

STATE AND LOCAL

Alders: student participation the key to making changes

By BRIAN PEARSON
Reporter

Texas A&M students will have to get involved if they want to change student government, Student Body President David Alders said during Sully's Symposium Wednesday.

"We get our ears bent by students' opinions when most of these people are not involved at all with the student government," Alders said.

Many students have not made any effort to contact their senators and some do not even know who their senators are, he said.

Alders said student opinion does have an effect on school policy, but added that a certain amount of experience is needed to run the University.

Alders said although at times he disagrees with the Texas A&M Board of Regents, the regents are most qualified to run the school.

"It would be the height of ignorance if the University let students with two or three years experience at A&M to run the government and formulate policy," he said.

Alders said he respects the actions of the board, but unfortunately since it mostly concerns itself with business issues, it can only consider student opinion a small percentage of the time.

Student Government's purpose is to consider student opinion, he said.

Alders said the executive office is the figurehead of the student body and chief officer of the Student Government.

Alders said his list of accomplishments in Student Government included speaking against the raising of the drinking age, opposing budget cuts increases and supporting local events such as the blood drive and Big Event.

Alders mentioned several problems currently plaguing Texas A&M.

"The academic advising at A&M ranges from good to deplorable," Alders said, "and the majority is deplorable."

He said the University has become more research-oriented than teaching-oriented.

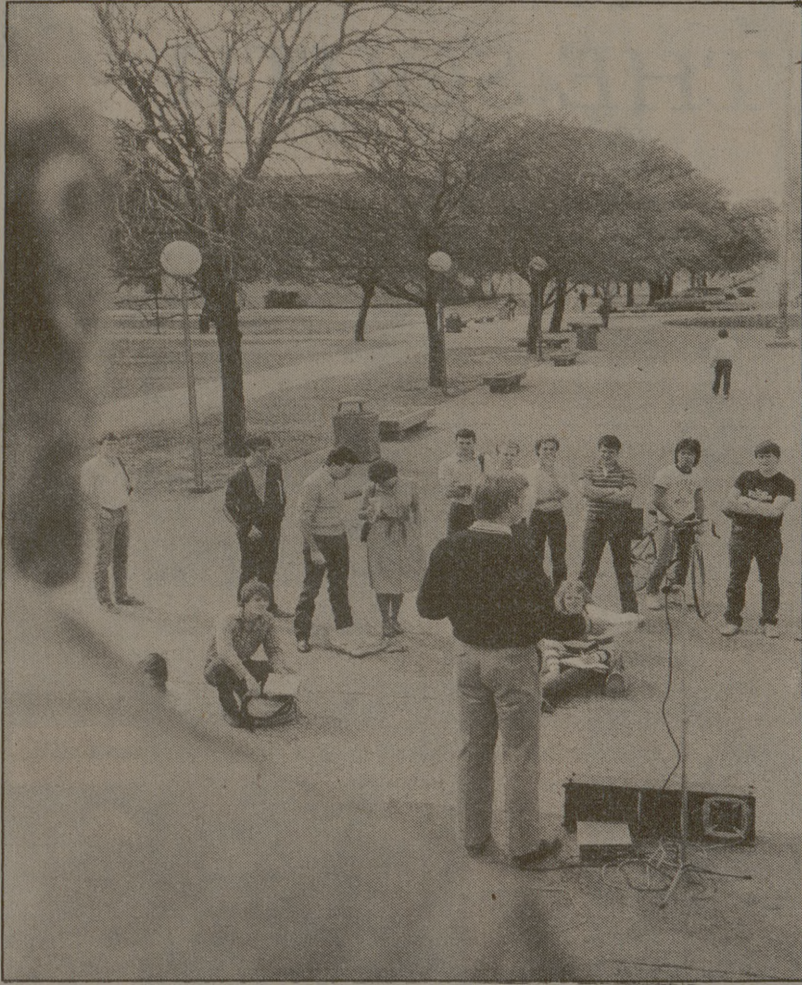


Photo by WAYNE L. GRABEIN

David Alders, student body president, speaks to the small gathering at Sully's Symposium Wednesday.

"Good teachers have been let go because they are not good researchers," Alders said.

He said he bases his opinions about women in the band and discrimination against minorities on his value judgement.

"If traditions discriminate, then they should be evaluated," Alders said.

