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Candidates address voters at forum

By JACKIE VRATIL
THE BATTALION

State Senate are Republican Steve Ogden and Democrat Mary Moore. Running for the vacant seat in the House of Representatives are Republicans Richard Smith and Dr. William Roman. Senate candidate Moore was the only candidate not in attendance.

Each candidate stated his views on issues involving both the community and the Texas A&M campus.

Ogden said costs to attend higher learning institutions continue to increase, but he will try to ensure educa-

"... we will be proud of the returns we get when we put money into education."

Steve Ogden
State Senate candidate

the returns we get when we put money into education.

When confronted with the question of rising costs in education, Smith said he would, with the cooperation of others, decentralize funding.

"Handling the rising costs will take a cooperative effort by the faculty, the students and the administration," Smith said. "The legislators will look out for any problems that may occur."

Smith said he would offer college students in the Bryan-College Station area his

experience of living in the area and attending the University.

"I can empathize with their (students') problems," he said, "and I have worked with the Student Government."

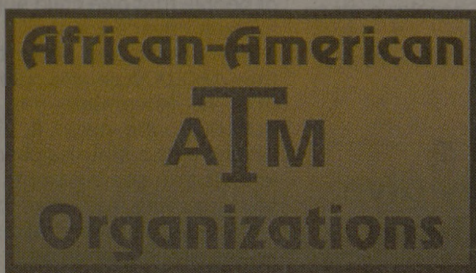
Roman held a medical practice in College Station for 40 years, and at one time taught at the University. He thinks, therefore, that his background of working with students gives him experience in knowing what students want.

"They want somebody to talk to," Roman said. "I will listen."

Pan-Hellenic

Groups emphasize close relationships

By MARISSA ALANIS
THE BATTALION



The eight historically black fraternities and sororities that make up the Texas A&M Pan-Hellenic Council strive to represent brotherhood and sisterhood.

In the 1930's, the National Pan-Hellenic Council was established, and four fraternities and four sororities were introduced.

Jason Brewer, the A&M Pan-Hellenic advisor, said the National Pan-Hellenic

Council was devised so black Greeks could share ideas and aim to better their own communities.

"A lot of issues weren't being addressed that concerned the well-being of their specific organization, i.e. rush," Brewer said.

The Pan-Hellenic rush procedures differ from other Greek organizations in that potential applicants must undergo a selective review process. Grades, good standing with the University and extracurricular activities are taken into consideration. If a student meets these requirements, they may fill out a membership application.

