2002. The challenge now lies in student leadership and the cooperation of the administration.

The results show that 12,000 students voted in the survey. On this campus, 12,000 students voting on an issue is an overwhelming turnout and one that calls for action. Last spring, 8,500 students voted in the student body elections, and this turnout is well above most referendums or fee increases. As tempted as the administration might be to discredit the turnout for the Bonfire survey, 27% is a significant amount. Although Bonfire coordinators did not define what acceptable student turnout would be, 12,000 students voting on Bonfire 2002 is a definite show of support.

One of the most interesting, and encouraging, figures from the survey is the number of underclassmen who participated. Almost half of the survey feedback was provided by freshmen and sophomores, with the Class of 2005 representing 26% of the voters — more than any other class. This is exemplary of the support necessary for a Bonfire in 2002 and dispels the notion that the Bonfire tradition is not being passed down to younger Aggies. Such a high freshmen participation suggests that this tradition will not die despite the passage of time and lack of administrative enthusiasm. The Classes of 2004 and 2005 have spoken and shown that the tradition of Bonfire has carried on, regardless of and future generations want to see it burn.

Almost 83 percent of those who voted were never involved with Bonfire. They have never experienced the building of this mighty tradition firsthand, yet are still willing to uphold the spirit of Bonfire. This is a call for strong student leadership from the upperclassmen who have worked on previous Bonfires.

The survey did not satisfactorily answer all the questions, however. One factor that will hinder the future of Bonfire is the cost and if students are willing to pay for Bonfire's future. Should 44,000 students pay for something that 12,000 voted on? The answer to this is uncertain. The question on the survey was misleading and did not directly ask what kind of a fee increase students would support. Bonfire planners need to reevaluate the issue of cost and rely on students for answers.

The results of the survey should be an overwhelming push for the future of Bonfire. Input was asked for, students offered it in substantial amounts, and it is now time for the administration and students to join together to push this tradition forward.

## THE BATTALION

### EDITORIAL BOARD

Editor in Chief | MARIANO CASTILLO

Managing Editor	BRIAN RUFF	Member	MELISSA BEDSOLE
Opinion Editor	CAYLA CARR	Member	JONATHAN JONES
News Editor	SOMMER BUNCE	Member	JENNIFER LOZANO
News Editor	BRANDIE LEFFICK	Member	KELLY ZIMMER

The Battalion encourages letters to the editor. Letters must be 200 words or less and include the author's name, class and phone number. The opinion editor reserves the right to edit letters for length, style and accuracy. Letters may be submitted in person at 014 Reed McDonald with a valid student ID. Letters also may be mailed to: 014 Reed McDonald, MS 1111, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX 77843-1111. Fax: (979) 845-2647 Email: mailcall@thebatt.com

### MAIL CALL

#### Aggie Rings are only for Aggies

I found that a graduate of A&M in 1972 bought an Aggie ring for their spouse, who didn't attend or graduate from A&M.

This is unfair to every A&M student and graduate who worked for their ring, but it's more unfair to the A&M seniors who don't have an Aggie ring and are in their graduating semester. Currently the ring policy is under review for graduating seniors. Under the new policy, graduating seniors could not order their rings in time for graduation. If accepted, it will be announced Feb. 1.

The ring policy needs to be changed. It is ridiculous a non-Aggie can get a ring so easily but our real Aggies cannot even get one before they graduate! I am an Aggie senior and the school I love will not allow me to purchase a ring that will complete my Aggie experience. Remember, "Once an Aggie, always an Aggie". What better way to show Aggie spirit and loyalty than to give our graduating seniors their much deserved ring.

Jo Anna Pareya  
Class of 2002

#### A&M is not Harvard

In response to Jan. 22 editorial:

Your promotion of the Enhancement Fee is a step backwards in the fight for our ability to restrain the tremendous inflation of tuition and fees that we are witnessing. The fact that our fee was proposed in a reasonable way does not warrant our support of this wholly unreasonable fee. In the editorial, a former president of Harvard is quoted. His words ring true, and no one doubts that Harvard is a great school, but alas, we are not Harvard.

At A&M we are given much, but Texas A&M is a public school, and, as such, has a responsibility to remain affordable to the average applicant. It is not A&M's role to become an expensive, perfect university. How do we keep up Aggie family traditions when we cannot afford to send our kids to A&M? Why would we even want to, when a generation of Aggies that has already been through hell with Bonfire and everything else gets trampled on again with an outrageous fee like this?

Aaron Crews  
Class of 2002

# A dog of a man

## Buddy statue is not suitable for a presidential library

President Harry Truman said, "If you want a friend in Washington, get a dog." But one look at the new Clinton Presidential Library exhibit on display in Little Rock, Ark., will have people thinking, "Get a life." The misguided nucleus of the still forming library will be a life size bronze statue in memory of the former first dog, Buddy. Buddy was mowed down by an



GEORGE DEUTSCH

SUV as he fled the Clinton's New York mansion earlier this month. The nation is understandably in shock.

