

# THE BATTALION

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## Senate requests standard Q-drop

By MERIL EDWARDS  
Campus Staff

The Texas A&M University student senate will recommend to the University Rules and Regulations committee today that it standardize Q-drop policy among the academic colleges.

The Q-drop standardization bill that the senate passed in its meeting Wednesday calls the present Q-drop system unfair. It said it is discriminatory for students in different colleges to be subject to different Q-drop policies.

John Calhoun, vice president for academic affairs, said the present Q-drop policy allows a student to drop a class up to the 12th class day with no record. He said if the class is dropped between the 12th and 25th class day, the student must receive approval from the dean of his college and the drop will go on record.

"This bill would exclude the dean's power," Calhoun said, "and give it to the student. It would allow the student to drop up to the 25th class day on his own, without approval from the dean."

In other action, the senate voted down a proposal to change senior boot line's formation to before football games instead of at halftime.

Brad Smith, vice president for student services, said it isn't necessary to have boot line before games and that it would cause too much confusion.

"The boot line confusion can be solved by more organization rather than a radical change in a tradition," Smith said.

A bill urging reinstatement of free coffee refills in the Memorial Student Center Cafeteria was held in committee until more work can be done on it.

Bills before the senate for a first reading

Wednesday were the adoption of student senate bylaws and the continuation of survival kit distribution.

In another first reading, George Black, vice president for finance, presented a student service allocation amendment to the senate.

Black's amendment concerns the funding of Texas A&M's women's athletic program. Women's athletics is currently funded by the Athletic Department. Because of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare Title IX regulations, their cost has increased.

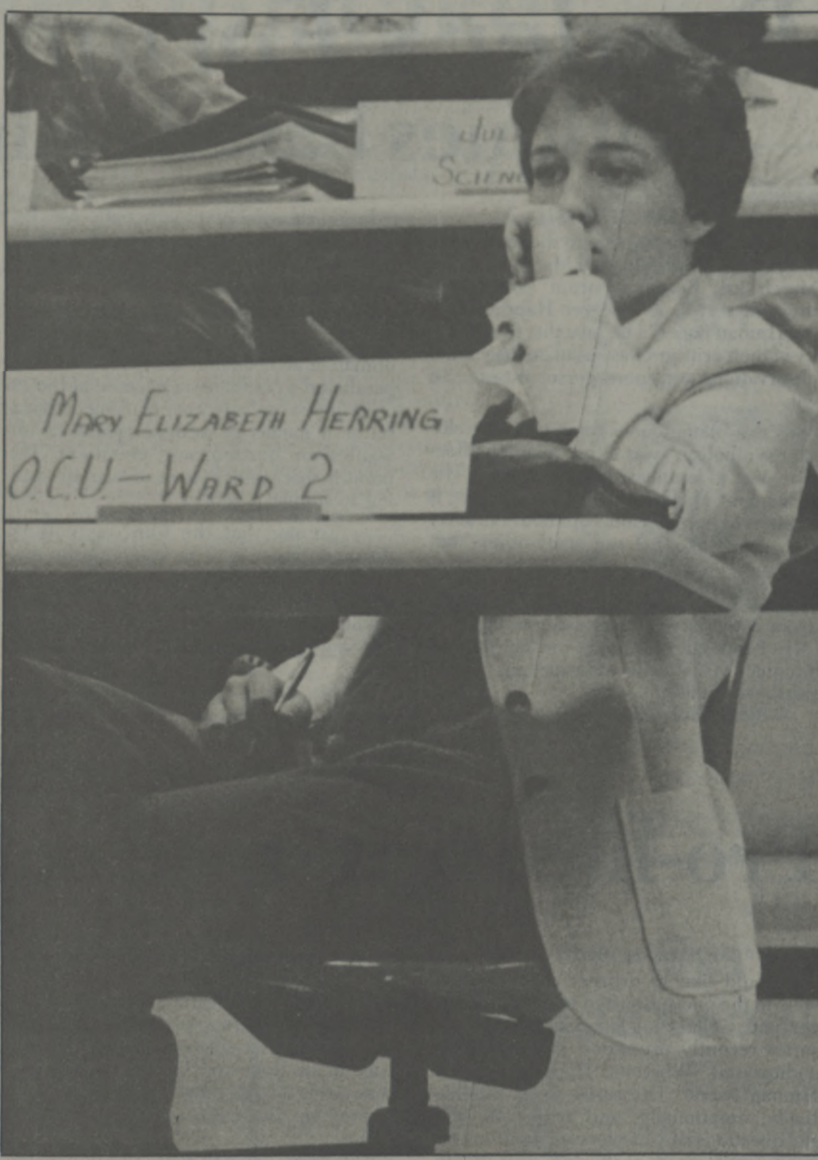
"I'm proposing that a portion of student service fees be allocated to the athletic department," Black said. "And that the student service fee increase not be more than 50 cents for this purpose and that no services be reduced as they are presently allocated for."

