

Greeks, GLSS hold discussion

By TANYA SASSER

Staff Writer of THE BATTALION

In the first-ever panel discussion between Texas A&M Greeks and members of the Gay and Lesbian Student Services (GLSS) on Thursday, A&M gays and lesbians said that, with a small number of exceptions, Aggies accept them for who they are.

Four members of GLSS, three men and one woman, answered questions from about 30 members of the Greek system.

Clay Kilpatrick, a panelist and sophomore computer engineering major, said he receives a number of prank calls when he checks Gayline messages.

"We do get a lot of obscene calls such as people saying, 'All you fags are going to die of AIDS,'" he said. "This is absolutely not true, and fortunately, I think these calls come from a small local minority."

Kim Rettig, a panelist and architecture graduate student, responded to a question about the treatment she receives from fellow Aggies.

"I've never had a real problem with any of the students here," she said. "I don't think it's as big of a concern as people think."

Jim Mazzullo, a panelist and professor of geology at A&M, said he feels religious groups and young people have the hardest time accepting homosexuals.

"This is completely understandable," he said. "They proba-

bly don't mean any harm. They are just exercising their feelings, and I don't have a problem with that."

Rettig, who formerly attended the University of Washington, said acceptance of gays is greater in large cities.

"A&M is located in a small town, and we are not exposed to the diversity of a large city," she said. "People here are a little more suppressed, but I have not experienced any real problems."

Rettig said most harmful reactions against gays are a direct effect of people's fear. Fear is a natural reaction from people that don't know any other way to handle the issue, she said.

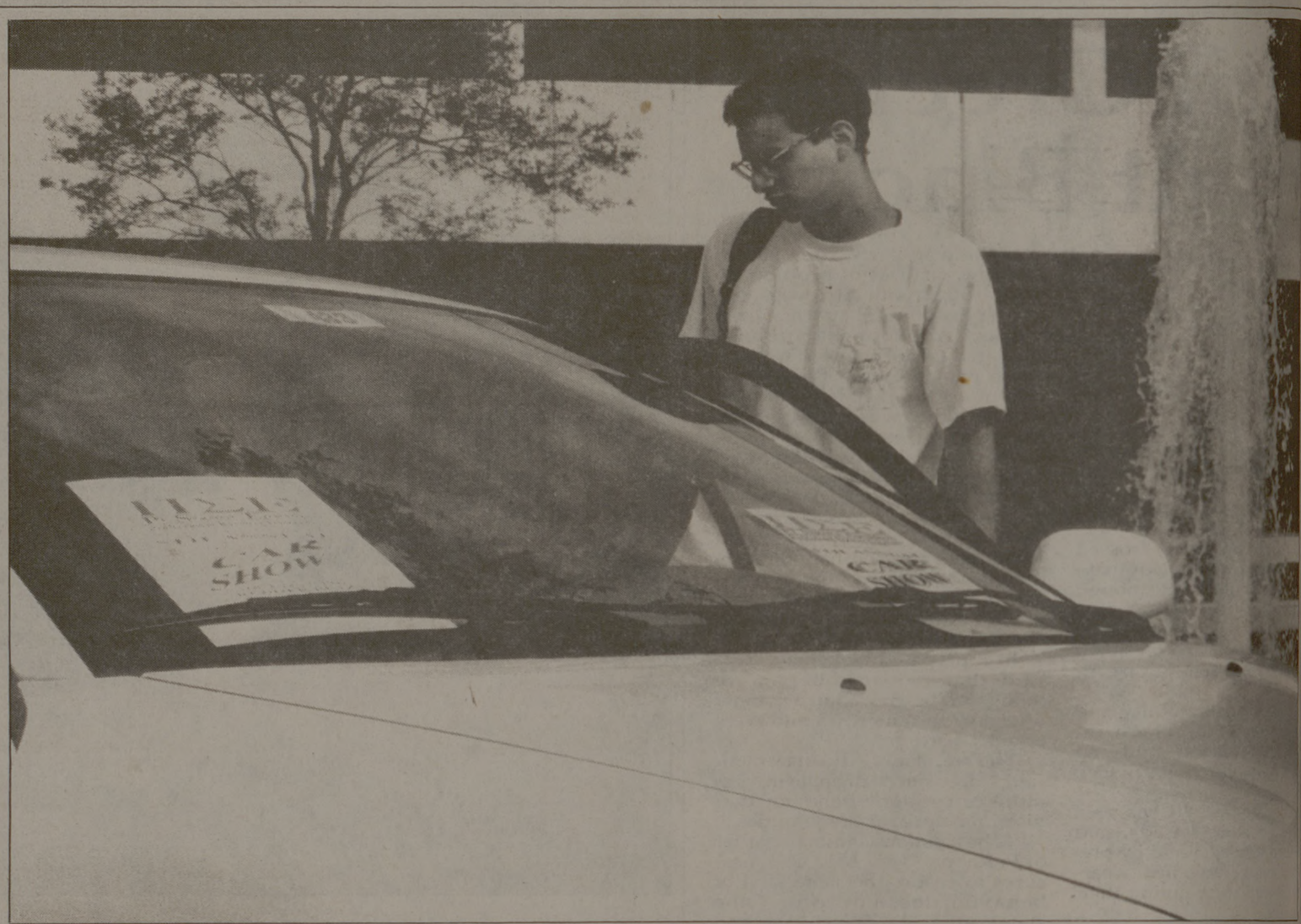
Kilpatrick said the number of gays in this country has dropped below 10 percent because AIDS struck the gay community first in America.

