

# THE BATTALION

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## GOP anti-abortionists claim victory

### Hutchison was selected as a delegate despite her pro-abortion stance

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — U.S. Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison may have succeeded in representing Texas as a delegate to the Republican National Convention, but GOP anti-abortion forces who opposed her are claiming victory.

The Texas GOP Convention ended Saturday with abortion opponents winning a majority of the state's 123 national delegates and vowing to force presumptive presidential nominee Bob Dole to pick a strong abortion foe as his running mate.

"This sends a very clear signal to Bob Dole to stop his meandering around about the pro-life plank and make up his mind about giving us a pro-life presidential running mate," said Bill Price, president of Texans United for Life and the most vocal opponent of Hutchison, who supports restricted abortion rights.

Texas GOP Chairman Tom Pauken said he felt sure the delegation was united leaving the convention.

"We came together most of the time," Pauken said. "I feel very good about the entire convention."

"These are people who have committed to vote for Bob Dole when they go to San

Diego, and I'm confident they are going to do that," Pauken added.

Despite the vocal support of U.S. Sen. Phil Gramm, U.S. House Speaker Newt Gingrich and Gov. George W. Bush, Hutchison barely survived a voice vote at the convention that some said was too close to call.

"In spite of the fact that we were up against the might of the Republican Party establishment, we got close to and maybe over 50 percent of the vote," Price said.

Pauken said the vote was 60 percent in favor of the at-large slate of delegates that included Hutchison.

"I think it's a strong delegation ... that includes Senator Hutchison," Pauken said after the vote. "I think most elements of the party were reasonably satisfied, some were not and these are good sincere people and I understand that their frustrated."

Abortion became a lightning rod at the Texas GOP Convention after Dole requested a "declaration of tolerance" on the issue.

Texas Republicans balked at the request, responding by toughening their

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## Ags attend state convention

By David Taylor  
THE BATTALION

SAN ANTONIO — Several Texas A&M students got hands-on experience with democracy over the weekend at the Texas Republican Convention.

A number of Aggies served as delegates or alternates to the GOP convention.

Megan Machedmehl, a master's student studying educational human resources development, attended her first convention.

"When I first sat down in the Alamodome and realized that I was a delegate whose vote could make a difference, I was almost overwhelmed," Machedmehl said. "I was reminded that age has nothing to do with having an impact. Anyone can get involved in the party and have an impact."

Jeff Livingston, president of the Texas A&M College Republicans and a senior electrical engineering major,



Stacy Stanton, THE BATTALION

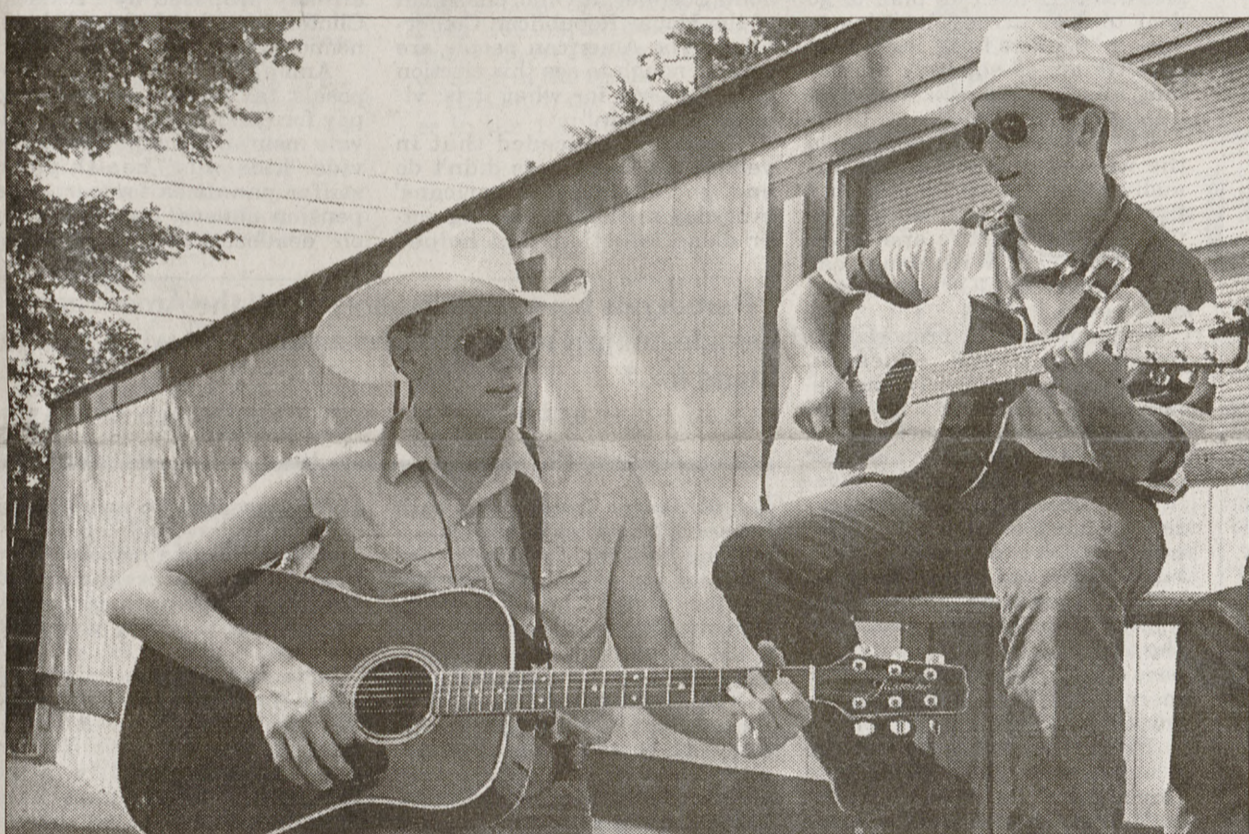
Shanna Nugent, Allen Watson, Richard Holt and Jeff Livingston were among the Aggies to serve as delegates to the Texas GOP convention over the weekend.

