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Catcher William Shiflett took the long road to Texas A&M. Sports, Page 7

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THE BATTALION

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Hearing set for Fish Aides *Hazing may tie into traditions*

The Hearing Board will decide whether six freshmen violated hazing regulations by kidnapping the student body president.

By Wes Swift
THE BATTALION

The Texas A&M Student Organization Hearing Board will decide March 19 whether the actions of the Student Government Fish Aides toward the student body president, which have drawn mixed reactions from Greek organizations, violated University hazing regulations.

If found guilty, Fish Aides could face disciplinary actions ranging from a reprimand to removal of the organization from campus.

Christi Moore, Hearing Board chair, said a preliminary investi-

gation by the Department of Student Activities yielded enough information to spur a hearing.

"There were enough questions like who planned (the incident), who took part in it ... that it warranted a hearing," she said.

In addition to charges against the organization, Fish Aides may face individual charges from the Student Conflict Resolution Center.

Dr. Gene Zdziarski, SCRC coordinator, said he is waiting for the results of the investigation reports before deciding whether to file charges.

The hazing charges stem from a Feb. 19 incident in which six Fish Aides, or freshmen Student Government assistants, kidnapped Toby Boenig, student body president, in honor of Presidents Day.

The freshmen blindfolded and handcuffed Boenig, a senior agricultural development major, and dropped him off on the corner of Texas Avenue and George Bush Drive.

State and University regulations forbid "any act of threat, physical or mental, perpetrated for the purpose of submitting a student or other person to physical pain or discomfort, indignity or humiliation."

The regulations also prohibit physical bondage and taking students to outlying areas and leaving them.

Boenig shouldered the blame for the incident Thursday, saying that he should be held responsible since he had authority over the freshmen involved in the incident.

"If there is a hearing, it should be held on me personally," he said. "Being the student body president, I'm the elected leader of 40,000 students, and I was in charge of the six Fish Aides."

"I am the one responsible if this incident is defined as hazing."

He said he is drafting a letter that will be sent to Moore and other representatives in the Division of Student Affairs that explains his argument. Boenig

said he does not feel the incident was hazing and plans to present a defense of the incident at the hearing.

A&M Greeks reacted to the announcement of the hearing with mixed feelings.

Earlier this week, fraternity and sorority members complained that the Boenig kidnapping was being treated as a joke, though similar instances in the Corps of Cadets and in Greek organizations were pursued as hazing incidents.

Jason Jordan, Interfraternity Council president and a junior marketing major, said he was happy to see that all organizations would be treated fairly, but knew the six freshmen never imagined that a hearing would result from their actions.

"On one side of the coin, I'm glad to see that every organization is held to the same level of responsibility," he said. "But on the other side, I feel bad for those (freshmen) because I know they had no ill intentions."

University officials said common defenses of hazing, including tradition and consent, are not acceptable.

By Wes Swift
THE BATTALION

Texas A&M officials said hazing at A&M is widespread and is influenced by the tradition-laden nature of the University and close ties between current and former students.

Dr. Gene Zdziarski, coordinator of the Student Conflict Resolution Center, said many common acts on campus could be considered hazing under state and University regulations.

"By University policy, I'd say (hazing) is widespread," he said.

