

# Program testing officers for job satisfaction, fitness

by Connie Hutterer  
Battalion Reporter

How physically fit are College Station's police officers? How much do they like their jobs? Does their fitness affect their job satisfaction?

The Texas A&M Department of Health Education is helping the College Station Police Department answer these questions.

Last weekend, 42 police officers spent one of their off-duty hours doing sit-ups, filling out questionnaires and taking heart rate tests while Texas A&M students recorded the data.

It was the first of three weekends of testing coordinated by Ginny-Lib Sulzer as part of her doctoral dissertation.

Sulzer began planning the program this summer when the College Station police asked Dr. Jackson Wagner, head of the Texas A&M College of Medicine and a reserve police officer, to study the physical fitness and job satisfaction of police officers.

"It's a combination of stress and fitness testing," Sulzer said, "to see if we can improve their fitness level. Then we want to look at how the officers interpret their job satisfaction."

One officer who participated in the program said, "both of us get good out of it."

The police department should learn how to retain healthy, happy employees, and each officer will receive a personal "prescription for wellness" with suggestions for diet, exercise and relaxation techniques aimed at his own interests, Sulzer said.

Testing will be done in the afternoon and evening Friday and Sunday in the courtroom of the College Station Police Department. After last week's basic testing, officers must return with a five page medical history for a quick physical by Wagner and a nine minute session of stress testing.

The results will be computer analyzed and returned to the officers, who are encouraged to put the suggestions to work, Sulzer said. She will check up on the officers periodically to see if any changes in their programs are needed.

After six months, the officers will repeat the tests for evaluation of any improvements in fitness and attitude, she said.

The police turnout was good for the first session — 42 of the 65 patrol officers, detectives,

administrators and reserve officers attended. One officer quipped, "It's strictly voluntary, but when the chief's name is first on the list, well..."

A nurse taking blood samples speculated that some volunteers may have been scared away by the blood test and the six hour fast required.

The first weekend's tests were not too demanding, however. After completing a lifestyle questionnaire, the officers gave blood for testing of their sugar level. Their blood pressure was measured and they were wired for the electrocardiogram.

Next came the "pinch test," where students used a skin caliper to measure the fat layer on the chest, abdomen and upper arm.

Then it was time for the workout. First, the officers sat with their heels firmly planted against a box with a gauge painted on its top. They stretched forward to push a bar along the gauge, measuring their flexibility.

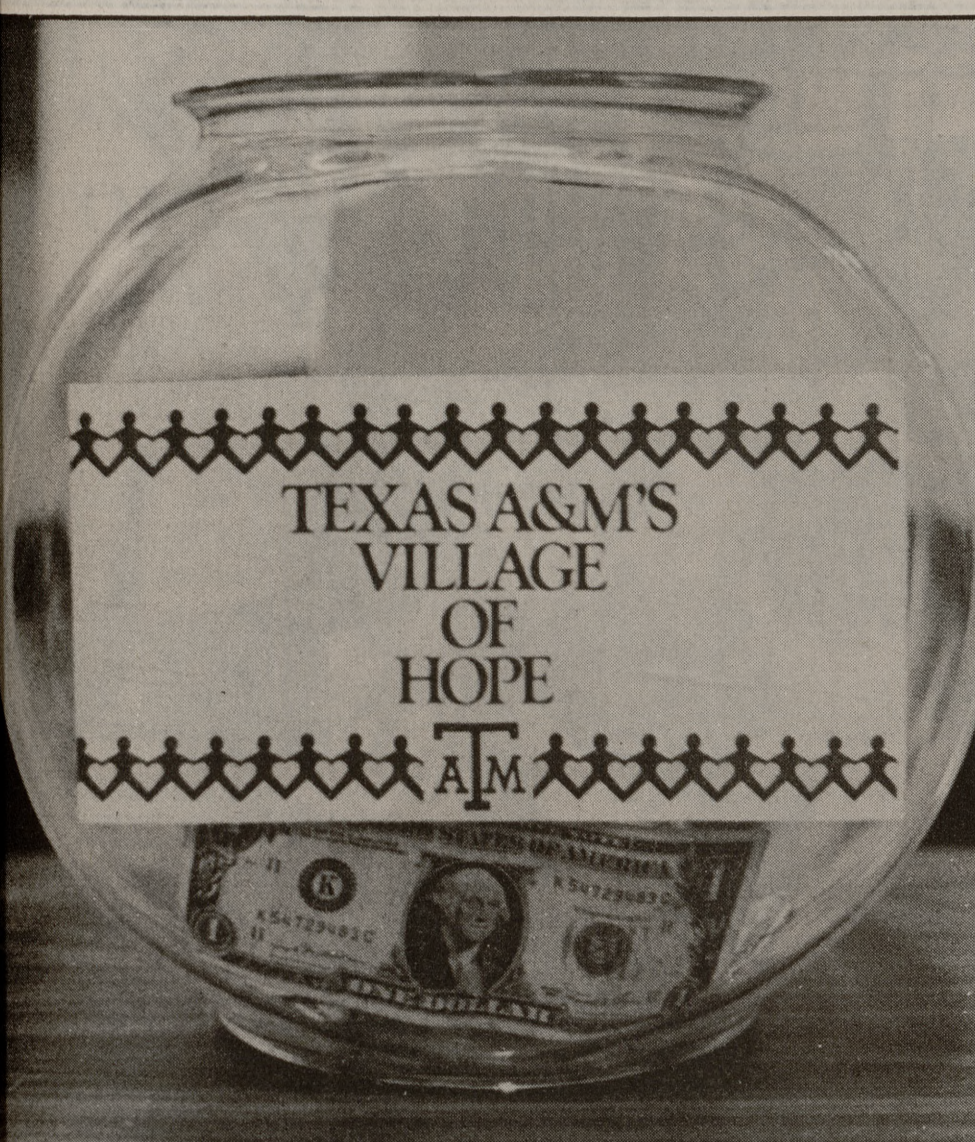
Next, a minute of sit-ups and a minute of push-ups. Officers averaged 30 sit-ups and 40 push-ups in the allotted time, graduate student Bruce Crowhurst said.

