

THE BATTALION

Vol. 102, No. 145 (6 pages)

Serving Texas A&M University Since 1893

Monday • June 10, 1996

Democrats avoid gun control, abortion issues

Victor Morales was chosen as the party's U.S. Senate nominee

DALLAS (AP) — Texas Democrats, in their drive for a "mainstream" party platform, on Saturday rejected putting gun control in the document laying out their party positions.

Neither the new slimmed-down party platform, which gives general positions, nor detailed issue papers that accompany it mention an assault weapon ban or the Brady Bill handgun control.

Both measures are supported by President Clinton and by Democratic U.S. Senate nominee Victor Morales, who trucked into the convention in his trademark white pickup.

"The government of the United States is not going to take my gun, and I have no fear about that," Morales, his 9-year-old son by his side, told the convention.

But when Texas Democrats considered their platform, a move to add support for gun control to the position papers failed. Opponents said it's a divisive issue that would cause candidates to distance themselves from the platform. Support for an assault weapon ban was part of the 1994 platform.

The two-page platform also doesn't mention the issue of abortion rights. But support for abortion rights is mentioned in the more specific issue papers, which were adopted



MORALES

with the platform.

"It doesn't signal a retreat from pro-choice," Democratic spokesman Joe Cutbirth said of the move. He said Texas Democratic Chairman Bill White wanted the platform to be a "clear and concise statement of what the Democratic Party stands for."

White was elected without opposition to head the party Saturday. He took over the chairmanship late last year, after 15-year chairman Bob Slagle stepped down.

The two-page platform lists "core values" — opportunity, responsibility, family and community, security, freedom and fairness — and notes "Democrats will debate how we will accomplish our mission."

Accompanying issue papers go into more detail about education, fiscal policy, criminal justice, jobs, worker safety and rights, agriculture, health security, the environment, civil rights and other issues.

First lady addresses Texas delegates

By Stacy Stanton
THE BATTALION

Thousands of Democrats chanted, "Four more years!" as Hillary Rodham Clinton took the stage at the 1996 Texas Democratic Convention Friday night.

Clinton's speech highlighted challenges her husband set before the nation in his State of the Union address in January.

"This election is about meeting the challenges of our time," Clinton

said. "Cherish our children and strengthen our families. Strive for economic opportunity and security for all workers. Take back the nation's streets from crime and drugs. Ensure peace and freedom and prosperity for all."

The first lady cited a few of her husband's presidential successes, such as the passage of the Family Medical Leave Act, which she said, "has affected nearly 3 million

See Clinton, Page 2

Running pleads 'no contest' to records tampering charge

By Melissa Nunnery
THE BATTALION

Felony charges against Vickie Running were day after she pleaded no contest to a misdemeanor charge of tampering with records.

Running, executive secretary of the Texas A&M University Board of Regents, received six months deferred adjudication probation and a \$500 fine.

"Rather than go through the time and expense of a trial, I have decided to accept the dismissal of the felony charges by the state," Running said in a news release.

"[Running] was originally indicted on the felony charge of tampering with records and a misdemeanor charge of the same offense," Brazos County District Attorney Bill Turner said.

The misdemeanor charge will be dismissed after the successful completion of her punishment.



RUNNING

Turner said Running was accused of altering government documents that were obtained by a newspaper reporter and subsequently published. The documents contained information concerning the source of funding for alcohol purchased by the Board of Regents.

The documents originally stated the alcohol was purchased with funds from the special concessions account, but when the documents were released to the media, they stated the money came from the institutional development account.

Mary Nan West, chairman of the Board of Regents, and Dr. Barry B. Thompson, chancellor of the Texas A&M University System, released a joint statement Thursday saying "The Texas A&M University System is pleased that after a very short period of informal supervision, all alleged charges against Ms. Running will be dismissed. We are very glad this unfortunate episode is at an end."

"I believe it is time to put this behind me and move forward with my life," Running said in the news release.

