

# The Battalion

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Gunning for first place

Battalion photo by Linda Howard

Freshman members of the Texas A&M University Women's Drill Team are shown practicing for the state championship meet to be held this Saturday in San Antonio. The team consists of 14 members and is currently tied for first place with the University of Texas at El Paso. To win the championship, A&M must win three of the four events

Saturday, or must place highest in overall points of the five teams competing. The Women's Drill Team is only two years old, but won the State Championship last year in its first competition. Members of the team, from left to right, are: Thelma Roman, Sandra Francis, Eve Totin, and (front) Carol Polly.

## A&M life uncomfortable for blacks

By PHYLLIS CARVER

In 1963, Texas A&M University opened its doors to all civilians, women and blacks.

Now, 14 years later, there are 26,000 students, 9,000 women, but only 100 blacks.

Why hasn't the enrollment of blacks at A&M increased as much as might have been expected?

Fred McClure, student body president and a black, said one reason more blacks do not attend A&M is the lack of social activities for blacks.

Chandra Myers, past president of Black Awareness Committee, agreed.

"Most blacks don't consider A&M because they can't identify with anything here," she said. "The first thing they ask is what concerns do we have here, then, what social activities are there for blacks."

"When I came here in 1974 there were only three black girls on campus. I walked around four weeks before I saw a black girl. I didn't feel comfortable here at all my first year."

Myers said she has been criticized by other blacks for not attending a predominantly black school.

"They asked why I didn't go to Prairie View (A&M) so I could get more funds. They're worried that the black colleges will lose their funds and fade away if they don't get better attendance," Myers said.

Blacks are also concerned that a black student at a predominantly white school will change his identity, she said.

"It's great to better yourself, but don't forget who you are or reject your background," Myers said.

"I've seen black Corps members turn and walk another way to avoid saying hello to other blacks," Myers said.

The social atmosphere is not the only factor. Robert A. Lacey, registrar, said fi-

nances might also be a reason.

"A&M has no general scholarship for minorities as some other schools do," he said. Lacey added that A&M makes efforts to be easily accessible to all students.

A&M contacts National Achievement Students (National Merit scholars who ask to be listed as blacks), said Daniel Hernandez, assistant director of admissions.

Hernandez has visited predominantly minority schools and worked with federal minority programs to acquaint minorities with A&M.

"One girl asked if we still had to chop cotton as a course here," Hernandez said. Myers said that in the past A&M was considered an all-white military college

and is still considered to be an agricultural college.

McClure said he has had no problems. "If anything, audiences seem to be more receptive to what I am saying because they want to know what a black as president of A&M is saying," McClure said.

Myers said that she has had only one bad experience, racially, at A&M.

"The first year I was here," said Myers, "I got on the elevator in the library with a friend and some guy stepped out and said he wasn't riding with any damn nigger."

Athletic Director Emory Bellard said that, of the 100 blacks at A&M, 51 are on athletic scholarships.

## Wet ground moves muster back into G. Rollie White

Aggie Muster, scheduled for 5:30 p.m. has been moved to G. Rollie White Coliseum because of the wet ground in front of the Systems Building, the original sight.

Muster is the Texas A&M tradition when students and former students honor deceased comrades. Speaker for this year's muster will be a former prisoner of war, Air Force Maj. James Edwin Ray.

Ray, a 1963 Texas A&M University graduate, was a North Vietnamese prisoner of war for seven years.

As a part of the muster tradition, a roll call of the absent is taken. Living friends answer "here" as names of Aggies who died last year are called.

Muster, an event held on the anniversary of the Battle of San Jacinto at A&M since 1903, will be held all over the world wherever Aggies gather to remember the dead.

The campus program also includes "The Spirit of Aggieland" played by the Texas Aggie Band, "Silver Taps" by band buglers and a rifle salute by the Ross Volunteers Firing Squad. The Singing Cadets' will sing "Auld Lang Syne."

## House members give tentative approval to new property tax code revision bill

United Press International

AUSTIN — Despite warnings they were creating a massive new bureaucracy, House members tentatively have approved a property tax code revision which would create appraisal offices in each county.

The House debated the issues for more than four hours yesterday before tentatively approving the measure 85-61 and scheduling it for final consideration today.

"It's against my personal convictions to pass legislation that creates a complex new bureaucracy," said Rep. Leonard Briscoe, D-Fort Worth.

"It's a step in the wrong direction and, in my opinion, would cause an overwhelming amount of paperwork."