The Clinton legacy, which is already shamefully and heavily tarnished, is only further degraded by this spectacle. The people behind this project have felt a legitimate need to build a shrine to a dead animal, and in a presidential library no less. This is nothing short of heresy.

Yes, it is true that Richard Nixon had Checkers, and Lyndon Johnson had Him and Her. George Bush's dog's book even outsold his

*The Clinton legacy, which is already shamefully and heavily tarnished, is only further degraded by this spectacle.*

own autobiography, but all of this pales in comparison to the newest Clinton fiasco.

What have presidential dogs contributed to this country? Except for an occasional urine stain on the Washington rug or feces by the Lincoln bedroom set, absolutely nothing. Dogs do not make important decisions.

But it gets worse. Not only does this animal have his own statue,

which many great presidents do not even have, he also has his own Website: Buddy's Buddies. At the exhibit, several bouquets of roses adorn the Labrador's likeness, and a nearby table touts Buddy fan mail. Yes, some people send mail to dogs. Where is anthrax when it is needed?

As if all of this was not bad enough, a volunteer even hands out photos of the dog in a seated pose to those who visit the exhibit. How can this poor soul look himself in the mirror every morning and be proud of what he does? Clearly, this is not Little Rock's finest hour.

Presidential libraries should ideally be boasting important documents, presidential artifacts and White House memorabilia, like Texas A&M's George Bush Presidential Library Complex. Dead dogs need not apply. Though former president Clinton does not deserve his own statue, even he would have been a better choice, with cigar in hand and intern at his side, than Buddy the Labrador.

Clintonpresidentialcenter.com, the Internet voice of the new library, is not without the influence of Buddy. The site reads more like a canine obituary than anything else. Included in it are such gems as: "Buddy expressed an enthusiasm for life as well as strong feelings for fellow first pet, Socks," and "Buddy is survived by his parents, Sadie's Rainbow Gold and Quantico's Stormy 'Coco' Bear, along with four brothers and four sisters."

While the world may expect this type of non-sense from a Clinton-backed project, it is still disheartening. Bill Clinton has long since had the sexual discretion of a dog, but now he has a statue to commemorate it.

George Deutsch is a junior journalism major.



DIANA SUAREZ • THE BATTALION

# Good riddance to rubbish

## WB station is unworthy of college student enthusiasm, should focus attention elsewhere

On Jan. 7, the Univision television network purchased KAKW and changed its formatting, choosing not to subscribe to the WB network. College students who enjoyed the perks of being home for the holidays returned to find Spanish programming instead of their favorite teenage dramas. Some may view the Spanish channel as a chance for diversity on television, but hundreds of cable-subscribers view the Spanish channel as a violation by their cable company.

Bryan-College Station has been frantically trying to locate a network that offers this staple of college students' lives. Instead of complaining, students should be saying good riddance to bad rubbish.

Although students are upset about losing the channel, it is not the cable companies that should be getting the heat. Univision made the decision to replace the WB, and until the local cable companies find a different network, they must air Spanish programming in its place. According to the Cox Cable Co., the companies are looking as far as Houston or Waco to provide their customers with dearly missed programming.

Without the WB, cable companies are losing the respect of their customers. The

WB gears the large majority of its programs toward teenagers and young adults. Unfortunately, what the WB has deemed important is the fictitious lives of vampires, aliens and sex-driven

teenagers. The emphasis on pre-marital relationships has revolutionized what today's student deems important.

As students get involved in dating relationships, the experiences they draw from for guidance are those of fictitious

*Unfortunately, what the WB has deemed important is the fictitious lives of vampires, aliens and sex-driven teenagers.*

characters. It is not surprising that so many relationships end abruptly. With role models that live such unrealistic lives, TV experiences cannot be applied to anything real.

When the random, yet entertaining plots of these characters' lives appeals to so many students, it is hard not to become dramatic in real life and fall short of expectations. Aside from the unrealistic, poor role models these television shows provide, the programs also monopolizes students' weeknights.

The WB provides students with a mindless release for an expansive amount of time every weeknight. With shows that focus on the trivialities of dysfunctional families and alien abductions, these several hours are not educating their audiences.

It is time that students end their time of mourning and devote their free weeknights to studies or more educational TV programs. Roommates can gossip about Dawson and Joey and Felicity and Ben as if they went to high school together, but can they do anything else? The extent to which college students dote on every detail of these fictitious characters' lives is ridiculous.

By eliminating the WB, students are faced with countless free hours every night. Maybe the average college student's grade-point ratio will rise as they succumb to studying instead of their usual mindless vent. Another, and probably more realistic, possibility is that students will resort to other programs. Either way, the average student IQ may rise, as other shows aired at the same time require thought.

While students across Bryan-College Station are relentlessly harassing their cable companies, they should be saying, "Thank you."

Katherine Tucker is a sophomore general studies major.