Black said he had no concrete figures of the money needed to bring the women's athletic program into compliance with Title IX regulations to present to the senate, but would be talking with Texas A&M President Jarvis Miller and would have more details at the next meeting.

Also up for first reading was a bill opposing the Traffic Panel's recommendation to raise the parking ticket fine from \$5 to \$10.

The vice president for rules and regulations, Paul Bettencourt, proposed that the senate support the current policy of the campus police department, under which two tickets are given to parking violators who don't have a valid permit.

Another bill introduced was a request that permission be granted the Basement Coffeehouse to apply for a permit to sell beer on weekends.



Mary Elizabeth Herring, a junior in agricultural economics, is running for a seat on the College Station city council. She has served as the Texas A&M student senate liaison with the council since October and will continue in that position until April 1. For the related story, please see page 5.

Staff photo by Lynn Blanco

## IM, ORC battle over equipment

By CATHY SAATHOFF  
City Reporter

Rental rights on \$10,000 worth of recreational equipment are up in the air: the Intramurals office wants them, and the Outdoor Recreation Committee doesn't want to let them go.

Nothing can be done until somebody comes up with a place to put the whole operation. The equipment, which includes 10 complete sets of backpacking gear and eight canoes, is stored in the Grove now.

Dr. John Koldus, vice president for student services, will have the final say in the matter, but he's waiting for the Intramurals department to come up with a proposal about how to operate the rental. ORC members are keeping their fingers crossed.

"The intention is to provide a service to the university community," said Dennis Corrington, director of Intramurals. "We feel that to provide a better service, we need to have a full-time service."

The ORC rental, operated out of the Grove, is open 24 hours a week. Committee chairman Charlie Walter said that is more hours than Texas Tech's rental service, which is the largest in the state. Tech's rental, a part of that school's intramural department, is open 14 hours a week.

Walter said 24 hours a week is enough. He said most people renting equipment for weekend trips pick it up on Thursday afternoon or Friday and return it on Monday or Tuesday, and that those are the days the ORC operation is open.

James Welford, associate director of Intramurals, said, "We think we can offer better hours for checking out equipment." He said ORC would still have a say in how the equipment is handled.

Walter said a full-time equipment checker would twiddle his thumbs most of the day.

"I see no real need to keep it open 40 hours a week," he said.

Welford said his department could handle the longer hours.

"We have a program set up that can handle that," he said. "We have the student staff to handle it."

The Intramurals office is open until midnight during the week and from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. on weekends. Welford said those hours are flexible.

Corrington said his department has wanted to get involved in adventure-type sports since 1976, but ORC had a head start of two years. The ORC program started in 1974, and Walter said the MSC Council was dubious about its success.

"It's been a long haul to get the thing off the ground," Walter said. "As of December 1979, we doubled our inventory." The canoes made up the bulk of the new equipment.

He said the committee members have always had to prove themselves, but that

the council has been behind them. Don Rohel, adviser for ORC, said, "I'm an emotional issue, because Outdoor Rec is a group of people who have put their heart and souls into the program."

"There are a lot of people in Outdoor Rec that are students who are experts in the fields."

Walter said the whole idea behind MSC committees is that students should work for students.

Corrington said Intramurals works for the same goal.

"We feel we're here to serve the students," he said.

Koldus said nothing will be done until the Health and PE department, which Intramurals is part of, comes up with a plan for managing the equipment.

"Everybody must be agreeable," said.

Space is at a premium in the H-PE department, with various groups clamoring for a spot in the G. Rollie White addition.

