

# The Battalion

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## Prairie View: One vote, one questionnaire

By MARK POWER  
and  
JULIE SPEIGHTS

**PRAIRIE VIEW** — Students at Prairie View A&M University quietly registering to vote this week at a booth set up in their student center. The applicants come to register at a rate of 250 a day. The organizers of the project, members of a black social and fraternal fraternity, say their goal is to have a successful voter registration drive at Prairie View. But in view of the controversy that surrounds black applicants in this college town, the drive represents years of Waller County politics. Students of Prairie View have had difficulty registering to vote in Waller County because of a questionnaire that LeRoy Symm,

County Tax-Assessor-Collector, requires in addition to the regular voter registration forms. Symm's refusal to register students from Prairie View on the basis of this questionnaire brought charges that the voter registration practices in Waller County are discriminatory. "In lieu of the ability of other Texas students to vote at their schools, there is no reason our county should discriminate against our right to vote," says Harold E. Brown, president of the fraternity that sponsors the drive. "About 50 per cent of the students registering know of the problems with the county officials ahead of time," says Brown. So far more than 1,000 students have participated in the drive. The questionnaire begins with such questions as: "Are you a college student? If so where do you attend school?" and "Do you intend to reside in Waller County indefinitely?" Other questions

concern affiliation with Waller County organizations other than those related to the college. Symm, who has held the office since 1946, was unavailable for comment. The legality of the questionnaire has been challenged several times in state and federal court. In 1967 the Legislature amended the Election Code to make the Secretary of State the chief election official with the power to enforce the Election Code.

*"The kids couldn't care less when you really think about it. It's not a big problem to anyone but (Mayor) Sams. These are not Waller County people."*

—Jack Taylor,  
Waller County Judge

In 1972 the Secretary of State issued an order to Symm asking him to refrain from using the questionnaire based on the amendment to the election code. Symm refused to comply and fought the state on the grounds that the Secretary could not stop him. The court ruled that the Secretary could issue such an order, but stopped short of preventing Symm from using his questionnaire and turned the matter back over to the state.

On September 1, 1977, Secretary of State Mark White issued an emergency order stating "No questionnaire or additional information shall be required prior to the registration of any applicant for a voter registration who has properly completed a voter registration form which has been prescribed by the Secretary of State."

But a September 6, 1977 affidavit shows that four students from Prairie View attempted to register through Symm's office. They were given a questionnaire along with the regular voter application form.

A key figure in the Waller County dispute is Prairie View Mayor Eristus Sams. He is helping the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity in their voter registration drive and has been actively opposing Symm and his questionnaire since 1972.

"We have a grave legal problem on our hands. If you talk to

the students they will tell you that they feel they're being led on," said Sams Tuesday morning. "We've battled this so many times they get turned off," he said in reference to the Prairie View students.

Mayor Sams is currently suing Symm because the Tax Assessor-Collector refuses to make Sams a deputy registrar. In the registration process, the deputy registrar assists in filing registration forms and carrying out the process of registering citizens to vote. Sams has been a deputy registrar in the past.

"The (Symm) told me he won't make me a deputy registrar because I won't do what he tells me to do," the mayor said. Sams said the attitude of the student body is general restlessness over this issue. He said that it's time to honor the applications from the student community and dispense with the questionnaires. Waller County officials feel differently about the questionnaire.

"This is old hat to us, Mayor Sams and his suits," said Waller County Judge Jack Taylor. Taylor said the Waller County questionnaire just asks for a "little more information."

"We just happen to enforce the law," Taylor said referring to retaining the questionnaires. "We're doing exactly what we've always done, we're just doing the job like it should be done. If they have any claim at all, he (Symm) lets them vote."

Judge Taylor said the students are not really concerned.

*"We think that students should be interested in politics but we want them to be interested at home where they are actively involved."*

—Christal Carr,  
Chief Deputy Tax Assessor-Collector,  
Waller County

"The kids couldn't care less when you really think about it. It is not a big problem to anyone but Sams," Taylor said. "These are not Waller County people."

The judge added that students who were not satisfied with their registration status and questionnaire could ask for a hearing before Symm.

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Battalion photo by Kathy Curtis

### Diez y seis

Guitars and soft lights set the mood as this mariachi band performed last night in front of the MSC fountain. The group's performance

highlighted a Mexican Independence Day celebration, sponsored by the MSC Committee for Awareness of Mexican-American Culture.

### FAA study could mean lost funds

## Easterwood tower faces closing

By GARY WELCH

Easterwood Airport is expecting a continued increase in air traffic despite a discouraging study made recently by the Federal Aviation Administration, says Bennett Smith of the airport's business office.

The study named Easterwood's control tower as one of 73 in the country (six in Texas) whose cost exceeds its benefits. Easterwood faces the loss of federal funds needed for operating the tower. Without those funds, the tower would probably be closed to close.

The FAA study set up a specific cost-effectiveness formula which indicated that College Station's tower will cost more than will help from 1978-1992.

"I have not seen the criteria for this study," Smith said. "Apparently it is some criteria which they (the FAA) have applied."

He said the official FAA air traffic count reported by the tower shows a total of 104,000 take-offs and landings from September 1976 to August 1977 compared to 88,000 in the same period a year earlier.

The FAA is considering five alternatives for the 73 towers in question.

First, it may choose to keep all 73 in operation without regard to losses.

Second, the FAA may revert to an older study released in 1975 that takes a short-term look at costs and benefits. Under the old study, Easterwood would remain open.

The third alternative would be to use the new study to judge tower effectiveness. If the FAA chooses to implement this option, all 73 towers would be closed.

"We could still operate if the tower were closed," Smith pointed out. "People could expect increased delays in any kind of instrument approach. We would have to operate on an individual see-and-be-seen basis."

