

THE BATTALION

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Blackout hits areas on campus

By Lauren Smith
THE BATTALION

Computer screens went black and the lighting blinked out as the power went out in Sterling C. Evans Library, one of several buildings on campus that lost power at 6:10 p.m. Tuesday.

Other buildings affected by Tuesday night's outage were Reed McDonald, Halbouty and Biological East and West. The power in two Corps of Cadets residence halls also went out.

Director of Utilities Jim Riley said as of Tuesday night, the

cause of the outage was unknown, but a full update should be available Wednesday morning.

"We will get to the bottom of it," Riley said. "Crews will stay up working all night if they have to."

Power outages continued as the evening progressed due to a shortage in Halbouty.

While plant workers went underground to check each feeder for a possible shortage, students in Evans Library were told to move to the Annex if they wanted to continue studying because the library would be closing.

Director of Access Services for Evans Library Pixey Anne

Mosley, said the library would be closing because of safety concerns that would arise when it became completely dark outside.

All bags had to be searched manually as students filed out of the library due to lack of electric sensors.

Nathan Moore, a sophomore business administration major, walked into the library only to hear warning sirens echoing throughout the building.

"I wanted to study, but the siren going off was very distracting," he said. "This is a big inconvenience."

The power going out in

Halbouty did not stop some professors from continuing with their lectures.

Kate Furst, a freshman biomedical sciences major, said the lights went out in the middle of class and her professor kept lecturing and writing on the board.

"It was so hard to see and actually concentrating was impossible," she said.

The first people allowed into Evans Library this morning will be from the pest control.

"There was a bat sighting on the sixth floor of the library," Mosley said. "We take reported sightings of bats very seriously."



JOSHUA HOBSON • THE BATTALION

Physical plant worker Brian Legg climbs out of a manhole near Sterling C. Evans Library Tuesday night after trouble shooting a power outage that affected Evans Library, Biological East and West Buildings and the Reed McDonald Building.

Saying goodbye



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Texas A&M Regent Susan Rudd Wynn, M.D., receives a hug outside Grace Bible Church after a memorial worship service held for Howard D. Graves, former chancellor of the Texas A&M University System. Graves passed away Saturday, ending a two-and-a-half year battle with

cancer. The funeral will take place at the Cadet Chapel at West Point, N.Y., where Graves graduated from college and later served as the academy's superintendent. Graves will be buried in West Point cemetery.

Medical school at UT possible

By Bart Shirley
THE BATTALION

Representatives in the Texas Legislature are considering a proposal to create a medical school at the University of Texas-Austin.

The proposal, spearheaded by Rep. Jack Stick, R-Austin, and Rep. Mike Krusee, R-Round Rock, is an attempt to achieve parity with other communities in the country. Austin is the second largest city in the country without a medical center.

"I started thinking about this when it became apparent that we need to expand the economy. Making Texas the leader in health care is the way to do that," Stick said.

Stick said he envisions a triangle of research cities, such as Houston, College Station and Austin, to compete with the likes of the Raleigh-Durham research triangle.

"(We want to) create an environment with the academic firepower to dwarf any other research facility," Stick said.

Jon Roberts, managing director of TIP Strategies, a business consulting group in Austin, said

the new facility is just part of encouraging the growth of a strong, leading community.

"It's an obvious thing to consider," Roberts said. "The impact would be very large. On some level, it's going to happen. It's the real Holy Grail for Austin."

With hospitals wanting to be able to offer more in terms of research and care, this new center would be part of a trend in health care. Roberts said there would have to be a major commitment from a regional hospital for the center to begin, and that it would need to begin as a facility for patient care.

"No one's designing a research center," he said.

The proposal will not be addressed until the 2005 legislative session.

"It's just in the planning stages," said Wendy Reilly, chief of staff for Krusee.

Stick agreed, citing numerous concerns that would need to be addressed, including the issue of redundancy within the UT system.

"We're working on how to do this without compromising the quality of other schools in

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Student loan rates remain steady

By Steve Giegerich
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The default rate on federally backed college loans hit an all-time low during the 2001 fiscal year, the Education Department said Tuesday.

The department said only 5.4 percent of college graduates who began making payments in fiscal 2001 defaulted on their debt. In the previous fiscal year, 5.9 percent of students with outstanding loans defaulted.

Tuesday's announcement stands as something of a contrast to two recently published reports that indicate college debt is resulting in long-term financial problems for many Americans. Even

so, Education Department officials heralded the 2001 results.

"Some of us have been around long enough to remember when we dreaded these announcements," said Sally Stroup, assistant secretary for postsecondary education. "That is no longer the case."