said power seemed to be in the people's hands at this convention.

"I'm actually really impressed with the grass-roots power individuals seem to have at the convention," Livingston said. "I think it's an hon-

or that Brazos County let some college Republicans come. That proves that the county and the Republican Party are wanting to reach out for

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Gwendolyn Struve, THE BATTALION

### I WAS COUNTRY WHEN COUNTRY WASN'T COOL

Bobby Richardson, a senior agricultural business major, and Chad Ripple, a freshman agriculture development major, practice some of their favorite country songs Sunday afternoon.

## Fish Camp workday promotes unity

By Heather R. Rosenfeld  
THE BATTALION

The loud music, paint-splattered legs and bustling bodies found at a Fish Camp workday may have led an observer to think it was nothing more than a wild party. A closer look at the gathering found in Zachry on Saturday revealed a much different purpose, however.

Although workdays are designed as general preparation time for camp, Robyn Johnson, Fish Camp director and a 1996 graduate of A&M, said planning and decorating often take secondary roles at a workday.

"They (workdays) build camp unity, and people working together is key in doing that," Johnson said. "It is a time when a camp comes together as a camp, they aren't just individuals anymore."

Todd Donohue, Fish Camp director and a senior accounting major, said he understands the importance of bringing a camp together during the summer.

"The freshmen can tell the difference if a camp is close or not," Donohue said.

Of the 500 students that are involved in Fish Camp, some students have been preparing for the arrival of the freshman class since September, and the workday is one of the many events that anticipate the six sessions held in August.

The workdays also allow time for those involved to reflect on the reasons behind their dedication.

Allison Carter, co-chair for Camp Carrington and a senior elementary education major, said that she wants to ease the difficult transition from high school to college.

"It's very hard to leave home



Rony Angkriwan, THE BATTALION

Cary Lasher, a junior chemical engineering major, Michelle Brueggings, a sophomore elementary education major, and Bernice Odom, a sophomore speech communication major, work on a Fish Camp poster Saturday.

because you are leaving your comfort zone," she said.

"I was scared that I wouldn't find my niche, but it's not that way. There is a place for everyone at A&M."

Although many long hours of unpaid labor have been spent to ensure success this summer, Suzanna Henderson, head director of Fish Camp and a senior English major, says it all comes to fruition with the arrival of the incoming class at camp.

"I think it is the enthusiasm and excitement of the fish during the four days at Fish Camp that makes every minute of time, and every dollar you spend, worth it," she said.

Johnson agreed with Henderson and furthered the reasons for such dedication to the organization.

"All these students are working to welcome the Class of 2000," she said.

"... It's great to see high school seniors suddenly turn into Texas Aggies."

