

THE BATTALION

A Texas A&M Tradition Since 1893

Volume 110 • Issue 24 • 10 pages

www.thebattalion.net

Wednesday, October 1, 2003

Johnson delays journalism decision

By Sarah Walch
THE BATTALION

Next fall, Texas A&M will no longer offer high school students the chance to earn a degree in journalism.

Earlier this year, College of Liberal Arts Dean Charles Johnson recommended the Department of Journalism be cut due to budget constraints. Johnson has been delayed in finalizing his decision to cut the journalism department by his impending trip to Qatar the week of Oct. 6-12 to help A&M's newest branch get its feet off the ground, said Leanne South, director of college relations.

Johnson has received a preliminary report from the committee he appointed in August to look into "alternative pathways" for student journalists attending A&M, but that information is not yet available for release, she said.

Senior journalism major Bernhard Hall said he was surprised when Johnson announced on July 10 his recommendation to cut the journalism department. "I never thought they would actually do it," he said.

Though Johnson has said the student newspaper and yearbook, The Aggeland, could serve as an outlet for aspiring student journalists, Hall said a lot of journalism majors are not interested in newspaper writing.

"Newspaper writing is just a small part of the department," he said. "(Students in journalism) also want to do public relations or broadcast journalism."

Senior journalism major Cheryl Kempe agreed. Students interested in magazine, news or broadcast journalism need a background education, she said, and can apply what they learn at A&M to any type of job.

Loren Steffy, Dallas bureau chief for Bloomberg News and president of the Former Journalism Students' Association, said the A&M journalism department has always been a diamond in the rough.

Over time, the biggest impact of the journalism's departure will be on laboratory settings such as The Battalion, he said.

The University will have a significant decline in student journalists because most potential journalists would rather go to a school offering a jour-

nalism degree, he said.

Johnson said all current journalism faculty members will retain a position somewhere in the College of Liberal Arts. Also, after the current journalism professors retire in about 10 years, new professors will be unwilling to come to A&M to join a program that doesn't exist, Steffy said.

However, without the full educational experience to provide a framework, "the quality (of The Battalion) is definitely going to deteriorate," Steffy said.

Directly following the announcement of Johnson's recommendation in July, Steffy, the FJSA and the summer editing staff of The Battalion organized a letter-writing campaign and online petition, using the Web site www.savejournalism.com, to illustrate to the administration and the regents how many students and professional journalists are opposed to limiting journalism education.

Hall said once the journalism department is gone, The Battalion could be forced to hold its own newspaper writing classes for non-journalism majors unfamiliar with the style required for

Journalism Update

The future of Texas A&M journalism is being contemplated before the decision to close the department is finalized.

- Next 30** Liberal Arts Dean Charles Johnson sent a recommendation to President Robert M. Gates to close A&M's Department of Journalism.
- Next 60** Johnson charged a Committee to Effect Change in Journalism to identify issues related to the department's closure.
- Next 90** Gates announced that he will not consider closing the department until "alternative pathways" for journalism at A&M are found.
- Next 3** Johnson charged a Committee to Recommend New Initiatives in Journalism Education to suggest alternative pathways for students interested in a journalism career.
- Next 60** The committee turned in a preliminary report to Johnson, but it is not yet available to the public.



SETH FREEMAN • THE BATTALION
SOURCE: TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

reporting.

Hall also expressed concern about future employees who have heard about the recommendation.

"What are they going to say when I walk into an interview?" he said.

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Clowning around



JOSHUA HOBSON • THE BATTALION

Marcia Lightsey, of Bryan and a balloon artist also known as "Twister," waits at College Hills Elementary School fourth grader, Lyndie Ruesink of College Station picks out a balloon design and color in front of Gattitown off of Texas Avenue Tuesday afternoon. The "Twist for Love" event

is part of "Balloons Around the World 2003", where hundreds of balloon artists across the globe tie thousands of balloons for kids for free or exchanged for a donation to a charity. Canned foods and other donations were accepted to benefit the Brazos Food Bank.

ODP research gets \$450 million grant

COLLEGE STATION, Texas (AP) — Texas A&M will continue its world-renowned role in exploring the ocean's floors after signing a new research contract worth \$450 million on Tuesday.

The 10-year deal is the largest in the school's 127-year history.

A&M and Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory of Columbia University, two key partners in the research endeavor, will join the Joint Oceanographic Institutions to form the U.S. implementing organization for the new Integrated Ocean Drilling Program, funded by the National Science Foundation.

The new endeavor replaces the Ocean Drilling Program. A&M had been its science operator for nearly 20 years.

"We are honored to be selected again to have a key leadership role in carrying out this program that has such profound scientific significance," said A&M President Robert M. Gates. "We look for-

ward to a continued strong working relationship over the next decade with our colleagues at Lamont-Doherty, and with all of the participants — U.S. and international — in IODP."