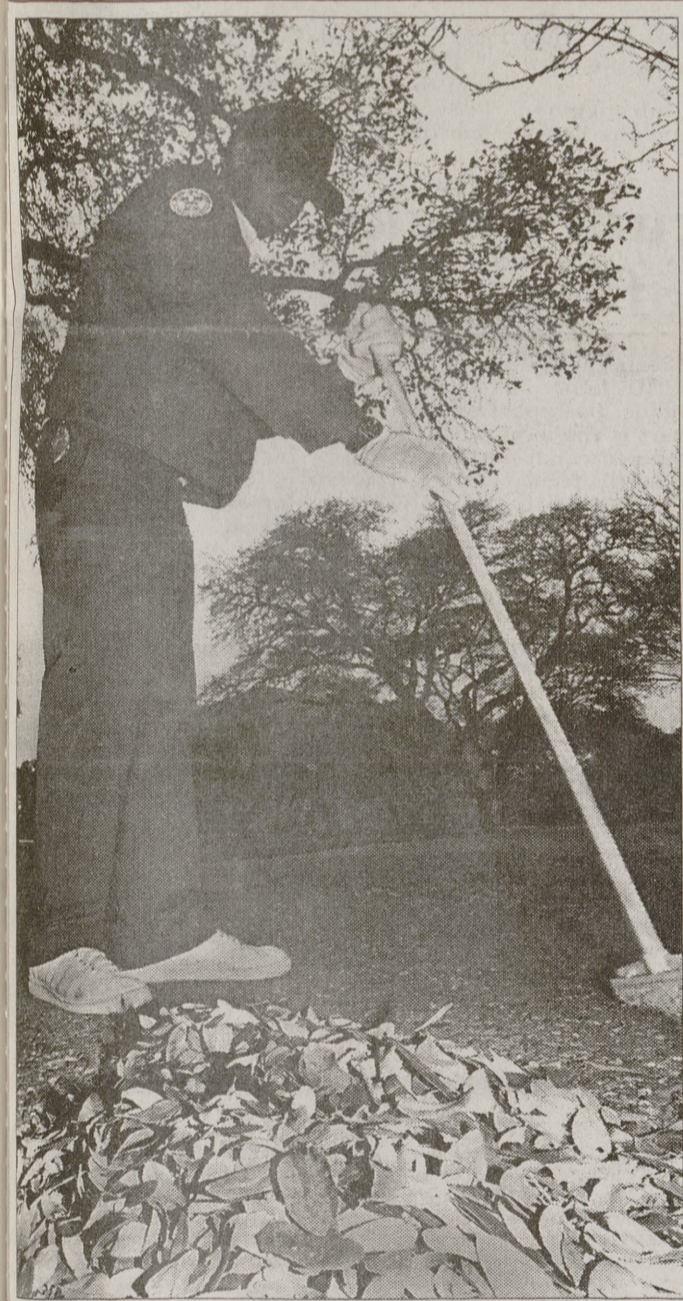
Texas law, from which the University draws its own hazing policies, defines hazing as any act that endangers the mental or physical health of students or destroys property for the purpose of admission into an organization or as a condition for continued membership in the organization.

Hazing on campus has taken the spotlight since the Interfraternity Council Judicial Board found the A&M chapter of Pi Kappa Alpha fraternity guilty of hazing on Feb. 15.

The fraternity was placed on probation for two years and sentenced to 400 hours of community service.

Thursday, the Student Organization Hearing Board announced that it would hold a

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Rony Angkriwan, THE BATTALION

A CLEAN SWEEP

William Davenport sweeps leaves in front of the MSC. Davenport has worked for Texas A&M for more than two years.

Commander and deputy chosen to lead next year's Corps of Cadets

Stephen Foster was named Corps commander; Cynthia Ericson was named deputy commander.

By Lily Aguilar
THE BATTALION

Members of Texas A&M's Corps of Cadets filled the Sam Houston Sanders Corps Center Thursday night to hear the announcement of next year's Corps commander and deputy commander.

See related EDITORIAL, Page 9

Maj. Gen. Thomas G. Darling, Corps commandant, announced that Stephen Foster, a junior political sci-

ence major of Company D-2, will become the next Corps Commander, replacing Tyson Voelkel.

Darling named Cynthia Ericson, a junior international studies and political science major of Company G-1, deputy commander.

Ericson, who is replacing John Warren, is the second woman to hold the position of deputy commander.

The crowd cheered and whooped when the announcement of next year's leadership was made.

"If I could say one thing, the Class of '97, we have got to work together to make this Corps better than the way we found it," Foster said.

Foster said he is humbled and excited that he will be at the helm of the Corps next year and that he will work closely with Voelkel in the coming



Dave House, THE BATTALION

Stephen Foster and Cynthia Ericson were selected as next year's Corps commander and deputy commander.

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MSC asks for increase in University Center Fee

The student body can vote on the decision in a referendum in March.

