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DRAFT DAY

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THE BATTALION

102, No. 134 (10 pages)

Serving Texas A&M University Since 1893

Monday • April 22, 1996

Ethnicity criteria temporarily reinstated

Lily Aguilar
THE BATTALION

The 5th Circuit Court of Appeals decided Friday to allow public colleges and universities to reinstate admissions and scholarship policies that use ethnicity as a criteria.

The decision allows state institutes of higher education in Texas, Louisiana and Mississippi to continue following their admissions policies despite the March Hopwood vs. State of Texas ruling that made special considerations based on ethnicity illegal.

The court's stay, which was requested by Dan Morales,

Texas attorney general, will be effective until May 13, when the State of Texas will request that the U.S. Supreme Court review the lower court's ruling in the Hopwood case.

From that point, the appeal will automatically extend the stay until the Supreme Court completes its review.

Jim Ashlock, Texas A&M director of University Relations, said Texas A&M will begin following its policies again and that the Hopwood ruling has not affected many students.

More than 90 percent of admissions for Summer and Fall 1996 had been decided before

the ruling, he said.

"We will revert to what we did before, but about 90 to 95 percent of our enrollment for the summer and fall had been done," Ashlock said.

"Our only problem now is the students who were being held up because race was no longer a criterion."

The A&M administration is pleased with the court's decision, Ashlock said, because the stay provides more time for it to review its policies.

The University has been using ethnicity as a criteria for 13 years. The Hopwood ruling forced it and other colleges and

"Our only problem now is the students who were being held up because race was no longer a criterion."

— JIM ASHLOCK
Texas A&M director of University Relations

universities in the three-state district to shut down their admissions offices until new policies were formed.

Ashlock said the University, which closed admissions for six days in March, had to review and revise quickly, leaving administrators scrambling for a legal way to promote diversity.

"We need some time," he said. "We've been giving special

consideration to minority students for 13 years. Out of the blue we are told 'Don't do it that way anymore.'"

Dr. Ray Bowen, Texas A&M president, said in a press release Friday that the additional time the court's stay has allowed will give University officials an opportunity to develop feasible alternatives, should the Supreme Court uphold the Hopwood ruling.

"We will be provided time to review the overall situation," Bowen said, "and develop alternatives available to us once the Supreme Court rules finally on the case."

Morales said in a press release Friday that the court was right to grant the stay.

"The 5th Circuit has properly granted a stay in this case, thereby allowing the state the opportunity to prepare its appeal to the Supreme Court," Morales said. "We are optimistic that the Supreme Court will accept the case and give guidance and advice to the state and nation in this important issue."

Brazos march sets fund-raising record

Kendra S. Rasmussen
THE BATTALION

The Texas A&M Corps of Cadets marched 14 miles to the Brazos River banks Saturday, setting a fund-raising record and marking the beginning of the end for senior cadets.

More than 2,000 cadets participated in the annual March to the Brazos, the nation's largest student fund-raising event for the March of Dimes.

The money raised surpassed last year's record-setting \$60,000 and added to the \$50,000 raised for the Brazos Valley March of Dimes by the Corps during the last 18 years.

Erin Dick, a senior English major and March to the Brazos chairwoman, said the Corps hoped to raise \$55,500 this year.

"We have met and surpassed our goal," she said. "Right now we have over \$61,000. We have blown our goal out of the water."

Dick said money is still coming in, and final totals have not been determined.

Every spring the Corps marches to the Brazos River. The event marks a symbolic transition of leadership in the

Corps, as seniors turn their duties over to their successors.

The Corps marches to the river under senior leadership and marches back with the juniors in the lead. Seniors do not march back with the Corps; they ride home in buses.

Dick said many seniors get emotional at the march because it unofficially kicks off several senior activities, such as senior weekend, senior banquet and Ring Dance.

"A lot of seniors are kind of starting to realize March to the Brazos marks the beginning of the end," Dick said.

Chris Jay, a junior genetics major, said the march allows the Corps to help others while displaying their unity.

"I think it is an opportunity for the Corps to ... show that we are unified and that we can collectively work together," he said.

Cadets collect donations for participating in the march from businesses and individuals in Bryan, College Station and their home towns.

Dick said this year's collections were greater partly because of a

See March, Page 5



Gwendolyn Struve, THE BATTALION

G-1 Apache sophomores (from left) Robert Martinez, a mechanical engineering major; Danny Musquiz, a biomedical science major; and Sergio Mares, an electrical engineering major, "crap out" their fish in preparation to "drop handles" — the privilege to use their sophomores' first names as they are gaining sophomore rank — with them near the Brazos River during March to the Brazos Saturday.

Muster remembers life, spirit of Aggies

By Pamela Benson
THE BATTALION

As the flames of remembrance were lit and the word "Here" echoed through the hushed audience, thousands of Texas A&M students and former students joined together Sunday night to pay tribute to those who have died during the past year.

The Muster ceremony, which was held in G. Rollie White Coliseum, attracted a capacity crowd as current and former students gathered with family and friends to participate in one of A&M's most time-honored traditions.

The Class of '46 and former students who participated in the 1946 Muster in Corregidor were also honored at the ceremony, some of them present.

Muster originated in the late 1800s and is held at more than 400 locations across Texas and throughout the world.

Kim Greebon, the Student Government Muster Committee chair and senior political science major, opened the ceremony by explaining the importance of Muster.

"Muster is the epitome of Aggie spirit," Greebon said. "It is something that cannot be explained in words, but it simply must be experienced."

Dr. Ray Bowen, A&M president, discussed the historical significance of the Class of '46 and told how the closeness shared between those cadets should be sought by today's students.

"These Aggies have set a fine example of integrity, pride and spirit," Bowen said. "Class of 1996, you too will have the opportunity to return to Muster and set the example for the classes that will follow you."

