

The Battalion

Vol. 92 No. 130 (10 pages)

1893 - A Century of Service to Texas A&M - 1993

Wednesday, April 14, 1993

Election woes: student leaders blame constitution

By JULI PHILLIPS

The Battalion

Members of student government blame the Student Government constitution for the controversy surrounding the March 31-April 1 student body elections. Warren Talbot, '92-'93 Off-campus Aggies president and student government chief of staff, said he had planned to file a petition for a re-vote, but after considering the rules regarding revotes,

he felt the potential harm to the students involved outweighed the benefits.

The election problems surfaced when two appeals were filed April 2 to the Judicial Board which called for re-votes because of incidents of ballot tampering by members of the Election Commission and other problems with the election process.

One appeal asked for a re-vote of senior yell leader and the other for a re-vote of the entire election.

The Judicial Board last Wednesday denied the appeals saying the election commission's actions were without malice and did not change the results of the election.

Talbot pointed to the re-vote guidelines in the Student Government constitution as the source of all of the trouble.

"The entire constitution needs to be rewritten," Talbot said. "A petition for a re-vote from a student, like me, would take 20 days to go through the process before a

re-vote could take place.

"That's just too long a period to be justified. Something needs to be changed."

Election Co-commissioner Michelle Cook agreed with Talbot's assessment.

"There are so many things within the Election Commission guidelines that need to be changed, but we don't have the power to change them," she said. "We need the Senate to do something about our guidelines."

Cook said the problems have been progressive, stemming from vague election rules. Student government must step back, admit there is a problem, and take action, she said.

"When we changed the ballots, we had no idea that we were doing something wrong," Cook said.

Ballots were altered because it was clear the voters did not understand the voting procedure for some of the offices, Cook said. The Election Commission had

seen the problems in past elections but did not think about correcting them, she said.

Talbot said he is not questioning the integrity of the election commissioners, but the process must be changed for student government to regain credibility.

Brian Walker, '93-'94 student body president, said changing the constitution is not an easy procedure, but they will do what they can.

MSC hat controversy

Students disregard tradition in protest of University history

By JENNIFER SMITH

The Battalion

Some minority students at Texas A&M do not participate in the Aggie tradition of taking their hats off in the MSC.

A sign in front of the MSC asks all visitors to remove their hat out of respect for the Aggies who died in war. But many minorities feel they should not honor these Aggies since A&M was an all-white university during World War II.

Joseph Gourrier, president of the A&M chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, said he understands these complaints.

"Some minorities will say why should they take their hats off for people who would have lynched them if they were here at that time," Gourrier said.

Cultural differences may also prevent blacks from taking off their hats in the MSC, Gourrier

said. "Blacks can't run their fingers through their hair to straighten it out after they've been wearing hats," Gourrier said. "So if you don't want to go around with messed up hair, you leave your

"As much as we value traditions and like for everyone to respect them, you can't always expect everyone to abide."

-Kevin Carreathers
director of
Multicultural Services

hat on."

Student Body President Steve Beller said students are doing themselves a disservice by not understanding and participating in

the tradition.

"When you walk into the MSC, you take off your hat out of respect for Aggies that died for America," Beller said. "They died defending the Constitution of the United States."

Kevin Carreathers, director of Multicultural Services, said he sees the value in traditions because they can help ease tensions between different ethnic groups.

"Traditions have their place and mean a great deal to this University," Carreathers said. "It brings all students together."