By Courtney Walker
THE BATTALION

The Texas A&M MSC Council will present a referendum to the student body March 28, the day of campus elections, asking for a \$3 increase in the University Center Fee.

The fee for the University Center funds building maintenance, personnel salaries and utility bills for the Rudder Tower and Theatre Complex, the MSC and the Koldus Building.

For the proposal to go into effect, it must be favored by a majority of students who vote in the election.

Patrick Conway, MSC Council president and a senior genetics major, said he realizes

any prospective student fee increase is going to have negative connotations.

But Conway said he hopes students realize this increase would be \$3 a semester, not per semester credit hour, and that it is necessary.

"The operating costs have increased over the last four years, but fees have not, so the University Center needs more money," Conway said.

Annual University Center expenses have increased from \$2.4 million in 1992 to \$2.8 million in 1995, and projected expenses for 1996 are \$2.9 million.

Currently, \$1 million of University Center money is spent on employee salaries, \$600,000 on custodial services and \$300,000 on utilities.

Dennis Busch, University Center director, said he intended to ask for an increase last year, but Dr. J. Malon Southerland,

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B-CS home for Habitat conference

The founder of Habitat for Humanity International, a Christian ministry that helps build low-income housing, is this weekend's keynote speaker.

By Kendra S. Rasmussen
THE BATTALION

The Texas A&M chapter of Habitat for Humanity International will join other Texas and Oklahoma chapters this weekend for the 1996 HFHI Southwest Regional Conference and the organization's 20th anniversary celebration.

The conference will begin today with tours of Bryan-College Station HFHI homes and will continue Saturday with devotionals, discussion sessions and workshops.

HFHI is the nation's largest nonprofit housing organization, and an estimated 400 people from affiliate chapters are expected to attend this weekend's conference.

Millard Fuller, HFHI founder, will deliver the keynote address tonight at 7 at the First United Methodist Church in Bryan.

Fuller, who has written six books about his work with HFHI, is expected to discuss the lack of affordable housing and HFHI's response to that need.

More than 30 million Americans are living in poverty, which Fuller said is a disgrace because other less wealthy countries have managed to eliminate substandard housing.

"(The nation's poverty rate) is a disgrace on every mayor of every city, a disgrace on the President, a disgrace on Congress, on churches and on everyone that is in a position to solve the problem that has not

See Habitat, Page 6

Texas graduate students to discuss foreign policy research

The conference is an opportunity for participants to present their research to peers from several universities.

By Michelle Lyons
THE BATTALION

Texas A&M's Program in Foreign Policy Making is hosting its first regional graduate student conference today.

The conference on "New Directions in Foreign Policy Decision Making" begins at 9:30 a.m. in 701 Rudder Tower.

Four graduate students from A&M and four students from the University of North Texas, Rice University and the University of Texas will present re-

search papers they have completed on foreign policy issues.

Lynn Reitmayer, program coordinator, said making the presentations will benefit the students.

"This gives them a chance to present their research and gives them experience in doing presentations in front of their peers," Reitmayer said.

"We, being graduate students who hope to be professors someday, need this in our curriculum so we can look good."

— Christopher Hanson
program graduate assistant

"It gives them a chance to get some early exposure."

After presenting their papers, a dis-

ussion committee will comment on the presentations and the students will answer questions.

Two panels will be held during the day. The morning panel will discuss research on "Domestic Linkages to Foreign Policy," and the afternoon session will focus on "Foreign Policy Outcomes of the International Arena."

Christopher Hanson, a graduate assistant to the program who is presenting a paper, said he hopes the confer-

ence will become a regular event.

"There are plenty of conferences that give professors the opportunity to present research," Hanson said. "We, being graduate students who hope to be professors someday, need this in our curriculum so we can look good."

"We do some fairly intriguing and interesting things on our own without the professors."

Dr. Patricia Hurley, Department of Political Science graduate adviser, said she will attend the conference to hear graduate students she has worked with make their presentations.

Hurley said the graduate students will benefit from this opportunity because several professors from universities across the region will be attending the conference.