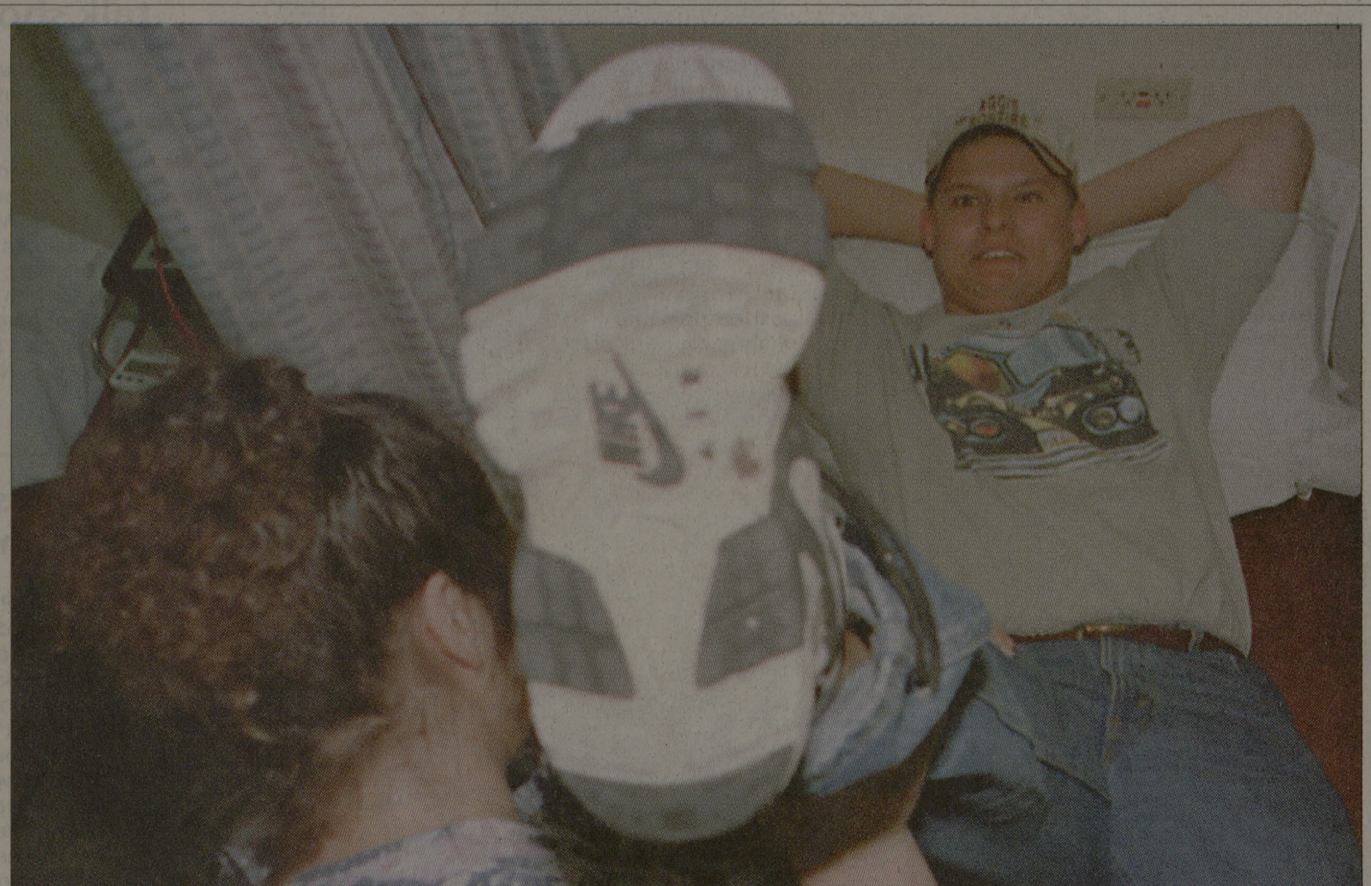
First-semester freshmen are not allowed to rush Pan-Hellenic organizations because they do not have a grade point average.

After the national and regional headquarters of a chapter review an application, a vote is taken by the Pan-Hellenic organization the applicant wants to join.

One of the characteristics of Pan-Hellenic organizations is close-knit relationships among members because of the small membership classes each one holds.

Marcus Gardner, Alpha Phi Alpha vice-president and a senior civil engineering major, said he observed other non Pan-Hellenic fraternities with large membership classes did not seem to know their own brothers, even when they were wearing the same shirts.

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Pat James, THE BATTALION

Grin and Bear It

Randall Walton, a senior zoology major, grimaces while Mimi Sicilio, a physical therapist at A.P. Beutel Health Center, stretches his hamstring.

Scams may cost callers big bucks

By JACKIE VRATIL
THE BATTALION

At one time dialing outside the United States was a hassle. However it is now as easy as dialing outside the state of Texas, and many telemarketing scams are capitalizing on the improvement.

Ward Tisdale at the Attorney General's Press Office said the telemarketers' ploy starts when they leave a message on an answering machine explaining to the listener that a problem may exist or a prize of some sort needs to be claimed.

"Often times a message is left on an answering machine making the point clear that you must call back for a prize or some great opportunity," Tisdale said.

