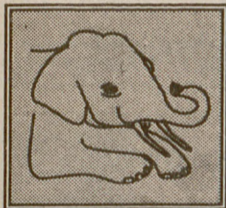


# THE '92 PRIMARIES

## VOTER'S GUIDE



### Primaries put nominations in public's hands, lack big turnout

By Karen Praslicka  
The Battalion

Voters turning out for Super Tuesday tomorrow are participating in the most widely used system in the 20th century for nominating candidates for elective office.

The primaries are elections held by each party to determine which candidates will be on the ballot for the presidential election in November.

The primaries have come a long way since the 1800s, when nominations for public office were made by congressional and legislative caucuses or delegate conventions. There was no public voting to

decide who would run for office.

Robert M. LaFollette's Progressive movement in Wisconsin during the 1800s encouraged the nomination of candidates by party members' direct vote. Democrats in Crawford County, Pennsylvania first used this kind of nomination system on September 9, 1842. Republicans first used the system in 1860.

Eventually the system was enacted into state election laws, and presently each state has some form of primary election.

Karen McQueen, election deputy for the Brazos County clerk's office said she is not expecting a large showing for the Texas primaries this month.

"There's a bigger turnout in Novem-

ber," she said.

McQueen said registered voters can vote for any party they choose in the primaries. However, they can only vote in one party's primary.

Texas voters are not required to register with a specific party, but if there is a run-off in the primaries, persons voting again in the run-off must vote with the same party they voted with in the original primary.

Bill McGuire, Democratic Party chairman for Brazos County, said normally the presidential candidate who gets the majority vote from the public gets the party nomination from state delegates, but it is not definite.

He said delegates who vote for the

presidential candidates at the party's national conventions can change their minds about who they vote for, even if the candidate received a majority vote from the public.

"But they're supposed to vote the way people send them up there to vote," McGuire said.

McGuire said voters often support a candidate based on his or her popularity, without actually knowing the candidate's stand on the issues.

He said the best way to get candidate information is to call local party offices and talk to the area coordinator for that candidate.

"They'll always have information," he said. "If there's no coordinator, there's al-

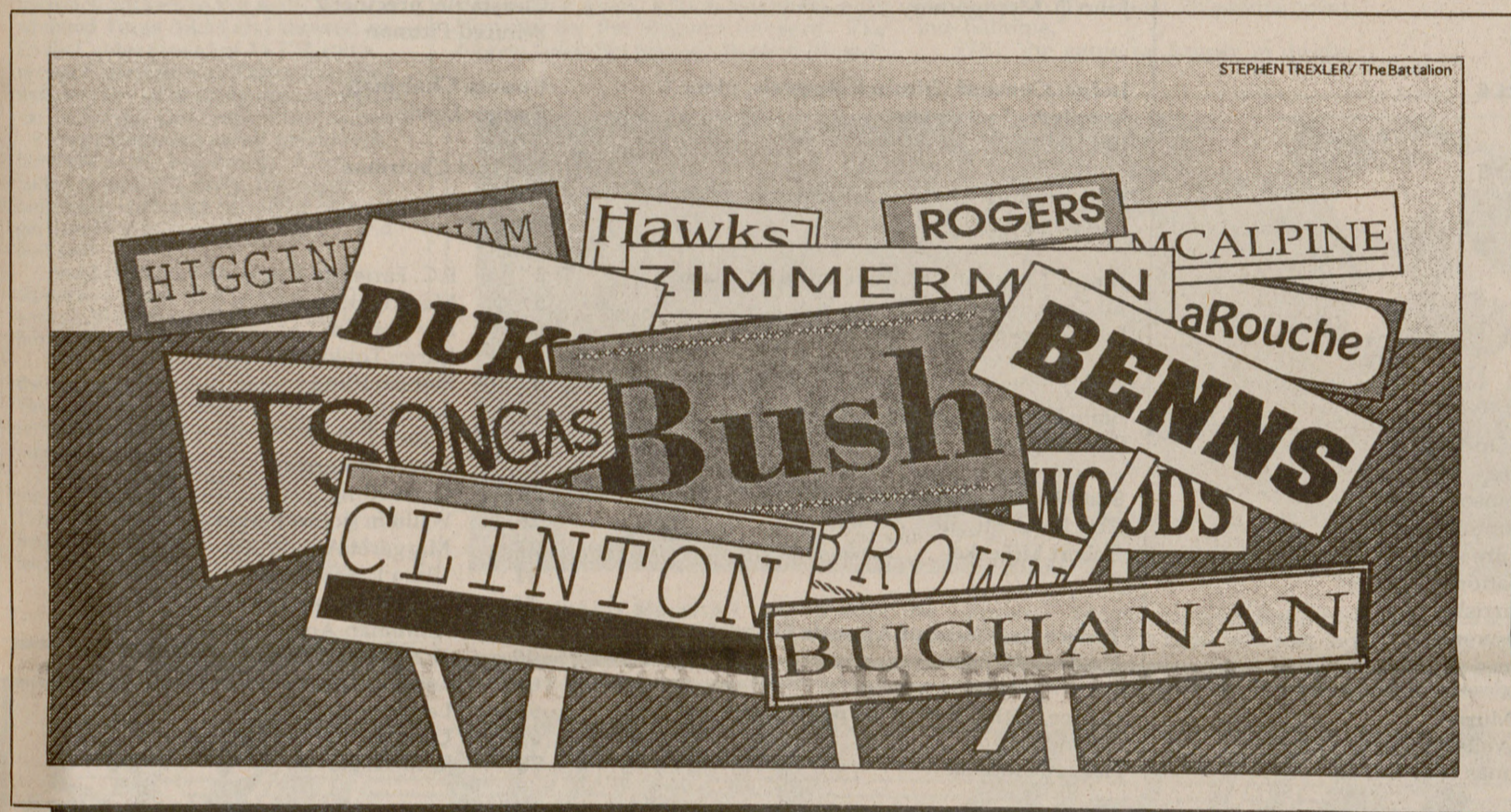
ways a state party office coordinator. They'll send you information."