Intramurals will move from its present site in Deware Fieldhouse to bigger quarters when the new section of the Coliseum is done. It would like to keep its present space as an equipment rental storage room.

Corrington said access by car will be an important factor in choosing a location since much of the gear is too bulky to be hauled across campus to a parking lot. ORC has a road leading up to the door of the stage in the Grove, so equipment can be loaded easily.

Walter said the equipment is a vital part of ORC's three-phase outdoor education program.

The first phase of the program includes seminars which give people the opportunity to look over the equipment and what's available.

The second phase is practice, in which participants do things like canoeing in the lake by the fireman's training school rappelling down the fire tower there.

During the spring, ORC sponsors a trip nearly every weekend. These are supplied with rented equipment.

"The majority of equipment is for people going on ORC trips," Walter said. "The equipment is an integral part of our program."

The rental is a self-supporting enterprise. It averages making \$200 a month which goes into maintaining old and purchasing new equipment. The original money to start the program was included in the ORC budget, which comes from student service fees.

The group is looking into hiring a full-time professional to handle its trip planning and the rental. Corrington said Intramurals might hire another staff member to help size outdoor recreation if the rental comes under his office's control.

Both groups dream of an outdoor recreation complex devoted entirely to outdoor sports such as backpacking, canoeing, rock climbing. But this is far in the future.

"Because the university has grown quickly, there are many organizational needs," Walter said.

## Cancer not linked to saccharin, studies say

United Press International

NEW YORK — Two new studies provide good news for diabetics and other users of saccharin, showing there is little or no link between the artificial sweetener and bladder cancer.

Similar conclusions were reported in a National Cancer Institute study released three months ago.

The NCI and the American Cancer Society funded the two latest studies, which support the American Diabetes Association's policy on saccharin. The ADA last year reversed its position on the artificial sweetener, recommending continued availability until Congress can study all food safety laws.

People who use sugar substitutes "have little or no" increased risk of bladder cancer, said Dr. Alan S. Morrison and associates from Harvard University School of Public Health, reporting Wednesday in The New England Journal of Medicine.

The American Health Foundation report was even more definitive, saying there was "no association between saccharin and bladder cancer." The report by Drs. Ernst L. Wynder and Steven D. Stellman appears in Science, the journal of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

They said the risk is no greater for those drinking diet beverages than for those tak-

ing the sweetener in tablet or pill form, even though diet beverages contain a very high amount of sweetener.

Their study also showed no evidence saccharin plays a role in promoting cancer among cigarette smokers, as previously claimed. Wynder, AHF president, is the health detective who first linked heavy cigarette smoking and lung cancer.

Wynder's study found there were no more diabetics in the bladder cancer group than in controls, even though diabetics use a greater amount of saccharin than the general population.

It also found there were no more obese bladder-cancer patients than non-bladder

cancer patients — even though obese people use significantly more artificial sweeteners.

The Harvard investigators surveyed 592 bladder cancer patients and compared their use of sugar substitutes in soft drinks and diet foods to 536 non-patients. They found bladder cancer risks generally were the same for users and nonusers.

The AHF studied detailed histories of 302 men and 65 women who were bladder cancer patients in hospitals in six American cities. These cases were compared with a control group of an equal number of patients without bladder cancer.

The NCI study was conducted among 3,000 patients.

## Carter — U.S. for detente despite Soviet actions

United Press International

WASHINGTON — President Carter says the United States is "still committed to detente" with the Soviet Union despite the current showdown over Afghanistan.

Carter made his remarks Wednesday night while delivering a toast to West German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt, who quickly endorsed the president's position.

The German leader, who met with Carter for 2½ hours earlier in the day, came to Washington seeking assurances that detente is not dead.

Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev has called for Washington to continue detente, but Carter has avoided responding. He said only he did not wish to resume the Cold

War. "We recognize that there are serious threats to stability and that we have come in this last few years to value highly the benefits of detente," Carter told guests at the dinner for Schmidt.

"These commitments have been shaken, but not changed by the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. We are still committed to detente. We are still committed to avoid a resumption of the Cold War," Carter said.

Carter said the United States and its allies must "meet this threat in a carefully planned, moderate but effective way."

Schmidt, whose government has been concerned about the fate of detente, quickly backed the president's statements by

saying his host "has not said one single word to which I could not subscribe."

The German praised continuation of detente and said his country stands "side by side with the American nation."

