

THE BATTALION

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New TS software provides students access

By Natalie Younts
THE BATTALION

Parking permit sales, online ticket appeals and tracking of towed vehicles will be available on the Web for the Texas A&M community after Transportation Services implements new software Dec. 10.

The software will streamline operations and serve as the backbone for Web-based services that will be unveiled over the next year, said TS Director Rodney Weis.

"By better managing our existing facilities, we will be able to minimize permit price increase over the next five years," Weis said. "It will also allow us to create a better space allocation system that will maximize the use of available space and reduce the need to build more

costly garages over the next 10 years."

The software, PowerPark, was purchased for \$261,000 from T2 Systems Inc., an Indianapolis, Ind., company, and was paid for with general parking funds, Weis said.

"While this may seem high, it is reasonable when compared to what it would cost to develop a program internally with the functionality that PowerPark has," Weis said.

Weis said the same software was purchased when he served as director of transportation services at both the University of Illinois and Georgia Tech.

"The (Georgia Tech) system has become a model for other universities to follow when implementing system changes that enhance efficiency and increase the utilization of space," Weis said.

Charles Bass, Georgia Tech parking system sup-

port specialist, said the software runs all of the school's transportation operations, including ticketing, letter-writing and permit sales.

"Anything that we do in parking is done through PowerPark now," he said.

TS is currently preparing for implementation by installing the software on 125 computers and training staff to use it, Weis said.

"Our current software was developed in-house a number of years ago and does not provide the flexibility and access to information that is needed to provide good, consistent customer service," Weis said.

One feature of the software is RoVR (Retrieval of Vehicle Registrations), which is intended to reduce the number of untraceable, unpaid citations.

TS employees in the field will be equipped with new palm pilots for writing tickets. The current elec-

NEW TS SOFTWARE

Transportation Services will implement new software, allowing students, staff and faculty increased online access.

- Parking permit sales, ticket appeals and tracking of towed vehicles will be available online
- The new software will be implemented Dec. 10
- The \$261,000 software was paid for with general parking funds



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SOURCE: TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

tronic ticket writers are 17 years old, Weis said.

See TS on page 9A

Thunderbirds



JP BEATO III • THE BATTALION

After waiting in line for 30 minutes, Rachel Pratt, 3, of Bryan, gets her autograph book signed by Lead Solo Thunderbird Pilot Major Todd D. Canterbury (left) and #5 Crew Chief staff Sgt. Jason Cooper in the museum

at the George Bush Presidential Library Wednesday afternoon. Pratt watched Wednesday's performance over the library. The Thunderbirds will perform today at 10:15 a.m. at the George Bush Presidential Library.

Food festival aids India's villages

By Nicole M. Jones
THE BATTALION

Two villages in western India received electricity for the first time last year, thanks in part to proceeds from the 2002 SWAAD food festival, hosted by the Association for India's Development (AID), a student organization at Texas A&M.

The A&M chapter of AID, established in March 2002, along with the AID chapters in Austin, Md., San Diego, Calif. and Ann Arbor, Mich., jointly funded a micro-hydroelectricity project to the villages of Bilgaon and Maal in Maharashtra.

Since its inception last year, the project has been completed and electricity is being provided to these villages from a renewable source, said Prasenjit Sengupta, a volunteer in AID and a publicity coordinator for SWAAD, the organization's food festival.

SWAAD, a word from the Sanskrit language of the ancient Hindu texts, means "taste" or "flavor."

"Though the 15 kilowatts

SWAAD Festival

The SWAAD festival will be held at 6 p.m. tonight on the second floor of the MSC and is sponsored by the Association for India's Development

- Registered U.S. non-profit organization
- Supports variety of social development projects
- 43 chapters in U.S.

- First festival held in 2002
- 472 tickets sold last year
- More than 100 volunteers involved in planning



RUBEN DELUNA • THE BATTALION
SOURCE: AID

of electricity produced may seem a pittance by the standards of even a small town, one must keep in mind that these villages had no access to electricity prior to this project," Sengupta said. "Now, life has been transformed there."

Tonight from 7 to 10 p.m.

See Festival on page 9A

A&M to help reestablish Iraq's agricultural economy

By Dan Orth
THE BATTALION

Texas A&M will be leading the way in helping to rebuild Iraq's agricultural economy by implementing a system to increase the country's agricultural production.

A&M has partnered with Development Alternatives, Inc. on the project, which will receive a U.S. Agency for International Development grant worth \$107 million during the next three years.

A&M and the International Ag Programs office will lead several universities, international agricultural organizations and agricultural experts in increasing Iraq's agricultural production, agricultur-

al research and improving its agriculture extension service.