He said he encourages minorities to come to the University and

although he is for women in the band, Alders said he does not encourage them to join.

Even though Student Government has been criticized, Alders said it has made progress this year. Governmental organizations have always been looked down upon and the negative image can never be eliminated, he said.

One week remaining

Black History Month to end

By DAINAH BULLARD
Staff Writer

Only one week remains in Black History Month, and the Memorial Student Center Black Awareness Committee is wrapping up the month with a number of activities.

"We began Black History Month with a party — a Soulful party, set in the '60s — and we're going to end it with one," said Charnella Swanson, chairman of the Committee. The March 1 formal, "A Touch of the Orient," is the last official event sponsored by the Committee for Black History Month.

Other events scheduled for the last week of Black History Month are:

- The final black history class Feb. 25 at 7 p.m. in 510 Rudder.

- "Entrepreneurs in the '80s," featuring successful black doctors, lawyers and other professionals, Feb. 27 at 8:30 p.m. in 410 Rudder.

- A jazz concert featuring Notropis Feb. 28 at La Cabaret.

The Committee sponsored events throughout the month, such as the "I Have a Dream" program Saturday night and black history classes every Monday night in February.

Swanson said she was pleased with the participation at the events, especially the "I Have a Dream" program. About 150 people attended the black heritage celebration at New Jerusalem Baptist Church.

"The turn out was really great," Swanson said. "I think that was the biggest turnout we've had."

Attendance at Black History Month events has been better this

year than last year, Swanson said. "I don't know the cause of it, but more students are participating than before," she said. "It's not where we want it to be, but it's a lot better."

Kevin Carreathers, Student Activities minority counselor, said he was pleased with attendance at the two black history classes he taught. But Carreathers said he would like to see more participation from non-black students.

"Last year was my first time doing it (teaching the classes)," Carreathers said. "This year, word got out that what I had to say was pretty good stuff."

Tracey Howard, vice president of cultural affairs for MSC Council, said planning for Black History Month began in Fall 1984.

Roosting birds on campus more nuisance than threat

By BRAD WHITTEN
Reporter

At dusk the Texas A&M campus is reminiscent of Alfred Hitchcock's movie "The Birds." Except that people are being bombed rather than attacked.

The birds that roost in the oaks by the Academic Building have been a nuisance since the early 1970s, says Dr. Keith Arnold, professor of ornithology.

"The first big problem was in 1974," he says. "They tried to settle it by shooting them (the birds). The University Police killed about 30,000 of them with shotguns, but that didn't drive them off."

The problem then was monumental compared to the bird problem now. Arnold says in 1974, there were about 2 million birds living around the campus compared to estimated 200,000 birds on campus this year.

"The droppings were an inch thick on the sidewalks and this was out by westgate, Northgate, ... everywhere," Arnold says. "They hosed the sidewalks off but it wasn't

long before it built up again."

Though none have been entirely successful, many different methods have been tried to get rid of the birds.

Eugene H. Ray, director and landscape architect for the Department of Grounds Maintenance, began using an exploding propane cannon and blackbird distress call.

"It worked well," Ray says, "but the noise was such that it disturbed classes so we had to stop. It took time to figure out the right way to do it. We found that you need to explode the cannon and broadcast the distress calls from the back of a truck, not stationary."

"We had them (the birds) off the campus over the holidays for a while but we had to stop the noise on Jan. 2 when the faculty arrived."

Both men say that for this method to work, maintenance personnel must use the cannon and calls before the roost is fully formed and they must keep using them until the birds are settled in elsewhere.

Arnold says some of the birds are

here year round. Some come from local roosts and others come from as far away as Dallas. When the breeding season begins the birds concentrate in an area such as the campus.

"You hear people talk about a health hazard and there are a couple of diseases one has to worry about," Arnold says, "but for the most part they are just a nuisance."

"They like the protection the buildings and trees afford them from the wind, rain and cold. The ideal solution would be to cut down some trees, but they won't do that because the aesthetic value is so great."

Ray says grounds personnel have been thinning the trees which has resulted in part of the bird population moving away.

Other methods tried by the maintenance department include hanging burlap sacks filled with chemicals from the trees, spraying trees with water and chemicals and even placing rubber snakes in trees.

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COMMONS.....	10 a.m.-8 p.m.	OPA

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