Another way to learn a candidate's stance on an issue is to watch television debates between candidates or news programs featuring candidates, McGuire said.

"Get somebody you're comfortable with and believes in most of what you believe in," he said. "We won't find somebody who has 100 percent the same beliefs we do."

McGuire said many people consider voting for a candidate that is "electable," and then consider who the best candidate would be.

"I don't believe that's the right way to go about it," he said.



### Redistricting shifts many polling sites

Brazos County voting places change, increase after '90 Census evaluated

By Alysia Woods  
The Battalion

Voters this year should be aware of new Brazos County redistricting that nearly doubled the number of precincts in the county.

Ruth McLoud, executive assistant to the Brazos County Commissioner's Court, said because of the 1990 U.S. Census figures, the county has increased its precincts from 40 to 76 and now has two U.S. Congressional districts, instead of one. Brazos County also has two Texas House of Representatives districts.

"Because of the population shift, we've had to realign the precincts to ensure minority representation," McLoud said.

The realignment has resulted in smaller precincts with fewer people in them.

Redistricting is a process in which county officials realign county precincts to ensure appropriate representation within each precinct.

Redistricting is conducted every 10 years following the census and is a result of the Federal Voting Rights Act of 1965.

McLoud said Brazos County began redistricting in March 1991 and finished Jan. 1.

"It actually took that long," McLoud said. "We were glad it

was over."

A consultant from Austin was hired to help in the process, which included computerized maps and statistical information from the census. McLoud said the redistricting affected almost all the precincts.

"Some were cut by more than 50 percent," she said. "The northern part of the county was affected the most."

McLoud said students who intend to vote this year should be aware of the new precincts.

She said the first thing students should do is check and make sure their voter registration card has not expired. A new card is issued every year.

The next step, said McLoud, is to check the precinct listed on the card because, more than likely, it has changed since last year.

"For example, if you previously voted in the 15th Precinct, it's now been divided into two or four districts," said McLoud.

Next, voters need to determine where their precinct's polling place is located and, finally, McLoud said students should call their respective party to clarify the location.

Many precincts have been combined into one location.

"It's extremely difficult to understand, but we can't deviate from it," she said.

### Brazos County voting simplified for '92 vote

By Jayme Blaschke  
The Battalion

A wording problem on voter registration cards, which kept many Texas A&M students from voting during the last presidential election, has been corrected this year.

A deputy from the Brazos County Tax Office, which is in charge of voter registration for Brazos County, said anyone wishing to vote must register at least 30 days in advance of that election.

"Any American citizen at least 18 years old can register to vote," the deputy said. "They can send

for an application from our office through the mail or pick one up in person. It only takes a few minutes to fill out."

On previous cards, the space for the voter's address was marked as "permanent address." Since most University applications ask for "permanent address" as the student's parents' address, many students wrote down their parent's address instead of their local residence.

This registered them to vote in their home town instead of Bryan-College Station.

"The wording 'permanent address' has been changed to 'resident address,'" the deputy said. "This should cut down a lot on

confusion."

It is too late for unregistered voters to get registered in time to vote in the March 10 "Super Tuesday" primaries, but there still plenty of time to get registered before the Nov. 3 general election.

Once the card is filled out, it is returned to the tax office, and the voter will receive a voter registration certificate, confirming that the voter is registered.

Voter registration cards are available this year from several places besides the tax office.

Sterling C. Evans Library on the Texas A&M University campus, the Democratic and Republican party headquarters and the United States Secretary of State's

office will all supply registration cards.

