

J-board declares referendum non-binding

At an SGA hearing, board members denied a student's request to enact the yell-leader run-off election referendum.

SEE RELATED EDITORIALS, PAGE 11

By ERICA ROY
THE BATTALION

The Student Government Association Judiciary Board denied a student's petition requesting enforcement of the yell leader run-off elections referendum Thursday night, declaring the referendum

non-binding.

Kevin Jordan, j-board chair and an accounting graduate student, said the hearing questioned the interpretation of the Student Government Association's constitution, and did not decide on yell leader run-off elections.

"It (the decision) had nothing to do with the merits of run-off elections," Jordan said. "It had to do with referendums and the way it (the referendum) was stated. ... We (the j-board) never once discussed whether we wanted run-off elections or not. We're interpreting rules."

In the Student Government Association's Constitution, referendums can be grouped under two sections, F and G.

Under section F, the purpose of

a referendum is to consider proposed legislation.

The j-board ruled that section F referendums can be non-binding or binding, and for a referendum to be binding, the words "binding to the Student Government Association" must be attached.

A referendum under section G allows the student body to bypass the Student Senate and enact measures without the Senate's consent. The student body president must take action if a referendum is passed under section G, because this type of referendum is binding.

The j-board declared that the yell leader run-off elections referendum falls under section F, making the referendum non-binding.

Chris Williams, plaintiff in the

hearing and a senior political science and speech communications major, said any referendum, by definition, is binding.

"A referendum is not a public opinion poll," he said. "A public opinion poll does not belong on a ballot. When something is on the ballot, we expect our government to comply with that."

Jordan said the j-board defined the referendums more clearly in their ruling.

He said the yell leader run-off elections referendum was unclearly worded, causing confusion over whether the referendum was binding.

Carl Baggett, student body president and a senior accounting major, said the j-board's ruling clarified some of the unclear wording in

the constitution.

"There was ambiguity — that was the whole problem with everything," Baggett said. "The ambiguities that were once there are no longer there."

Matt Mayfield, executive vice-president of Student Government and a senior animal science major, said the Student Senate held the referendum to find out the student body's opinion on the issue.

"We wanted to solicit the opinion of the student body," he said. "Looking back on it, we should have just done a poll."

Williams said although he received a fair hearing and he supports the j-board's process, he still thinks the referendum was binding. "Students thought they voted on

something last spring that was binding — it wasn't," Williams said.

"I do still believe the referendum was binding, but that's not my decision to make," he said. "That right belongs to the j-board."

Williams said he encourages students to become more active, if they want their voice to be heard by the Student Government.

The j-board is composed of eight members and one chair (a non-voting member, unless a tie occurs). There are four at-large members, one graduate, senior, junior and sophomore member.

Seven of the eight voting members supported the decision made by the j-board.

See **J-BOARD**, Page 12

Regents approve Use Fee increase

GUF will climb to \$34 per credit hour

By MELISSA NUNNERY
THE BATTALION

The Texas A&M University System Board of Regents approved a \$10 per credit hour increase in the General Use Fee Friday in Laredo.

The GUF will go from \$24 per credit hour to \$34 per credit hour on Sept. 1.

The \$10 GUF increase will provide the University with an additional \$11 million a year.

Texas A&M faculty and staff will receive a merit-based pay raise this year as a result of the increase. The University will implement a 2 percent salary increase Mar. 1, and another 3 percent increase when the GUF increase goes into effect.

Texas A&M President Ray M. Bowen said regents faced a dilemma in voting on the increase.

"Raising student fees is never easy and requires considerable study," Bowen said in a press release. "Our regents have thoroughly reviewed this matter and considered every possible alter-

native. I know our faculty and staff greatly appreciate this difficult decision."

Bowen said the University must see students get their money's worth from the fee increase.