Paul J. Fox, director of the Ocean Drilling Program at A&M, calls the new agreement "historic" because of its long-term benefits.

"We will now be able to read and record the Earth's history and planetary change the same way the Hubble space craft has allowed us to look into space," Fox believes. "The IODP is of true fundamental importance in many aspects. It will place A&M faculty on the

center stage of many new discoveries and it will be of tremendous benefit to the university in many areas of research."

The Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory is based in Palisades, N.Y., and is a leading unit of Columbia University's Earth Institute.

"We will now be able to read and record the earth's history and planetary change the same way the Hubble space craft has allowed us to look into space."

— Paul J. Fox
director of ODP

Sharon wants security fences for W. Bank Jewish settlements

By Jason Keyser
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

JERUSALEM — Prime Minister Ariel Sharon wants to shield several large Jewish settlements by extending Israel's security barrier deep into the West Bank, but he would leave gaps in the section in hopes of defusing U.S. objections that the fence could mark a permanent border, a Sharon adviser and a settler leader said Tuesday.

The plan, denounced by Palestinians as a land grab, comes up for approval before the Cabinet on Wednesday and is likely to pass.

In its bid to stop Palestinian suicide bombers and other attackers, Israel has already built almost 100 miles of the barrier that will eventually stretch, depending on the route, up to four times that distance. Portions of the barrier — a network of fences,

walls, razor wire and trenches — run on West Bank land, but to date it has largely kept to the Israel-West Bank dividing line known as the "Green Line," diverting in some places a few miles into the West Bank to enclose Jewish settlements.

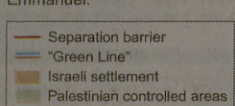
Under the new proposal the barrier would veer almost 20 miles into the territory, cutting the northern section of the West Bank in two for much of its width.

The new section will take several months to build and would incorporate on the "Israeli" side a bloc of settlements — Ariel, Kedumim, Karnei Shomron and Emmanuel — where some 45,000 Israelis live, said Ariel security chief Eli Shaviv.

The United States backed the Palestinians' opposition to the barrier's extension when the idea was first raised several months ago. But excluding Ariel —

Sharon seeks barrier extension

Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon wants to shield several settlements by extending Israel's security barrier deep into the West Bank. The fence would include the settlements of Ariel, Kedumim, Karnei Shomron and Emmanuel.



SOURCES: B'tselem, Associated Press

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Boeing continues alliance with A&M

By Nicole M. Jones
THE BATTALION

Boeing, the world's leading aerospace engineering company, announced its second-year support last week for its interdisciplinary curriculum partnership program with the Dwight Look College of Engineering and the Mays Business School.

Boeing initiated this partnership last year as part of an overall \$245,000 gift to Texas A&M.

The program is the first interdisciplinary initiative across colleges at A&M specifically tailored for engineering design curriculum. The goal of the program is to prepare students for real-world industry teams where engineering and business professionals depend on each other to make design and cost decisions.

"Boeing is developing a closer relationship with a few schools around the country, and Texas A&M is fortunate to be one of those schools," said David Lund, director of the Aerospace Vehicle Systems Institute, part of the Texas

Engineering Experiment Station.

Thirty seniors from three engineering departments — aerospace, mechanical and electrical — will work in "integrated product development teams" and follow engineering project management processes to accomplish the design, simulation, test and evaluation cycle of a complex aerospace system, Lund said.

With sponsorship from Boeing, funding is included in the project to ensure a useful output that creates value, Lund said.

Along with Lund, Dr. Clair J. Nixon, professor and associate dean of the Mays Business School, was asked to develop the original proposal for the program.

The business school's part of the program is still under construction, but Nixon said A&M students should benefit from it in the future.

The business school is currently providing lectures and insight to the financial and global aspects of engineering

See Boeing on page 7

House, Senate limping toward map agreement

By April Castro
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

AUSTIN — House and Senate Republicans remained at odds on congressional redistricting Tuesday and one of the lead negotiators said he hopes a fourth special session won't be necessary for both chambers to agree on a new map.

It appeared Tuesday that Gov. Rick Perry's preferred Wednesday deadline

would be missed.

"Obviously we want to get it done before the end of session so the governor doesn't have to call a fourth one," said Rep. Phil King, R-Weatherford, the House point man for negotiations. "But, I've done it three times now, I guess I can do it again."

Democrats successfully fought the measure during the regular session and the first two special sessions. The third special session has been marred by a stalemate

between Republicans over the design of West Texas districts. Through Tuesday, the Texas Legislature has been in session a record 215 calendar days this year.

Members of the House and Senate negotiating team have had fruitless meetings behind closed doors several times this week to find middle ground in the roadblock.

"I'm fairly encouraged," King said.

See Agreement on page 7