To find out where to vote, a registered voter can either call the local political party headquarters or the tax office. Voters must vote in their precinct polling place, and with the recently redrawn voting lines, many people will find themselves in new precincts.

"A person doesn't need to take their voter registration certificate to vote at the polls," the deputy said. "Their name should be printed on a list of the registered voters in that precinct, although they need to take some kind of I.D."

The polls will be open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

### FREEDOM OF CHOICE

Smaller parties offer alternative to big party politics with small budgets, high aspirations

By Ursula J. Burrell  
The Battalion

Democrats and Republicans dominate the electoral spotlight, but other political parties, however, do exist, including diverse organizations such as the Prohibition, Peace and Freedom, Socialist, and Libertarian Parties.

Unlike the Democratic and Republican Parties - that hold primaries to select candidates for upcoming nominating conventions - minor political parties hold one nominating convention during August and September to select their nominee for president.

Minor political parties may not participate in primaries due to the expenses that incur.

Libertarian Party office staffer Steve Feldman said the Democratic and Republican parties can afford primaries because they are forcibly funded through taxes. Money that supports their primaries is taken from everyone's income taxes whether they like it or not.

"Primaries also require a lot of

money and time," Feldman said. "These are things that small parties do not have much of."

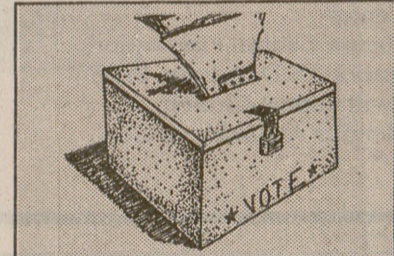
The Socialist Party is another organization with limited resources.

"We do not participate in primaries because we are a small party and we are not going to fight to among ourselves like the Democrats and the Republicans," said Ann Rosenhaff, national secretary for the Socialist party.

The Socialist party nominated retired school teacher J. Quinn Brisben for president and William D. Edwards for vice president. The party seeks radical and fundamental change in the structure and quality of economic, political, and social relationships in America.

Their platform includes restoring high tax rates on the wealthy, socializing banks and creating a publicly funded and administered health care system for all.

Commercial real estate broker Andre Marrou and Dr. Nancy Lord are the Libertarian president-



Where is my precinct? Where do I go to vote in my precinct?

These are questions facing Brazos County residents after a 10-month redistricting process expanded the voting districts from 40 to 76. A list of the new district's polling sites is listed on the back of this page. If you are unsure about what precinct you live in call either party's headquarters or the Brazos County Tax Office.

- Brazos County Tax Office  
361-4490
- Democratic Party Headquarters  
846-1725
- Republican Party Headquarters  
764-1988

See Smaller /On Back

### Presidential race draws interest of Democrats, bores Republicans

Sheriff's office, other local contests attract students' attention

By Reagon Clamon  
The Battalion

Students at Texas A&M are rushing to find out more about the Democratic presidential candidates as the March 10 primary approaches, while debate among the Republican voters seems to be reticent.

Joe Trimble, president of A&M College Republicans, said the national race isn't a topic of much excitement to student Republicans.

Trimble blamed the lack of Republican interest on the fact that there's no real contest between the presidential candidates.

"There is less interest in this race than, say, two years ago when Clayton Williams was running against Ann Richards," Trimble said. "I don't think anybody doubts that Bush will get the nomination eventually. You might explain the lack of excitement by saying there's no knock-down drag-out in the Republican race."

Unlike the Republicans, the attention of most student Democrats is focused on the presidential primary.

David Lesmes, a graduate student with Aggie Democrats, said local issues do not seem to interest the students he has talked to.

"They don't know who's running," Lesmes said. "They mainly know about the national election."

Lesmes said the Democratic race, at least among students, has narrowed to two.

"Clinton and Tsongas are the big guys that we're getting inquiries about," he said.

Trimble said the economy is foremost among students who have talked to him about the presidential primary.

"Obviously, the first question that comes up is about the economy," Trimble said. "There was a dip in the economy, and people are concerned. Now the economy is recovering, so it's a moot point."

Trimble felt that most of the speculation among student Republicans was over the local elections.

He said the Brazos County Sheriff's race, pitting incumbent Republican Ronny Miller against Republican Howard Hill, will turn out to be the attention getter.

"As much as students deal with law enforcement, I think the sheriff's race should be the most important," Trimble said. "Students pay taxes and go to jail in this county, so they should be concerned with who is sheriff."

Lesmes said although students are ignorant of local issues, the excitement of a national presidential race has opened a few students eyes to what is happening in their own back yard.

"Most of the people working on this election are having their first political experience," Lesmes said. "I think that's a good indicator."