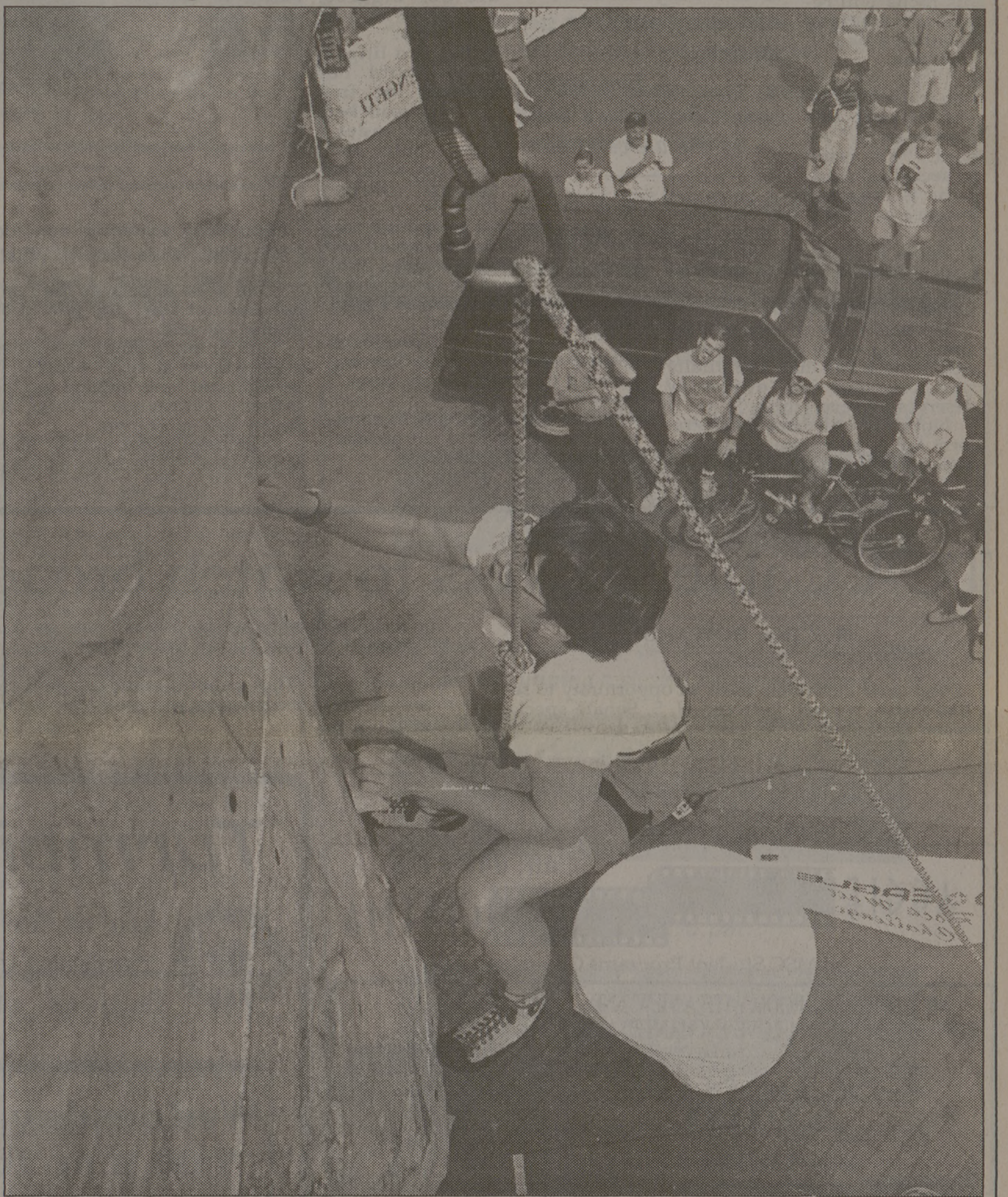
But minorities, or anyone not wanting to take off their hat in the MSC has a right to their viewpoint, he said.

"As much as we value traditions and like for everyone to respect them, you can't always expect everyone to abide," Carreathers said.

Dr. John Koldus, vice president

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Climbing the highest mountains



JOHN GARBER/Special to The Battalion

Debbie Bess, a senior psychology major and TAMU outdoors rock climber, reaches for the top of the Rockwall Challenge at the Intercollegiate

Health and Fitness Fair held near Rudder Fountain. Bess, along with a few other students, made it to the top of the obstacle.

Los Angeles looks to avoid riots

Troops await Rodney King verdict

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

LOS ANGELES - Barricades went up around the courthouse and Marines practiced storming a town Tuesday, the fourth day of jury deliberations in the Rodney King beating case.

Sketch artists were admonished by U.S. District Judge John Davies, who said they were "too accurate for comfort" in their portrayals of the anonymous jury deciding the fate of four police officers accused of violating King's civil rights.

"Any drawings of jurors or alternates must contain minimal detail and must not render them recognizable," the judge wrote in a court order posted in the courthouse press room.

A crane lowered 3-foot-high concrete barriers into place outside the federal building, blocking the entrance to crowds and vehicles, and a chain-link fence went up around a parking lot across

the street. Police said it would be used as a staging area.

"This is part of our preparedness program," said Lt. John Dunkin.

About 600 National Guard troops trained at armories in Inglewood, Burbank, Glendale, Los Alamitos, Van Nuys and Arcadia.

"California guardsmen have been instructed that they are to use any means at their disposal to protect themselves or any other citizen if they are in threat of human death," said Maj. Gen. Tandy Bozeman.

Another military contingent was training 80 miles to the south. About 1,000 Marines at Camp Pendleton stormed a mock town as part of a "just in case" urban assault exercise.

"The 3rd Battalion, 9th Marine Regiment is on standby for any problem up there and this is a state-of-the-art training facility for them," said Cpl. Rick Laemmle, a base spokesman.

Hours after Sgt. Stacey Koon,

Officers Laurence Powell and Theodore Briseno and former Officer Timothy Wind were acquitted of most charges in a state trial last April, the city erupted in violence that left 54 people dead and caused \$1 billion damage.