The telemarketers emphasize the fact that returning the phone call at the number given is a necessity; this is where the scam is pulled. The telemarketers may tell the listener everything about the problem or the prize, but neglect to explain the returning phone call may cost the listener up to \$100.

The scam is pulled by giving the listener a phone number beginning with the area code 809. When dialed, this area code can connect the listener with most of the Caribbean nations.

"Because those numbers lead to off-shore scams international laws are in effect and that is what makes it so hard to follow-up and catch the

scams," Tisdale said.

By dialing the 809 area code, U.S. telephone regulations are bypassed and prices for the long distance calls can be as high as \$25 a minute.

U.S. telephone regulations ensure the caller knows exactly how much each minute will cost and approximately how long a caller can expect to spend on the line.

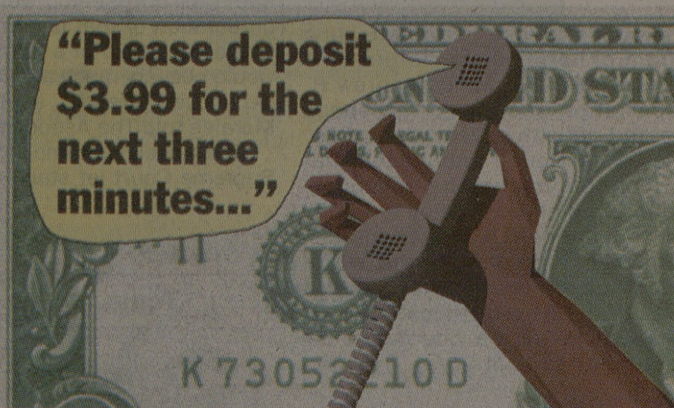
In a news release sent to Texas papers, Attorney General Dan Morales said phone scams have innovated other ways of attracting victims.

"The answering machine is not the only source of these phone numbers," Morales said. "All too often, people looking for jobs are targeted."

The ads encourage the reader to call a local number for more information. Once on the line, a recording comes on explaining the legitimacy of the company and tells the listener to call another number to speak with someone who can give more details about the job.

The other number begins with the area code 809. The listener is told he will have to pay for the call, but not how much or how long he will be on hold or listen to a long recording.

Another way the scam works is by tying up a beeper. A number comes up on the



screen of the beeper with the area code 809. A return phone call is made and the scam triumphs again.

Other area codes used for the scams are 268, 242, 246, 345, 441, 664, 670, 767, 758, 787, 868, 869, and 876.

Tisdale said protecting oneself by knowing who and where one is calling is the best way to avoid being a victim.

Morales' advice is to take an additional minute to find out exactly where the area code is from, and why the call needs to be made.

"Don't know anyone from a Caribbean nation? Don't call back," he said. "And beware of ads touting 'mystery shopper' jobs or unknown overseas opportunities."

Man in sketch no help in Cosby investigation

LOS ANGELES (AP) — The goateed man depicted in a police sketch as another possible witness to the Ennis Cosby slaying was candid and cooperative, police said Tuesday, but unable to give them any help in finding the killer.

"He did not have any additional information of substance to offer," said police Cmdr. Tim McBride.

Meanwhile, CBS reported Tuesday night that it had received a threatening fax, purportedly from the same woman police arrested in New York over the weekend for allegedly trying to extort \$40 million from the victim's father.

Authorities said she claimed to be entertainer Bill Cosby's illegitimate daughter.

The elder Cosby has denied being related to the woman, identified as Autumn Jackson. Police say they don't believe the extortion case is connected to the killing.

CBS said the fax it received threatened the network with extortion if a woman identified as Autumn Jackson Cosby "doesn't receive a fair settlement." The network carries the entertainer's show *Cosby*.

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Blinn continues expansion

KEVIN CUMMINGS
THE BATTALION

The new Blinn campus on Villa Maria may seem like a huge parking lot and a small building, but the current building is just phase one of a four-phase construction plan. The plan will accommodate Blinn's expected future enrollment of almost 15,000 students within the next 15 years.