Dr. E. Dean Gage, former A&M provost and a member of the Class of '65, opened his speech with a lighthearted joke, but soon mesmerized the crowd by telling them the true meaning of Muster.

"We celebrate lives at Muster because those who are being honored have lived their lives with dignity," Gage said. "We must remember and learn from the contributions of the past."

Gage also used the six letters in the word Muster to represent how the cere-

mony is significant to him.

"M stands for the memory of those who are absent; U is for unselfishness; S is for the Spirit of Aggieland; T is for the tradition; E is for enthusiasm; R is for the responsibility we have to protect and respect Muster," Gage said.

Jan Higginbotham, a senior agricultural journalism major, said she enjoyed Gage's message because he explained the ceremony in a way everyone would understand.

"I thought Gage's words exemplified what Muster is all about," Higginbotham said.

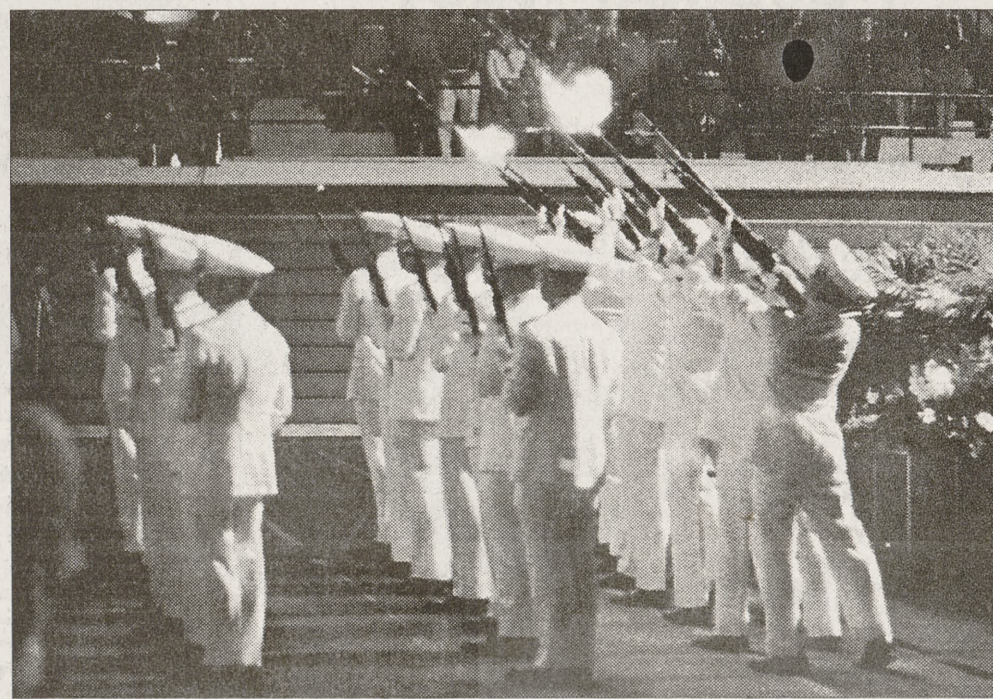
"He put into words a concept that is so hard for people who are not Aggies to understand."

Following the keynote speech, roll

See Muster, Page 5



Photos by Tim Moog, THE BATTALION



Top: Karla Pruitt, Class of '92 holds a candle for her father, Dr. James R. Singer, Class of '64. Bottom: The Ross Volunteers fire a 21-gun salute to mark the end of the Muster ceremony.

Unity Fest echoes Woodstock themes — peace, happiness

By Marissa Alanis
THE BATTALION

In a spirit reminiscent of Woodstock, 700 to 800 people united on O.R. Simpson Drill Field Saturday, lounging in the grass, watching bands perform and eating fajitas at the fourth annual Texas A&M Whoopstock Unity Festival.

Despite overcast weather, several campus organizations provided food and entertainment. The Aggie Democrats barbecued sausage-on-a stick, and Challenge, a program within the health and kinesiology department, facilitated noncompetitive activities such as parachuting and Hula-Hooping.

Karri Wilson, a Whoopstock concessions committee member and junior zoology major, said the festival's themes echoed those of the original 1969 Woodstock.

"It's bringing in the thoughts of Woodstock, which were peace and happiness, with an Aggie twist," Wilson said.

Ethnic dances were performed by members of organizations such as the United South Asian American Committee, who mixed a traditional Indian dance with modern dance.

Partha Mukherji, the USAAC treasurer and a senior biology major, said the performance united the dancers, who represent various religious backgrounds, promoting understanding among them.

Festival attendees with a creative flair had the opportunity to draw on the sidewalks with chalk, an activity sponsored by the MSC Visual Arts Committee.

Lalaine Little, MSC Visual Arts Committee adviser, said sidewalk art allowed people to express their own ideas of unity, creating a visual web of symbols.

"The idea of unity has so many symbols connected with it," Little said, "that if people see the unity symbols, it will drive that

See Whoopstock, Page 5

Coaches face prayer lawsuit

ELGIN, Texas (AP) — High school football and baseball in this town of 4,874 bring the community together.

Now, a lawsuit contends that Elgin High athletic director and football coach Eddie Baca violated the constitutional separation of church and state by forcing his players to pray before games. But that doesn't upset many residents here.

"You'd think (from media reports) lines were drawn, but I don't see it at all," Mayor Eric Carlson said. "I don't sense a great deal of trauma."

Baca, in his first year at Elgin, faces a school board hearing Monday night to determine if his contract will be renewed.

The contract was up for consideration before the American Civil Liberties Union filed suit on behalf of some students and parents last month. The lawsuit accuses Baca, baseball coach Brad Osborn and two

See Prayer, Page 2