Smith said Easterwood's tower handles anything from jets and turboprops to low-speed trainers. Even supersonic jets have passed through Easterwood's traffic pattern and have relied on the tower to guide them safely through the air traffic flow.

"From a safety standpoint, our tower is necessary to maintain traffic separation," Smith added.

The fourth option would be to close the least profitable control towers and allow the other 38 to remain in operation. The new FAA study lists 60 towers that are not expected to break even in the near future, but Easterwood's tower is not one of them.

"Ours is one of 13 towers expected to yield an economic profit within the next two years," Smith said.

That asset could also exclude Easterwood from the fifth alternative, which would have the FAA keeping all unprofitable towers open until 1980—to allow time for organization of state and local operations.

Such operation of Easterwood has not been discussed at the airport, Smith said.

"We are not even considering it, we are just working to show Easterwood's usefulness," he added.

Smith said Easterwood handles much of Houston's air traffic and some from other major cities. "We have more traffic than

some carrier (major passenger airline) airports," he said.

"We have a lot of people coming into this community for business reasons," Smith said, "and there is some freight handled here also."

Easterwood also handles a lot of instrument approach training because Houston is too busy, Smith said.

He predicted that Easterwood's tower will show its usefulness in time. "I feel we will be able to justify its continuing operation," he said.

The FAA is inviting public comment on whether these airports towers should be closed. The deadline for comments is October 15.

## Humane society seeks funds for new shelter

By KAREN ROGERS

The Brazos Valley Humane Society failed Monday at a public budget hearing to convince the Bryan City Council to allocate revenue-sharing funds to build a community animal shelter.

"It's a matter of priorities," said Louis Odle, Bryan city manager. "Bryan has an animal shelter, so the council as a whole felt this wasn't a high priority item in a community trying to hold the line on taxes."

He said, however, that he did not think the animal shelter in Bryan had adequate facilities.

The proposed animal shelter was voted on by the people of Bryan in a July 9 bond election. The proposition was defeated by 162 votes.

Betty Schier, a member of the BVHS, said they had taken a survey prior to the bond election.

"Most of the people indicated they were for it, but preferred that it be financed some other way than through tax money," Schier said.

The BVHS has been collecting private donations and sponsoring fund-raising events such as flea markets to raise the money for the shelter, Schier said.

She added they were far short of their \$65,000 goal.

Members of the BVHS feel the

Bryan facility is inadequate.

Kathy Neme, another member of the Society, said because of the small size of the pound it is impossible to separate sick animals from healthy, large animals from small, or passive animals from active.

Charles Hummick, animal control officer for Bryan, said that 432 dogs have been picked up and put in the Bryan shelter at various times since July.

Neme said that animals are kept at the Bryan pound for a certain number of days and are then taken to the vet school either to be used for research or to be destroyed.

The BVHS has secured a contract with the Houston Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals which allows them to take animals to the Houston animal shelter. There is no charge to the BVHS.

"It's not the ideal situation, because being in such a large area, there is less chance of the animals being adopted out," Neme said.

But until the BVHS can either raise enough money to finance the shelter or find funding somewhere else it will have to do, she added.

Charlotte Woods, treasurer of the BVHS, said they will continue trying to finance it themselves and may eventually ask the Bryan City Council again for help.

## Authorities advise pre-professionals to study with tests

By MARGIE SANTAMARIA

All pre-professional students and prospective graduate students at Texas A&M University have one common goal, to pass the entrance exam of their prospective school.

Some authorities on testing recommend using study tools such as the Graduate Record Exam (GRE) study guides and taking courses that deal with specific test questions. Others say the same goals can be achieved without such aid.

Throughout the school year, various agencies offer intensive test preparation programs, some lasting only one weekend, says Nancy Zettelmoyer, administrator of the Stanley H. Kaplan Educational Center in College Station. These programs, including Kaplan's, are not designed to teach but to provide students with material that is on the real tests, Zettelmoyer says.

The Kaplan program in College Station concentrates on preparation for several tests requested by students. These are the Medical Careers Aptitude Tests, the Veterinary Aptitude Test, the Graduate Record Exam and the Law Scholastic Aptitude Test. The VAT, however, is no longer required for applicants to Texas A&M's college of Veterinary Medicine. Vet school applicants now take the GRE instead.

Some consider the course expensive, Zettelmoyer says, but in the long run, it

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muscle aches and sore throats, Goswick said.

An average of 33 students came in after hours between Saturday and Thursday last week.

Gough said she has heard few complaints about the new policy.

"We're getting fewer complaints than we thought we would," Gough said. "We do have injuries at night but I think most students who come in should've come in earlier to see a doctor."

If the annual flu epidemic affects students again, Goswick said he doesn't expect any problems.

"We can accommodate 44 of them and then we send them home to their beds as before," Goswick said.

Goswick explained that the pharmacy law is to protect patients and pharmacists. He added, "Most of all it's because pharmacists lobby for it."

Goswick said he didn't know the law

existed before, and that he learned about it from a pharmacist who began working last August. Previously, there was no Health Center pharmacist.

"We thought it was all legal," Goswick said.

Goswick said he heard a rumor last year that local pharmacists were going to report the Health Center.

"We were definitely in contradiction (with the law) the whole time before," Goswick said.

A representative of the Texas Pharmacy Board unofficially notified him that the center wasn't complying with the law, Goswick said.

To follow another part of the same law, amber safety-capped bottles are replacing the white paper packets the center previously used to dispense drugs.

Goswick said the bottles will cost over \$3,000 more a year than the packets.



Battalion photo by Ken Herrera

### Skylights

The sun hid behind a cloud long enough yesterday afternoon to create this view on a lightpole on the Texas A&M campus.