

Baptist group travels to Padre

Local church sponsors mission to save lives in vacation spot

By Reagon Clamon
The Battalion

When the wave of party-crazed college students hits the beach at South Padre Island next week, one group of Texas A&M students will be there to try and pick up the pieces.

Central Baptist Church of College Station and First Baptist of Bryan are sponsoring a group of 55 students going to South Padre on a mission to save lives and save souls.

Jerry Dingmore of Central Baptist, who will lead the group, said although some popular spring break haunts are adopting a less cavalier attitude towards drinking, South Padre Island has held on to its "anything goes" policy of alcohol on the beach.

"It's pretty wild," Dingmore said. "It's a blowin' off steam kind of place - a place where a lot of stuff goes on that doesn't need to go on. It can be a dangerous place."

Dingmore said his group will be providing rides for spring breakers around the island.

"All during the day, our group will be giving out cards that have a phone number on them," Dingmore said. "If someone is drunk, or needs a ride anywhere, all you need to do is call the number and the van will pick you up."

Dingmore said the van program is for more than just drunk people who can't drive.

"Part of this program is to present the gospel, and part of it is to hopefully bring some safety to the situation there," he said. "The year before last, in the four weeks of spring break, there were eight reported rapes in South Padre. So it's kind of a scary place."

In addition to the van program, Dingmore's group will be working on several projects during the day, including giving away thirty thousand tubes of suntan lotion, holding a volleyball tournament, and making a sand sculpture exhibit.

One of the more popular activities is the sand sculpture, he said.

"We have a guy who has won some awards that will be building sculptures of Christ and Christian history," Dingmore said. "Other organizations that have done this have seen fraternities and sororities put their kegs around the sculptures so nobody will mess it up."

Although this will be the first time Dingmore's group will participate in the van program, other groups in the past have gotten some negative reactions.

"You do sometimes get a negative response, but we try not to push anything down anybody's throat," he said. "Some people are scared we're going to brainwash them and drag them off to some island somewhere."

Dingmore said, although reactions are mixed, most people appreciate the effort.

"They see us out there helping them, and they see we're not pushing anything down their throat," Dingmore said. "Generally from what I understand, the reception has been real positive."

Corps spends time assisting children



Paul Dixon, Corps chaplain, uses a model clock to teach eighth-grader Charlie Piwonka.

By Gina Howard
The Battalion

Members of the Texas A&M Corps of Cadets working with handicapped children say the children are not the only people the program rewards.

"This is an opportunity for us to interact with people less fortunate and for both parties to benefit," Corps Chaplain Paul Dixon said.

The Bronco Buddy program involves approximately twenty-five Corps chaplains spending free time with students in Stephen F. Austin Middle School's LIFE (Learning In a Functional Environment) program for the severely handicapped, as well as children with discipline problems or learning disabilities in other classes.

The program is the idea of LIFE teacher Marlene Albers, who first brought the concept of having Corps members work with handicapped students to the school principal last fall.

"He loved the idea and had me write up a proposal right away," said Albers. "I felt these

students needed some good role models from non-authority figures. My son graduated from the Corps of Cadets in '90, and I thought the Corps would be a good place to start."

Albers then took the proposal to the Corps, which accepted the offer. After initial planning at the end of last semester, Corps chaplains started the program at the beginning of the spring semester.

Cadets are only obligated to spend about thirty minutes a week with their individual buddy, but Dixon said most of the volunteers stay much longer than that.

"It's really been important to them," he said. "I think it's given a new direction and motivation to them and it's lots of fun."

Some children other than mentally handicapped students are involved in the Bronco Buddy program, said Elizabeth Shaana, who teaches students with learning disabilities and behavior problems.

"My kids are higher academically," Shaana said. "Many have learning disabilities or behavior problems and tend to not accept female authority figures, so this

program is good." The kids respond really well to the volunteers, Albers said. They look at the teachers as authority figures, she said, but the cadets become friends and the children open up to them.

Shaana also said it is worth it for the children to give up regular class time for this program.

"If they are getting something positive then it is worth modifying our other time," she said. "Some of these kids are in a downward cycle and several are at a high risk for dropping out. There is really a need for this because many come from homes where the kids don't have role models, at least not positive ones."

Craig Bryant, a sophomore political science major, works with two different children. One is totally dysfunctional and the other has behavior problems.

"Working with the children with behavior problems can be difficult," Bryant said. "You can't really preach, you have to gain their trust. You don't always know how you are doing. It can

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Programs focus on women's issues

By Robin Roach
The Battalion

This month has been designated national Women's History Month, and Texas A&M and Bryan-College Station have planned numerous activities to showcase women's issues.

Karen Severn, a financial aid counselor at A&M and a member of Student Services' Women's Issues Committee, said Women's History Month serves as a vehicle to heighten awareness of women in the community.

"The Women's Issues Committee tries to find out what services are provided for women and what programs are deficient to women," Severn said.

Women's History Month provides additional programs and seminars in which everyone can participate, and allows people to become familiar with various organizations currently addressing women's issues.

This year marks the first year that or-

ganizations on the A&M campus and in the community have provided a full calendar of events, Severn said.

Dr. Sue Lucas, chairman of the committee, said the events help to inform people of women's issues.

"One of our main goals is to increase people's awareness that Women's History Month actually exists and help people become aware of women's contributions," Lucas said.

Most, if not all, sponsors of events also encourage men to participate in the 17 scheduled programs this month.

Some of the events include an informal lecture series by Professor Sara Alpern on writing biographies of women, the brown bag lunch series on women and nutrition, a panel on women and print culture, and a dinner meeting highlighting recent findings in cancer research.

Sponsors of the various events include the Women's Issues Committee, various professors, the Women's Studies Program Review Committee,

Bryan-College Station Business and Professional Women's Club, the A&M Interdisciplinary Group for Historical Literary Study, the Department of English, the National Organization for Women, and the League of Women Voters.

Debbie Griffith, co-president of the League of Women Voters, said the goal of her organization is also to increase public awareness of women's organizations.

"This is the first time for us to do anything with Women's History Month," Griffith said.

"We basically want to show people how we fought for our rights and our right to vote," she said.

Women's History Month began with a brown-bag lunch in Blocker on March 3 and will end with a film series in the Sterling C. Evans Library on March 31.

Displays pertaining to Women's History Month can be observed at the Texas A&M Bookstore in the Memorial Student Center and in the Evans Library.

In Advance

Student election filing ends today at 5 p.m. in MSC

Candidates for the following positions:

- Student Body President
- Yell Leaders
- Student Senate
- RHA Officers
- OCA Officers
- Class Council

must file for spring 1992 elections by 5 p.m. today in room 139 of the MSC.

There will be a mandatory candidates' meeting tonight at 7 in room 226 of the MSC.

If you have any questions about elections, call Student Government at 845-3051.

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