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Community

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just for people in need, but people that have donated money and time and effort to A&M," Moran said. "I was shocked to find Big Event wasn't just for needy people, because Twin City Mission really needed the manpower and that was the least we could have offered to them."

However, the Big Event committee did provide services to all community members and groups that applied for help, maintaining its

record of never turning away a request for assistance.

Chris McKenney, a senior English major who attended the event with members of Sigma Tau Alpha, an English honor society, said that though he would prefer to help less fortunate people, he supports the idea behind the Big Event because students have a responsibility to serve their community.

"We come in and drink our fill, tear up the city and wreak havoc on the community 364 days out of the year," McKenney said. "I figure one day out of the year won't kill us to help other people."

Access

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lot of times what everyone thinks is accessible isn't really feasible at all."

Stephanie Blackwell, a member of Delta Delta Delta and freshman general studies major, said the project raised her consciousness of the dilemmas faced by disabled students.

"The way we checked things by rolling around in the wheelchairs was really neat, but it was really hard at the same time," she said. "I was going from the Koldus Building to G. Rollie White, and it was really scary because there is only the one ramp and the cars are right there."

"I think the experience made us all more aware. Afterwards, we went to McDonald's, and we all noticed things about the disabled parking and access there."

Marti Glasco, a Delta Delta Delta member and junior finance major, was part of a group that evaluated disabled accessibility on West Campus.

"Most of the buildings on that side of campus were fine as far as access because they are all so new," she said. "But in places like the vet-med school, some of the older parts were really bad. Doing something like this really shows you how much improvements are needed."

Jones said it is not his intention for the evaluation to put pressure on the University to upgrade accessibility, but that he wants to provide disabled students with correct information about the campus.

"I realize that improving buildings takes a lot of time and money, and I'm not trying to push the standards," he said. "I just want to provide students with accurate information so that they know what to expect."

The evaluation omitted service buildings where students do not regularly go, as well as dormitories. Information about dormitories is already available through the Department of Residence Life and Housing.

Along with updating the guidebook, Jones is working with Dave Sweeney of Adaptive Technology Services to include building accessibility information on the Texas A&M map on the Internet.

Carnival

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ready to work. It's the most wonderful thing that's happened to us."

Brandi Fike, a biomedical science major and Big Event volunteer, helped at the carnival with horse rides. She said she enjoyed the smiles the animals brought to the children's faces.

Because so many volunteers were available to help with the carnival, she said, they were able to give the children more individual attention.

The children's favorite carnival activities were the petting zoo, where a pot-bellied pig named "Mattie" was cuddled and hugged, and the egg booth, which sold eggs filled with colorful confetti that the children cracked over one other's heads.

But the colorful confetti and gentle animals were not the only things appreciated by the children.

Marissa Procter, a 7-year-old South Knoll student, expressed her gratitude to the Big Event volunteers.

"It's great this year," Procter said. "We have more helpers and more games."

As the carnival continued in College Station, Big Event volunteers in Bryan were improving the home of an elderly resident who was away receiving medical treatments.

The volunteers worked most of the day scrubbing mud off the sides of the house and cutting overgrown weeds and tree limbs. Others raked weeds into piles, dragged brush and collected trash that had built up in the woman's yard.

The volunteers worked all morning, stopping only to take one quick break when a few grey wasps were accidentally discovered.

Residents of Sherwood Health Care, a Bryan nursing home, also received help from Big Event volunteers.

As residents relaxed outside, enjoyed refreshments and basked in the Saturday afternoon sun, Big Event volunteers hosed down, washed and dried their wheelchairs.

Susan Harrison, Sherwood's assistant activity director, said the wheelchairs, which most residents spend most of their time in, get surprisingly dirty.



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