Carter said seeing her counselors work together as a team at the workday really highlights Fish Camp's message that every individual is important.

"They (freshmen) soon realize that they can be themselves and will be accepted," Carter said. Taking a break from painting a banner, Amanda Barneycastle, Camp Jones counselor and a senior accounting major, was able to sum up the essence of Fish Camp in one sentence. "Fish Camp is simply Aggies welcoming new Aggies into our family."

## Handgun class offers new perspectives

When you pull the trigger to fire a gun, you cause an explosion. Once the bullet leaves the barrel of the gun, you can't get it back. You are responsible for the bullet until it stops.

I learned about gun safety, target shooting and the legal aspects of carrying a gun when I took the concealed handgun license training class last week. I wanted to see who is carrying a gun and why.

I expected the class to be full of big, burly-looking men, but instead saw average-looking people you would meet every day.

There were five men and four women in my class. I was the youngest person and the only A&M student taking the class. Classes have typically been small since the concealed handgun law went into effect.

Most people who take the class want to keep a gun in their car for protection when they travel. Parents want to protect their children, and business owners want to protect their businesses.

To get a concealed handgun license, you start by taking the class. The class consists of 12 hours of classroom training, a pretest and a final exam. Then you go to a shooting range and qualify with a handgun.

The Department of Public Safety does an extensive background check on applicants. A felony conviction, being a fugitive from justice, being currently charged with a class A or B misdemeanor or being of unsound mind can keep a person from getting a license.

This screening should help ease the minds of those who are afraid the concealed handgun law will arm criminals and crazy people.

The instructor did a good job of teaching us the legal aspects of carrying a gun. No one missed more than one question on the written test.

Shooting a gun was the hardest part of the class. Having never handled a gun before, I didn't know what to expect.

The first shot was loud, the gun kicked back and the empty shell hit me in the forehead. Once I knew what was coming, I was even more afraid. I pulled the trigger with my eyes closed and missed the target a lot.

By the time I took the test, I was less nervous and hit the target almost every time. I realized the gun wouldn't bite me, and I wasn't going to shoot myself.

Even though I qualified to get a license, I



MELISSA NUNNERY  
CITY REPORTER

don't think I'm prepared to carry a gun. You must have a plan of action for shooting a gun and decide if you are capable of taking a life. I haven't done either of these things.

It takes a lot of practice to become a good shot. Shooting accurately is important, because if you miss an attacker and hit an innocent bystander, there is no legal justification.

Most people who take the class want to know where they can carry a gun. I thought you could carry a gun anywhere with a license, but you can't. Churches, synagogues, race-tracks, schools, polling places, businesses that derive 51 percent of their profits from the sale of alcohol, government buildings and secured areas of airports are some of the places where handguns are banned even with a license.

Because of my misconception about the kind of people who take the concealed handgun class, I didn't expect to learn how to peacefully resolve a dispute. I thought we would learn to be vigilantes.

The instructor said you should either try to talk your way out of a situation or retreat before shooting. It is very important to take note of innocent bystanders, the kind of weapon the attacker is using and where you are before you take out your gun.

The concealed handgun class prepares reasonable, logical people to protect themselves.



Rony Angkriwan, THE BATTALION

Thomas Archer practices hitting a target during the handgun license training class Saturday.

## Illegal handicapped parking may result in \$100 citation

By Tauma Wiggins  
THE BATTALION

The search for a parking space represents an annoying inconvenience for many Texas A&M students, but for disabled students, finding that spot is imperative to their safety and health.

Sean Merrell, a Parking, Transit and Traffic Services (PTTS) officer, said he has observed many A&M students parking illegally in handicapped spots.

"To me this is really serious," Merrell said. "A lot of times students will park in a handicapped parking spot and run into class."

Merrell said many students put their handicapped tag on only after seeing the officers.

"I've seen some students pull into a handicapped parking spot, and then, as soon as they see me, they put up a tag," Merrell said.

Merrell said PTTS does not prosecute but does give a \$100 citation for illegal handicapped parking.

Gary Jackson, PTTS manager for parking services, said it is difficult to prosecute an individual parking illegally in a handicapped parking spot because University Police Department (UPD) officers must be present.

"We've had two cases where we came close to prosecuting, but it's not easy," Jackson said. "The UPD has to be on the scene."

Jackson said the medical community

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