Currently, 7,000 students are enrolled at Blinn. That figure is expected to increase to 9,000 within the next year.

The increased enrollment has brought an increase in traffic and a subsequent need for more parking. Parking for Blinn has been expanded from 700 spaces at the old campus to 2,500 at the new location.

The increased congestion around the new campus is causing the city of Bryan to make some changes on Villa Maria. The city reached a settlement with a neighborhood organization, Citizens United for a Responsible Bryan, to expand Villa Maria to four lanes and

monitor near-by intersections to determine if traffic lights are needed.

With 8,000 more cars expected on Villa Maria daily, commercial developers have already begun moving into the area. Dan Wilkerson, director of utilities in Bryan, said the campus is expected to increase local revenue.

"That was one of the main reasons for building the college — to stimulate commercial development," Wilkerson said.

Plans for the area include a College Park Center, a strip shopping center to be built west of Shulman 6 Theaters, a major grocery store and dorm-style living and retail shops on the south side of campus.

To service the considerable percentage of Blinn students co-enrolled at Texas A&M, bus operations currently runs the Reveille route past the new campus with three buses on a 36-minute loop. The bus route is capable of shuttling about 60 students to and from the Blinn campus every 12 minutes, and is not yet being used to capacity.

Muslim students observe Ramadan

By BENJAMIN CHENG
THE BATTALION

Muslims at Texas A&M and around the world continue to observe the Islamic month of fasting known as Ramadan, which began Jan. 10 and runs through Feb. 8.

Muslims refrain from food, drink and sexual relations with their spouse from sunrise until sunset throughout the period. Fasting was prescribed by the prophet Mohammed in the Quran, the Islamic holy book, and is one of the five pillars of Islam.

Zillur Rahim, president of the Islamic Community of Bryan-College Station, describes the objective of fasting as an attempt to be more submissive to the commands of God.

"It is one way to prove that we are following the commands of God," Rahim said.

Younoos Latheef, president of the Muslim Student Association and a senior computer science major, describes fasting as an attempt to attain God-consciousness.

"During this month, you increase your devotion to God through prayers and sacrificing your desires," Latheef said. "At the end of the month, you should renew the devotion to your Creator."

The Muslim Student Association is the lone campus organization for Muslims at Texas A&M. MSA has about 100 members, Latheef said.

Brad Neal, a graduate environmental engineering major, said Ramadan is not only about fasting.

"Someone can observe all of the tenants of Ramadan," Neal said, "yet if they don't increase their rela-

tionship with God, they've wasted a good opportunity."

Rahim said fasting could be difficult for new Muslims.

"It's a matter of practice," Rahim said. "But the faith overcomes all of that. If you know that you are doing it for God, if you know that this is something that has been made an obligation upon you, then it becomes a source of pleasure."

Exemptions from fasting are made for the sick, the elderly, children, pregnant women and nursing mothers, Rahim said. The fasting can be made up by fasting at a later date or providing charity for the poor, he said.

When non-Muslims learn of his fasting, Latheef said their reaction is often to consider it impossible to accomplish.

"When people ask of Ramadan, they're kind of amazed and awed that I can go throughout the day without food and drink," Latheef said.

Rahim finds his colleagues respect his faith and his practice of fasting.

"In general, the people whom I work with are understanding because College Station is a community of knowledge and education," Rahim said.

Neal said many non-Muslims are unaware of his fasting.

"It's a transparent thing," Neal said. "People are not really observant of it."

Ramadan, an Arabic word, is the ninth month of the lunar calendar. Ramadan changes from year to year when measured against the Christian calendar used by Western civilization. Last year, Ramadan began Jan. 21 and ended Feb. 18.

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The Pressure: The Texas A&M Men's Basketball Team travels to Lawrence to battle the nation's top-ranked team.
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