Reps. Wayne Peveto, D-Orange, and Robert Maloney, R-Dallas, the bill's sponsors, said the measure would be the only effective taxpayer's remedy available.

"Everyone knows it, property tax is one of the unfair taxes in the state, but there is no way we can abolish it," Maloney said. "We don't know what the answer is but at least with the taxes we have, let's have them administered fairly and equitably."

The measure would create three statewide boards to administer the new property tax code — to monitor the appraisal of property, set standards for appraisers and hear appeals in tax disputes. It also would create appraisal districts for each county, but would allow county taxing authorities to withdraw from the districts.

Briscoe tried unsuccessfully several times to change the provisions giving county tax offices the option of joining the program, which is mandatory for school, city and other tax districts. Proponents said Briscoe's amendments would have "gutted" the bill.

"I do not believe the bill will bring about the reform it intends to bring about

if it hopes counties will enter the program voluntarily," Briscoe said.

Peveto said the appeals process established in the bill would allow property owners several methods of protesting unfair taxes.

"Will this bill raise property taxes in your area? My answer to that is definitely no," said Peveto, who contended local taxing authorities could not increase property taxes without first posting notices of the increase and then conducting a public hearing.

House members defeated a proposal by Rep. John Wilson, D-LaGrange, to tax holders of bank stock rather than the banks.

"Let's treat banks like we treat everybody else," Wilson said. "If you want to tax bank stock, tax the person who owns that stock, not the bank."

Wilson said the measure would result in more types of property being taxed.

"I guarantee it will increase bureaucracy, increase and valorem taxes and will increase paperwork," Wilson said.

The House also rejected proposals to tax intangible property, or property other than real estate, and to require disclosure of property improvements totaling \$5,000 or more.

## Tentative approval won for lethal injection bills

United Press International

Legislators in Texas and Oklahoma have given tentative approval to replacing the electric chair with lethal injections to execute condemned men "humanely, like you do stray dogs."

The Oklahoma House yesterday approved an amended version of a bill already passed by that state's Senate. The Texas House also gave its tentative approval to a lethal injection bill.

In Oklahoma the measure now returns to the Senate for consideration of House amendments. The Texas death by injection bill faces one more House vote before being sent to the Senate for consideration.

In both states, supporters argued the electric chair was a barbaric method of execution.

"Anything above the level of death by injection is torture and we need to get rid of

it," said Rep. David Hood, D-Oklahoma City.

"If you are going to execute people, you should do it humanely, like you do stray dogs," Rep. Bill Wiseman, R-Tulsa, told the Oklahoma House.

In Austin, Tex., Rep. Ben Grant, D-Marshall, displayed a waist-high picture of the state's electric chair and offered a graphic description of death by electrocution.

Grant said persons electrocuted are hit with 1,800 volts of electricity.

Their body arches from the chair, and you see a red glow from the body because he is being an electrical conductor."

He said the voltage is then temporarily reduced to 500 volts.

"This is to keep him from catching fire and burning up. Then there is the sick sweet smell of burned flesh, but the state has installed a fan to carry that away. Then a

doctor has to wait a while until the body cools before he can declare him dead."

In both states opposition came from legislators who said execution by injection would be too easy a death.

Rep. Bob Parris, D-Sallisaw, told the Oklahoma House the bill is "soft on criminals."

"Some of us out here probably would let all of them go and just say pray for them," Parris said.

Rep. T. H. McDonald, D-Mesquite, had a similar complaint in Texas.

"What do you propose as an adequate way to destroy that mad dog that rapes a woman or a little girl and cuts her up?" asked McDonald. "I get so upset when I think about slapping them on the hands and saying, 'Don't kill anybody else.'"

"Mr. McDonald, execution is not a slap on the hand regardless of how it is carried out," Grant replied.

## Book tells about life with Ernest

### Hemingway talks of spouse

By SUSIE TURNER

"I thought he was a great big over-bearded monster," Mary Welsh Hemingway said of the first impression her husband Ernest made in 1943.

"Ernest was a complicated, complex, ebullient, warm, sometimes exasperating, endearing, violent and virulent man," Hemingway told the audience in Zachry Auditorium last night. "We somehow worked out a symbiosis."

Living with Ernest called for a very busy lifestyle, Hemingway said. People were always coming to stay with them, especially during the 17 years they lived in Cuba. One day, she had written in her diary, marked the first time in 54 days that she and Ernest could lunch alone.

Ernest was not always easy to live with, Hemingway said. Sometimes spats over the littlest things turned into a major verbal battle.

"One time Ernest accused me of shrinking the necks of his shirts," she said with a smile.