Next week's tests won't be quite so easy, Crowhurst said. After Wagner's approval of their physical, the officers will be tested for heart-rate and blood pressure while riding a bicycle ergometer, which can be set at various degrees of difficulty. The data collected will give a good indication of the officers' fitness, Crowhurst said.

"Some of them will poop out right away," he said, "but some will just keep going and going."

The health education department will evaluate the officers' happiness by their responses to the Texas Wellness Institute's Lifestyle Inventory. The inventory asks 323 questions about diet, exercise and alcohol consumption, including how long the subject usually stays at a party, if he feels good about sex, how often he brushes his teeth, and whether he chews gum while swimming or water skiing.

When the study is completed, Schmidt said, the health education department may use the data to write papers for professional organizations interested in the relationship between fitness and happiness in stressful occupations like police work.



staff photo by Mike Davis

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This is just one of the dollars needed by Texas A&M Christian Children's Fund to help support a village in Colombia. One third of

the \$25,000 Christmas goal has been raised. Contributions are being accepted in the Memorial Student Center fish bowl.

# Political Forum agenda includes trip to capitol

by Jamie Hataway  
Battalion Reporter

MSC Political Forum will take a group of Texas A&M students to Austin this month to get a first-hand look at the Texas political system.

The group has a full agenda, but the highlight of the trip probably will be the meeting with Gov. Mark White, travel coordinator Lauri May says.

White will brief the group on his role as governor and talk about things he would like to see accomplished in the future.

The group of 26 also will meet with state Sen. Chet Edwards, a Texas A&M graduate and who, at 31, is the youngest member of the Senate. Edwards will talk to the fellow Aggies about the ups and downs of being a freshman senator, May said.

Others to speak on the trip are Lt. Gov. Bill Hobby, former assistant speaker of the House Joe Gibson, Land Commissioner Garry Mauro (also a Texas A&M graduate), Railroad Commissioner Mack Wallace and an assistant speaker of the house who has not been named.

Tours of the Lyndon B. Johnson Library, the Capitol and the governor's mansion are scheduled.

The group will be treated to luncheons by two lobby groups at The Quorum Club, an exclusive, invitation only club. A recent article in Texas Monthly said that is where the real politicians are, not just the lawyers who talk politics.

Cathy Hay, chairman of Political Forum, said the trip was advertised during MSC Open House earlier this semester. The trip had to be limited to 26 peo-

ple, and now there is a waiting list, she said. The trip costs \$25 and is open to any student.

Kevin Brannon, the Austin trip coordinator, said the highlight for him on a previous trip was talking to former Speaker of the House Billy Clayton, who pulled up his pants leg to show off the Texas A&M emblem on his cowboy boots.

May said a special part of last year's trip was having punch and cookies with the governor's staff at the mansion.

Political Forum has also scheduled a program by William Sullivan, former U.S. ambassador in the Philippines and Iran. Sullivan will speak in Rudder Theater on Nov. 29.

A trip to Washington, D.C. is planned in March of 1984.

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