Neither Running nor her attorney could be reached for further comment.

Planning for the Future

Program lets parents get head start on college tuition costs



Nicole Rich, a freshman biomedical science major, is the first participant of the Texas Tomorrow Fund to attend college.

By Amy Protas
THE BATTALION

Nicole Rich and her parents have one less thing to worry about.

Under the new Texas Tomorrow Fund, Nicole can spend her time studying instead of trying to figure out her next tuition bill.

Nicole, a freshman biomedical science major, is the first participant of the Texas Tomorrow Fund to attend college. The fund, brainchild of Texas Comptroller John Sharp, allows parents to prepay their children's tuition from the moment they are born.

Sheila Clancy, spokesperson for the State Controller's office, said the fund prevents parents from having to worry about fee increases that occur throughout a student's college career.

"The fund is a new state program that lets people prepay a child's tuition," Clancy said. "It locks down the tuition at today's rates. For a newborn, you could pay the price of tuition. When they're ready to go to college at 18, the tuition and manda-

tory fees are paid for. Parents don't have to worry about inflation."

Four different plans are available through the fund. Parents can designate tuition for private or public school. They can also choose to pay in one lump sum or over an extended period of time.

Clancy said Texas's plan is the most flexible in the nation.

"There are about eight other states with the program," Clancy said. "The rules vary from state-to-state, and we believe ours is the most flexible in the country. You can even transfer it to an out-of-state school."

"There are lots of payment options," Clancy continued. "They can pay on, say, a ten year plan. They can pay out over a then year time span and can make monthly payments until their child goes to college."

The only costs the fund will not cover are lab fees, books and room and board.

Sharp established the fund in January to help middle-class parents with the cost of tuition.

See Tuition, Page 6



Gwendolyn Struve, THE BATTALION

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

Dimitri Millas, a sophomore business administration major and forward for the A&M Soccer Team, practices on Simpson Drill Field Saturday.

Recruiting company attracts new cadets



Gwendolyn Struve, THE BATTALION

Mark Macicek, class of 2000, watches his older brother, Mike Macicek, a senior accounting major and a member of the Recruiting Company.

By Ann Marie Hauser
THE BATTALION

For most of the Corps of Cadets, summer means a time to relax and take off the uniform for a while. However, about 80 volunteers will spend their summer in uniform working to attract new cadets.

These cadets form the Recruiting Company. The outfit was organized in the summer of '94 with the goal of maintaining a visible campus pres-

ence for the Corps of Cadets over the summer term.

Heath Larkin, Recruiting Company Commander and a senior business analysis major, said there are many advantages to having the specialized company.

"Before the recruiting company, there was a lack of organization," Larkin said. "Now we can regulate the cadets' attendance and how effectively

See Recruiting, Page 2

Orientation program makes improvements

By Tauma Wiggins
THE BATTALION

The Texas A&M New Student Conferences are underway and orientation leaders are enthusiastically setting out to welcome the incoming class of 2000 with an emphasis on increasing parent involvement.

Cynthia Hernandez, a member of Student Life Orientation, said A&M's orientation program has undergone many changes in an effort to include parents.

"Something new we're doing this year is trying to expand parent orientation as well as student orientation, where the parents are just as involved as the students," Hernandez said. "When a new student comes in, we adopt the entire family, not just the student."

Darin Vickery, Howdy Barbecue Coordinator and a junior genetics major, said there will be several additions to this year's orientation program aimed at more effectively informing Aggie parents.

"Kind of a small thing we're doing this year is having a t-shirt designed especially for parents that says 'Aggie Parent Class of 2000,'" Vickery said. "It makes them feel more involved."

Another way to include and inform new Aggie parents is the addition of a parent-student leadership panel. The panel will operate without the presence of administrative figures so parents can feel free to ask questions, Vickery said.

See Orientation, Page 6



Gwendolyn Struve, THE BATTALION

Orientation leaders guide future Aggies on a campus tour Sunday.