The Brazos Valley Community Action Agency did a study on AIDS in Brazos Valley. It found that AIDS cases have increased 77 percent in the past three years.

"There are about 60 to 70 people in Brazos Valley infected with AIDS," Rettig said. "That number will be up to about 150 in the future."

Mazzullo said the average age that people become infected with the HIV virus is 18.

"That means that the college-age group is the fastest growing to become infected," he said. "That is a very frightening number."



RANDY NICHOLS/The Battalion

Benjamin DeLeon, a senior history major from Houston, admires a Mitsubishi Mirage near the Rudder Fountain Thursday afternoon. The show, which included cars from three local dealerships, was sponsored by Pi Sigma Epsilon, a business fraternity. The fraternity sponsored the show as a marketing

project. Cars from University Toyota and Mitsubishi, Varsity Ford Lincoln Mercury and Wayne Thomas Hyunda Subaru Auto Volkswagen, as well as booths by Nation's Bank, Mobile Technology and the Department of Food Services could be visited. The show will continue until 4 p.m. Friday.

Officials comment on halls' demolition

By LAURA HALEY

Special to THE BATTALION

The demolition of Law and Puryear halls will increase competition for off-campus housing and cause rent rates to rise, said Logan Hampton, coordinator of A&M's Off-Campus Center.

Both halls are scheduled for be demolition in the summer of 1994 because of water damage to the foundations.

The decision to tear down the halls was made after receiving several engineering studies from the Department of Planning and Facilities about unsafe conditions, said Dr. John Koldus, vice president of student services.

Students in Law and Puryear halls wanting to stay on campus are guaranteed a bed. However, this will leave 400 fewer spaces for incoming freshman and transfer students.

John White, assistant director of housing, said Law and Puryear will not be rebuilt be-

cause there is not enough money. Housing officials are reluctant to charge more fees to build residence halls because they are trying to keep costs down.

Ultimately, the elimination of the halls will force 400 students to compete for off-campus housing.

"Traditionally, there is a 99 percent occupancy rate [in local apartments, duplexes etc.] by the first day of fall classes, meaning that we still have some spaces available," Hampton said. "However, this year we had a 100 percent occupancy three weeks before classes had ever begun."

The problem of finding a place to live off campus will only grow because there are no construction plans for new complexes, Hampton said.

"Because rent rates are lower than the cost of building a new complex rents are probably going to have to go up another 50 percent before new complexes are built," Hampton said.

Meanwhile, off-campus housing prices are rising. Hampton said he believes that the 400 people forced to live off campus will add to the occupancy problem.

Branson Research Association, a local research firm, published concerns about the situation in January. They suggested students consider living in houses instead of paying the higher apartment rents.

The Off-Campus Center has asked the Bryan-College Station community for help with the housing situation. Representatives of the Center have sent newsletters, appeared on TV, and pushed for the refurbishment of complexes and duplexes.

"During the last two years the Bryan-College Station community has responded very well," Hampton said.

However, until new complexes or halls are built, students must continue to compete for the waning amount of spaces available on and off campus.

Early voter turnout in Texas doubles 1990 election rate

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

AUSTIN — Since early voting began in Texas last week, voters have been streaming to the polls at double the rate from the 1990 election.

The secretary of state's office checked the first seven days of voting in a survey of metropolitan counties.

Election and political party officials attribute the increase in part to a presidential election in which two candidates — Presi-

dent Bush and billionaire Ross Perot — call Texas home and the third, Bill Clinton, hails from neighboring Arkansas.

The officials also said that the increase in early voting can be credited to legislation that allows people to vote in malls and gro-

cery stores rather than the traditional locations in government buildings.

Travis County Clerk Dana DeBeauvoir said one spur to early voting this year seems to be a belief that casting a ballot can make a difference.

HEALTH TIPS

Best birth control depends on individual preferences

By RON WEBB

A.P. BEUTEL HEALTH CENTER

Q: What is the best method of contraception for me?

A: The best form of contraception for you personally is the one that you choose. No one knows you or your body better than you, so no one is better suited for making that choice than you.

But, it is essential that you be secure with your sexuality and your views on the different methods of contraception, be it condoms, the birth-control pill, abstinence, or any of the other forms of contraception before you make your choice.

You can choose from over-the-counter or prescription forms of contraception.

You, as an individual, must take it upon yourself to become familiar with the various methods and determine how you feel about them on a social, personal,

moral, religious, and other levels that are pertinent to you in the 1990s.

Effectiveness rates will vary according to which method is chosen, but ABSTINENCE IS THE ONLY 100% SURE METHOD OF CONTRACEPTION.

It is the only way that a person can be perfectly sure that will not become pregnant or develop a sexually transmitted disease.

The majority of the time contraception is seen as being the responsibility of the female, but this is an archaic notion.

It is as much the responsibility of the male as the female. If you want to know more about contraception, methods of contraception class is taught in Room 016 of A.P. Beutel Health Center every Monday evening at 5:30 p.m. Call the Health Center at 845-1511 if you would like to attend.

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