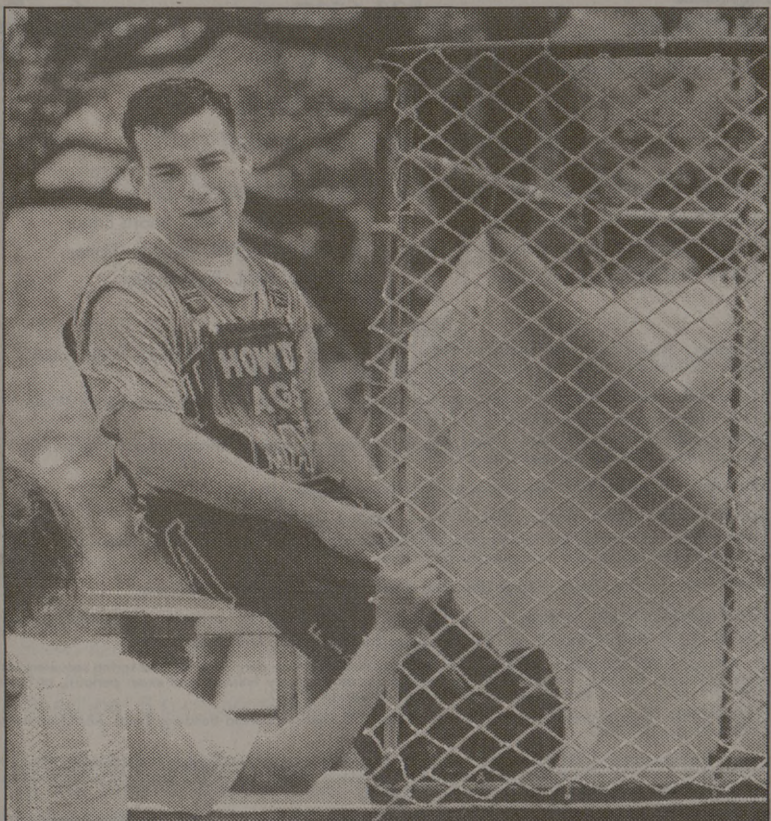
Police under the leadership of former Chief Daryl F. Gates were criticized for their delayed response to the unrest, but new Chief Willie Williams has promised protection for the city's 3.6 million residents.

"People need to be calm rather than seeing pictures of men crawling over tanks and armored vehicles," defendant Powell said. Some activists condemned the military and police buildup.

"We think that it's important that people have a continued opportunity to voice opposition," said activist lawyer B. Kwaku Duren.

In South Central Los Angeles, U.S. Rep. Maxine Waters handed out letters in her district saying, "It's time to chill."

All washed up



CAROLYN DICK/Special to The Battalion

Yell Leader Mark Rollins watches as he is about to get dunked at a dunking booth to raise money for the American Cancer Society

Three Marines acquitted in gay bashing trial

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WILMINGTON, N.C. - Three Marines were acquitted Tuesday of charges that they assaulted three people at a bar that catered to homosexuals.

Judge Jacqueline Morris-Goodson said the state failed to meet its burden of proof.

The three defendants hugged their attorneys when the judge re-

turned the verdict.

Lance Cpls. Walter Watkins III, 26, Patrick Cardone, 23, and Colin Hunt, 20 were charged with three counts each of simple assault. They faced a maximum penalty of 30 days in jail or a \$50 fine.

The most severely beaten man, Crae Pridgen, had testified that his attackers yelled "Clinton must pay" during the Jan. 29-30 ruckus, apparently referring to the president's move to lift the ban on ho-

mosexuals in the military.

The Marines testified Monday that they hit people, but only in self-defense after patrons of the bar threatened them. They also said they never referred to Clinton.

Pridgen and two others were beaten outside Mickey Ratz, a downtown bar catering to homosexuals.

In closing arguments, defense attorneys said Pridgen was intent

on fighting and met his match during the brawl.

"He was hell-bent on hurting somebody," defense lawyer John Burney said. "He picks fights, he gets drunk. . . . He met somebody who wasn't scared of him for once in his lifetime."

Defense lawyer Ed Bailey questioned the alleged ferocity of the attack in light of testimony that Pridgen's injuries didn't seem too serious.

Animals testing a necessity?

Must be balance amongst all interests, Mary Kay CEO says

By JASON COX

The Battalion

The use of animals in product safety testing is necessary to reduce the risks to human life and health, said the vice chairman and chief executive officer of the Mary Kay Corp. at a seminar Tuesday.

Richard C. Bartlett said while animal rights organizations have a right to be concerned about proper care, there must be a balance between economy and ecology.

"The appropriate use of animals is the best hope of eliminating their need," he said.

A recent survey revealed nearly 68 percent of the American public is concerned about the proper use of animals, he said, and some groups want to ban completely testing.

Still, other groups support limited and humane use of animals in order to ensure safe consumer products, he said.

Bartlett said product manufacturers have a legal responsibility to consumers, who use the product by choice, as well as others who might come into contact with the product inadvertently.

"It's been an argument by PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals) that cos-

metics serve no useful purpose, and that testing should be halted. But if people buy products for their own emotional satisfaction, they must be safe," he said.

Manufacturers are also responsible for workers who are exposed to large amounts of potentially caustic formulas, he said.

Bartlett declared a moratorium on animal testing within the Mary Kay Corp. in 1989 because of personal concern about animal use, confusion among consumers about ethical standards for product safety testing, claims from radical activists and the future

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