

State and Local

Group seeking ways to deal with law

Alcohol at A&M may be on rocks

By SONIA LOPEZ
Reporter

The legal drinking age in Texas goes up from 19 to 21 Sept. 1, and that at Texas A&M could be on rocks because of it. A special University committee is considering ideas to deal with the law, said committee chairwoman Jan Winniford, assistant director of student affairs. (The committee's) main goal is to develop a philosophical statement on the law, concerning the new legal age and its effects on a campus where most students will be under 21, she said. Currently students of legal drinking age may drink alcohol only in dormitory rooms, but Winniford said the committee is considering the possibility making it a dry campus. She estimates that less than 20

percent of all on-campus students — about 2,000 — will be of legal age once the new law goes into effect.

And some committee members feel that no alcohol would provide a clear cut policy that will be easier to enforce under the circumstances, she said.

Most A&M committee members do not want to take a restrictive viewpoint because they want students to learn to be responsible about their drinking, Winniford said.

"We feel that social drinking is going to be a natural part of campus life," she said, "and that students can be taught to be responsible in its use."

Winniford said the committee is keeping all its options open. And she said most of the committee's discussions have focused on giving students of legal age the right to drink in the privacy of their rooms.

Committee members also are working on ideas for special programs as alternatives to parties with alcohol.

Theme parties, with food rather than alcohol, and dormitory competitions will be emphasized, Winniford said.

The committee is planning an April workshop to give student leaders and residence hall councils a chance to review the new ideas. A comprehensive programming guide will be developed on the issue.

Another of the committee's goals is to educate students on the new laws regarding state alcohol policies. To do that, the committee has composed a summary of the new Texas laws scheduled to take effect next September.

The new Texas laws make it a misdemeanor for anyone under the age of 21 to purchase, consume or pos-

sess alcohol, punishable by a fine of no less than \$25 and no more than \$200 for a first offense. A second offense is punishable by a fine of \$100 to \$500.

The same punishment for first and second offenders also applies if a minor falsely represents himself as being 21 or older under the new law.

The 10-member committee is comprised of four students, one head resident and representatives from the departments of Student Affairs and Student Activities.

Before the law was passed, arguments as to whether or not the law should be enacted were heated, but that's no longer the issue, Winniford said.

"At this point we need to figure out how we can best work with the law and be prepared for it when it goes into effect," she said.

\$10 million in drugs, lab equipment seized

Associated Press

TYLER — Five people were in custody Thursday following a 14-month investigation that resulted in the seizure of about \$10 million in amphetamines and illegal drug lab equipment, authorities said. The drugs and equipment were seized during a series of raids by lo-

cal authorities, the Texas Department of Public Safety and the Drug Enforcement Administration in Dallas, Perryville, Mineola and Hope, Ark., said Marshall Smith, a spokesman for the Texas Department of Public Safety in Tyler.

Other seizures took place near Lake Cherokee in East Texas and in

Oklahoma, Smith said. The raids occurred Tuesday and were announced Thursday.

A Wood County man, identified as Richard Paul Hass, 34, was held in Dallas on a federal charge of conspiring to distribute amphetamines, authorities said.

Another man, 46, was arrested

during a raid near Mineola on Tuesday, Smith said. David Loyd Tapley was being held in lieu of \$25,000 on a charge of manufacturing methamphetamines, Smith said.

During that raid, officers seized a complete laboratory and chemicals capable of making 100 pounds of amphetamine, Smith said.

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