He said the allies "will continue to maintain an equilibrium with the Soviet Union" and described a "balance of military power as a prerequisite for detente."

In a related development, a White House official said a decision was made to proceed with arranging for alternate games to the summer Olympics in Moscow as part of the U.S.-backed boycott.

The games are expected to be held in late August at several different sites around the world.

## Round 'em up, move 'em out — town readies for rattlesnake hunt

United Press International

SWEETWATER — Sleepy diamond-back rattlers, coaxed out of their dens each March by the sun, will be the primary attractions again this weekend at the world's largest annual rattlesnake roundup.

Since 1958, rattlesnake hunters have made an annual pilgrimage to this community 44 miles west of Abilene to sack up the fanged denizens that populate the area's rocky, tree-dotted rangeland.

Hunters, using a gasoline spray mixture to roust the rattlers from their dens, curl a hooked pole over the snakes' necks and hustle them into burlap bags or 20-gallon garbage cans.

The hunters will receive a \$3-per-pound bounty for the first 5,000 pounds of snakes they bring in and \$1 for each subsequent pound.

With each successive year, the crowds at Nolan County Coliseum have swelled,

reaching an estimated 25,000 last year — more than twice the population of Sweetwater.

Veteran professional snake handler Bill Ransberger, a virtual fixture at this event, said the roundup should be a success again this year, particularly in terms of numbers.

"I look for a big crowd," he said. "We had the largest crowd ever last year, and this year, if we get any more, I don't know where we're going to put 'em. That bunch that was here last year is going to come back and bring their friends."

Most of the people do not join in the hunt. They come for the coliseum show, where piles of noisy rattlers are dumped for demonstrations and milking.

Many of the snakes brought in actually have been caught before the three-day roundup officially opens on Friday. Ransberger predicted recent cold weather in the area may result in a drop in the total weight of captured snakes this year, from

about 3 tons to 4,000 or 5,000 pounds.

"The weather this year has been pretty much against us. I talked to the National Weather Service and they said Wednesday, Thursday and Friday were supposed to be cool, but Saturday and Sunday should be good days," he said.

Ransberger said hunters from Washington, Pennsylvania and Kansas are in Sweetwater as well as television crews from Britain and the Netherlands. Renowned New York photographer Richard Avedon, who showed up last year, is expected back, Ransberger said.

With a flea market, the crowning of a Miss Snake Charming Queen, a dance, and a gun and coin show, the annual roundup takes on the air of a carnival, but Ransberger reminds that snake capturing is serious business.

"We don't allow no horseplay. It's strictly for education and entertainment," he said.



Spring break starts when?

From his expression, it's apparent that Gary Griebal, a freshman in Corps unit A-1, won't mind having a vacation from this kind of thing next week. The two amused seniors are Stuart Sasser, left, and Norman Linkenhoger, right, both of A-1. Texas A&M's spring break starts Saturday and ends March 16.

Photo by David Eissel

## Fire kills four children in Houston

United Press International

HOUSTON — Four children, two them infants, died and five other persons were hurt early today in a house fire investigators said was set by a teen-age girl at a boyfriend who lived in the one-story frame dwelling.

Fire Department arson investigator Sterling Jones said the victims, ages months, 1 year, 5 and 14, and nine of persons were asleep when the fire started on the outside of the house about 3 a.m.

"Two of them (the 5- and 14-year-olds) were right at the front door. They all got out of there," Jones said.

"It was arson. We got witnesses that there when it occurred. They had a young girl that set it on fire. She was staying with her boyfriend off and on. She just an argument with him."

Jones said police were seeking an year-old girl.

"Right now I don't know what she use start it. Until we investigate a little farther we won't know just what she use but she did start the fire from the outside the building."

The victims were identified as Fra Dwayne Wells, 6 months, Bridgette G. I. Telisa Williams, 5, and Gwendolyn Wells, 14, Frankie's sister. Jones said apparently died of smoke inhalation burns.

Fireman Steve Sparks said firefighters were delayed getting to the scene because they were fighting a 2-alarm fire near when the house fire alarm came in at a.m.

"That didn't have any impact on the lities, but it had some impact on how lo took to get it out," Sparks said.

Jones said 13 persons were crowded the house when the fire broke out and managed to escape.