

Aggie campaign manager. . .

(Continued from page 1.)
In fact, money seemed to weigh heavily in the Mowery campaign from beginning to end. "We ran dry several weeks ago," he said, "and we had to come up with the money ourselves."
It was strange to find a campaign manager who was not a hard-bitten professional. Though Darbyshire was president of the College Republicans at Texas A&M '75-76, he said he had no desire to enter politics as a career.
"It's a hobby of mine," he explained. "I get interested in issues, and I try to make my beliefs a reality."
So, when Mowery approached him for the job during his '77 Christmas vacation, Darbyshire said he had to think of school first.
Darbyshire met Mowery at Texas A&M, and he met Mowery's wife at the National Republican Convention in Kansas City where they both were delegates. Through the acquaintance, Darbyshire said, Mowery asked him to serve as campaign manager during the '78 spring semester.
Darbyshire said he decided to finish his spring semester first and help with the campaign as much as he could.
"That was a disaster," he said. "The campaign was always on his mind—like a disease it grows on you," he said, and his grades suffered.
He stayed out of school during the summer and the fall '78 semester, first working in Fort Worth as the overall campaign manager. Later funds grew tight and he asked to be transferred to College Station where he felt he could be more useful. At that point Mowery split his campaign into three districts.
Besides learning about people, he learned about himself. The 13-hour days taught Darbyshire about himself.
He also had a chance to view the politics from the inside. He learned about the effect of money on campaigns. He said that in apathetic campaigns like this one, media play a greater role than in elections where people are keyed up.
He also learned the problems of dealing with national party headquarters. Though he was sent to the '78 week-long campaign manager seminar, other help from the National Republican Committee (NRC) was meager.
Darbyshire said the benchmark polls were useful tools. In addition to studying the polls, he said he

spent time analyzing past voting records and patterns, examining them precinct by precinct. In addition, Darbyshire said one of the GOP's field men suggested using a polling firm run by a former member of the RNC.
"They play a little game called going to Washington D.C. and if they want you to hire a consultant, you should hire the one they suggest."
He said Mowery's campaign may have run afoul of the RNC by disregarding their advice in hiring a different consultant later in the campaign.
"It's funny that the Republican

party cries about bureaucracy but has one themselves," he remarked.
Darbyshire said being a student with an engineering background was not always a help. He had flow charts and tables outlining what everybody needed to do and when.
"I thought everyone would want to know exactly what they were getting into," he said.
"But he was wrong."
"One old boy in Robertson County... I laid out all these charts and it blew his mind. He said, 'There's no way I can do this.'"
"I scared him off, maybe others too," he recalled with a smile.
Darbyshire slouched in a chair in

the empty campaign headquarters. Behind a partition was a bank of phones and on a coffee table were unused bumper stickers and literature. "Aggies for Wes Mowery," one bumper sticker read.
It was late.
Darbyshire unplugged the television set and the radio and prepared to go home. His career as a campaign manager was over, and he said he was going to finish working on his master's degree in business.
Earlier in the evening, he uttered the quintessential Aggie comment on the night's outcome: "We weren't beaten," he said with a tired smile, "we just got outvoted."



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