The peak default rate, 22.4 percent in 1990, occurred before federal legislation curtailed student loan abuse by beauty colleges, truck driving academies and other trade schools.

Department officials attributed the drop in defaults to improved credit counseling, more flexible repayment schedules and low interest rates.

While the 2001 findings do not measure the consequences of major

tuition increases imposed by many colleges and universities over the past two years, Stroup does not expect the tuition hikes caused default rates to rise.

"You can only borrow so much money regardless of where tuition goes," Stroup said. "There are limits that can control how much people can borrow."

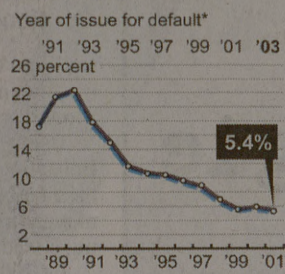
In addition to loan limits, Mary Mowdy, the executive director of the Oklahoma Guaranteed Student Loan Program, said borrowing on an as-needed basis is key to avoiding devastating post-graduation debt.

"Just because a financial aid office

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STUDENT LOANS Default rates at low

Despite the economic downturn, default rates for college student loans has dropped to an all-time low of 5.4 percent. The Department of Education says the drop is because of improved credit counseling, more flexible repayment schedules and low interest rates.



SOURCE: Department of Education AP

Republican says fines should be forgiven

By Jim Vertuno
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

AUSTIN — A senior Senate Republican suggested Tuesday that hundreds of thousands of dollars in fines assessed against the 11 Democrats who broke quorum should be forgiven so that the body could focus on the business of another special session on congressional redistricting.

"The important thing is to do away with (the fines) and get back to work," said Sen. Chris Harris, R-Arlington, who chairs the Senate Administration Committee and ranks third among Senate Republicans in seniority.

Harris' panel endorsed stripping future quorum busters of their Senate seniority rights, which include premium office and parking spaces and senior status in who acts as governor for a day, a mostly ceremonial position.

The panel put off making a recommendation on whether to forgive the fines. The fines and seniority rights will be discussed in a meeting of the Senate caucus, which includes all 31 senators and typically meets behind closed doors. The caucus will meet as early Wednesday.

Republican senators voted to impose fines totaling \$57,000 for each senator who left the state in July in a move that prevented the chamber from doing business in the previous special session. The Republicans also stripped the Democrats of other perks, such as prime parking spots around the Capitol, unless they paid their fines.



PERRY

Court considers allowing music industry subpoenas

By Ted Bridis
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — A federal appeals court panel offered few hints Tuesday whether it will permit the music industry to continue using special copyright subpoenas to track and sue computer users who download songs over the Internet.

The three-judge panel from the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia tossed tough questions at lawyers for all sides. Judges plainly wrestled with esoteric provisions of the disputed 1998 law that permits music companies and others to force Internet providers to turn over the names of suspected pirates.

The decision, expected later this fall, could have important consequences for the music industry's unprecedented campaign to discourage piracy through fears of expensive civil penalties or settlements.

The Recording Industry Association of America, the trade group for the largest labels, has

issued at least 1,500 such subpoenas this summer. It has filed civil lawsuits against 261 people it accused of illegally distributing music online and promised thousands more lawsuits.

Verizon Communications Inc. is challenging the constitutionality of the subpoenas under the 1998 Digital Millennium Copyright Act. U.S. District Judge John D. Bates earlier had approved use of the subpoenas, forcing Verizon to turn over names and addresses for at least four Internet subscribers; since then Verizon has identified dozens of its other subscribers to music industry lawyers.

But if the appeals court was leaning in one direction by the end of Tuesday's hearing, it was indecipherable. One judge, John Roberts, alternately suggested that a "logical extension" of the 1998 law wouldn't permit such subpoenas in these music lawsuits; then he accused Verizon of profiting from the online piracy of its subscribers.

"You make a lot of money off piracy," Roberts told Verizon lawyer Andrew McBride. People who download large collections of music traditionally favor high-speed Internet connections like those

offered by Verizon's Internet subsidiary. "That is a canard," McBride shot back. He said Verizon makes money when computer users purchase songs from online services affiliated with Verizon.

Roberts, a new appointee of President George W. Bush, also challenged RIAA lawyer Donald B. Verrilli Jr. about whether computer users downloading music were any different from people who maintain libraries in their homes.

Roberts questioned whether the fact that copyrighted files were publicly accessible on someone's computer necessarily means the Internet user is illegally distributing those files. File-sharing software typically stores downloaded music in a computer folder that is freely available for other Internet users to browse.

"Isn't it equivalent to my leaving the door to my library open?" Roberts asked. "Somebody could come in and copy my books but that doesn't mean I'm liable for copyright infringement."

The 1998 law, passed years before downloading

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