But those years in Cuba were good ones, Hemingway said. Lunchtimes were full of songs, friends and lots of wine.

Mary Hemingway said her husband wrote about things he really knew.

"I think that the Nick Adams he wrote about in those number of short stories was certainly similar to Ernest," she said.

If it hadn't been for Mary Hemingway, "The Old Man and the Sea" would have ended with the old man's death. She encouraged her husband to let the old man live, because "everyone would like it better that way." He changed the ending.

Many literary reviewers have written about symbolism in "The Old Man and the Sea." According to his wife, Ernest said: "I wrote a story. If they want to put symbols in it, let them."

"He was dedicated to authenticity and accuracy," Hemingway said. That is why he disliked every film about himself or his work except "The Killers."

Hemingway also talked about the years during World War II, before she met Ernest, when she wrote for the London Daily Express and later became a correspondent for the Time's London Bureau.

"In London, every night, 10,000 to 20,000 people were made homeless," she said.



HEMINGWAY

"With incredible ingenuity, the British made do. Incidents, the British people called the bombings. It seemed like such an understatement to me."

Hemingway also told anecdotes about several writers she had known during her early career before she met Ernest. She reminisced about Carl Sandburg, who nicknamed her "Minnesota" after finding out it was her native state. She mentioned some of the naive things she had said to him as an "inexperienced cub reporter of 33."

Once while interviewing George Bernard Shaw, she mentioned how handsome he was.

"I wish all playwrights looked as well as they wrote," she said.

Shaw replied: "The surfaces of objects seldom proclaim their contents."

Mary Hemingway has been lecturing throughout the United States since October to promote her new book "The Way It Was."

## Aggie Muster:

### Former Students around the world reminisce

In Egypt, Aggies may gather in silent memorial to deceased classmates while watching the sun rise over the pyramids. In Sweden, drinks may be lifted in "skål" to the occasion.

From Madrid to Kuwait, April 21 offers an opportunity for Aggies all over the world to meet in their area for Aggie Muster — perhaps the only time of the year they meet.

"If there is an A&M man in 100 miles of you, you are expected to get together, eat a little, and live over the days you spent at the A&M College of Texas," according to the March, 1923 Texas Aggie.

When Aggies get together for muster it may range from a shrimp broil to a candlelight service.

The Texas A&M University Former Student's Association sends a program to each muster chairman which offers suggestions for the ceremony. The rest is up to the individual club.

In New Orleans last year, muster was held during a beer and barbecue outing.

In Norway it is usually a cocktail party. But musters in other places aren't always planned.

About two years ago a U.S. Navy frogman was clearing mines in the Suez Canal. While working he met several Egyptians who had graduated from A&M, so they celebrated muster by going out to eat, partying in Cairo and watching the sun rise.

In Madrid, Spain, last year, one muster club went out to dinner after the ceremony. While at the restaurant, another Aggie family from Pamplona, Spain, happened to be there and joined them.

Musters have been held on airplanes, submarines — anywhere Aggies happen to be.

But there are problems encountered in organizing a muster in other parts of the United States or the world.

"Sometimes communications are hard to cope with," said James L. Youngblood, a Texas A&M graduate working with Brown and Root in Stavanger, Norway.

He said trying to get films that are exchanged with other clubs in Norway is very difficult due to communication problems.

Also a problem for a muster chairman is organizing and contacting large numbers of A&M alumni in a state or foreign country.

Dallas had about 700 people at their muster last year. There are eight musters in Germany, with 38 people attending one last year. Saudi Arabia had 34 persons at one of its musters.

Aggies in other states and countries enjoy getting together for muster, seeing

old and new friends and remembering those they have lost.

Most muster club members don't see each other except at muster. They look forward to it more than those on the A&M campus because people here see each other every day, said Pat Gersbach, assistant and secretary to the field director.

Youngblood referred to muster in Norway as "just a yearly thing."

"We merely learn who's living here. It's just a social occasion." He said that musters in other countries do not have the same atmosphere as the one at Texas A&M. "It's not really a solemn occasion."

But today, all over the world, Aggies have the chance to capture the spirit of muster and join together once again.



MANILA A&M CLUB

## Weather

Mostly cloudy with more showers and thundershowers today and tonight. High today in the upper 70s. Low tonight in the upper 50s. Mostly cloudy through mid-day tomorrow becoming partly cloudy tomorrow afternoon. High in the mid-70s. Precipitation probability 50 per cent this afternoon dropping to 30 per cent tonight.