Ed Price, associate vice chancellor for International Agriculture and Federal Relations, led the charge in getting the grant.

"In Iraq, we hope to introduce agricultural technologies, distribute these and help existing farms in their production," Price said.

A&M will have a key role in sharing technology with Iraqis and providing faculty to assist in establishing these plans and sharing their expertise.

Edward A. Hiler, vice chancellor and dean of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, said he believes this will be beneficial for Iraq and reflects well on A&M.

"This is a great opportunity to help stabilize Iraq

by improving the economic well-being of its people. It is also a recognition of the extensive international expertise of our partners as well as our faculty here," Hiler said.

Price said that in other projects similar to this, faculty and students are sent to countries to help implement their plans, but that safety has been an issue.

"Safety is a concern in working in Iraq, but we will only invite students and faculty to work in only those areas declared safe by the U.S. government in accordance with University policy," Price said.

Price's ideal plan is to send in nine groups of three individuals to set up 40 demonstration farms each. Demonstration farms will be displayed for government officials and people interested in started

their own farming.

Seed for many agricultural products will be distributed through various channels, providing agricultural and economic benefits. This will give quality seeds to Iraq farmers but will also help entrepreneurs get started in selling seeds.

"We are trying to avoid problems that occurred in Afghanistan where seed giveaways hurt individual entrepreneurs," Price said.

Price said he believes that if agriculture can be built up significantly, it will stabilize Iraq's economy. Economic stability will lead to a more peaceful Iraq and will bring American troops home, he said.

See Iraq on page 2A

Chiang remembered as 'worthy' Senator subject to recall petition

By Erin Price
THE BATTALION

Li-Wei Kuo met fellow Texas A&M graduate student Cheng-Hsien Chiang at the international airport in Taiwan this summer. His first impression of Chiang was that he looked reserved, but Kuo said he came to realize over the fall semester what a wonderful and faithful friend Chiang was to him.

"Hsien was a worthy friend to have," Kuo said. "When you were in trouble, he tried to help you out. When you were in a bad mood, he'd encourage you and make you happy."

Chiang, 28, died Saturday at the Scott and White Hospital in Temple from injuries sustained in an automobile accident. Edward Frank Sullivan V, 16, was also killed in the wreck.



CHIANG

Kuo said he will always remember Hsien, as friends called him, as a passionate and caring person.

Kuo, an industrial engineering graduate student, said Chiang was always there to lend a hand. Chiang was planning to help build a church and tutor needy children in College Station during his winter vacation, Kuo said. Chiang was also an active member of the First Baptist Church in Bryan.

Kuo said Chiang encouraged him to not become stressed about grades and to learn more about their new lives in American culture.

"Hsien liked to explore and discover

See Chiang on page 2A

By Sarah Walch
THE BATTALION

For the first time in the recent history of the Student Government Association, a Texas A&M student has started a petition campaign to recall a student senator.

In response to sophomore marketing major Mark McCaig's petition for the recall of junior political science major Dustin Teems, sophomore communications major Emily Burden filed a motion late Monday with the SGA's judicial court to appeal for an injunction to dismiss the recall. Burden's motion was filed on the grounds that Teems has broken no constitutional rules and that the situation does not warrant taking such extreme measures.

The Judicial Court will hear the case, Emily Burden v. Mark McCaig,

Thursday in Wehner 103 at 7 p.m.

Chief Justice and sophomore business major Daniel Jones said each side will have an opportunity to present its case and call witnesses at the hearing before the court deliberates and delivers its verdict.

McCaig, president of SGA Watch, filed his request to petition for a recall on Oct. 23, after an open-access budget bill he pushed for passed by a narrow margin of 27 to 21 in the Senate. At the Oct. 22 meeting, Teems spoke in opposition to the bill.

Before filing the petition, McCaig spoke to Teems to clarify the student senator's position.

"He does not support alternative channels to access budget information," McCaig said.

McCaig said he believes people who want to prevent easy access to how students' money is spent do not make good representatives.

"Students want their representative to represent them, not the SGA," McCaig said.

McCaig began his campaign for more student government accountability at the Oct. 8 Senate meeting, after he discovered he was unable to look at the line-item budget for SGA committees before the budget went before the Senate for approval.

"Students need to show student government in a very clear manner that they want easy access to budget information," he said. "What happened to me when I requested the budget from SGA officials is unacceptable."

Senators who sympathized with McCaig's frustration wrote the Open Access to Budget Bill as emergency

See Senate on page 9A