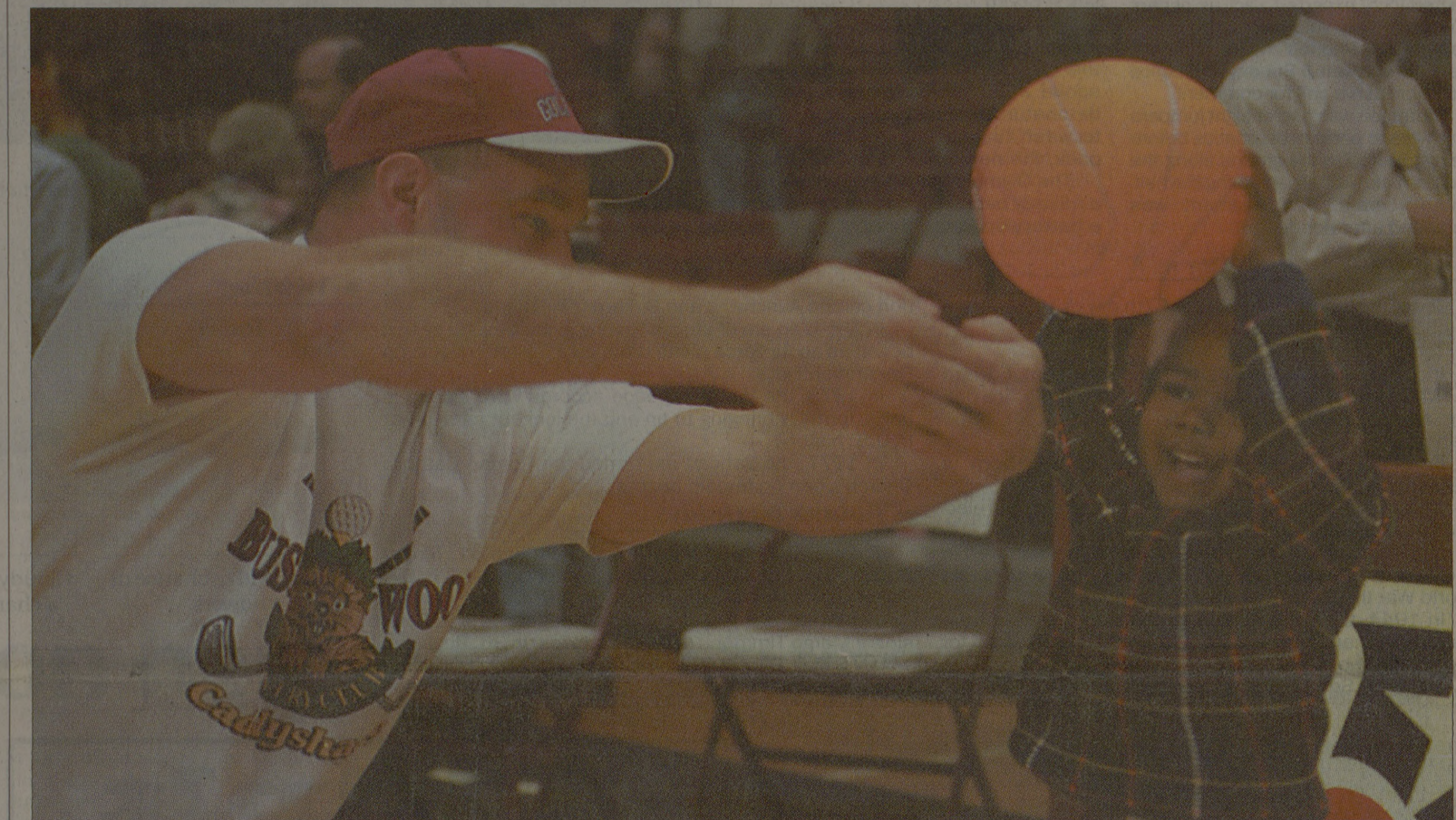
"It is now incumbent on all of us at Texas A&M to recognize and appreciate where this money is coming from," he said in a press release. "We must guarantee it is returned to the students through the highest quality academic experience."

In other business, the Board postponed a vote on an on-campus, child care center on the Texas A&M campus.

Regent Guadalupe Rangel of Corpus Christi asked that the vote on the center be postponed until the Board's March meeting, to have more time to study the proposal.

The child care center would serve children of students, faculty and staff members. If approved, the University would provide the center with a location and start-up funds.

The center would be self-sufficient and would operate on tuition.



Shootin' Hoops

Three-year-old Corey Haith, son of A&M basketball coach Frank Haith, reaches up for a dunk with Tim Fitzpatrick after the A&M v. Kansas State game Saturday afternoon.

Rony Angkriwan, THE BATTALION

Character names cause controversy

Mulder, Scully not welcome at A&M

By BENJAMIN CHENG
THE BATTALION

Renaming the Tam2000 computer-server prompt to "mulder" or "scully," two characters on the television show "The X-Files," has brought an alien image to Computing and Information Services.

Philip Kaiser, a service programmer, said users should not worry about e-mail address changes. Last fall, CIS announced that the address remained "unix.tamu.edu" despite a forthcoming prompt name change to "mulder.tamu.edu" or "scully.tamu.edu."

"That (Unix) is the only name they need to remember or refer to," Kaiser said.

The arrival of a new machine, the SunEnterprise 5000, to supplement Tam2000 motivated the name change. For administrative and technical reasons, the Tam2000 machine has been named "mulder" and the SunEnterprise

5000 has been named "scully."

Cheryl Cato, systems analyst for CIS, said the new titles help differentiate between the two machines.

"Every machine on a network has an address in numeric form," Cato said. "For ease of use, you can assign an alphanumeric name to that number. It's easier for people to use."

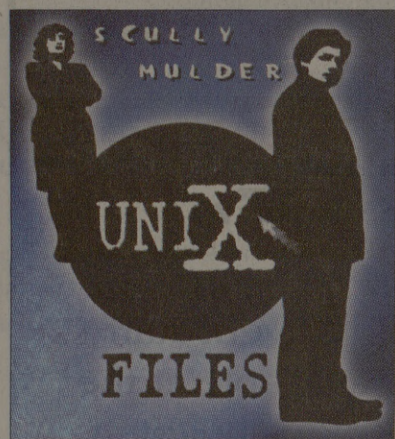
The decision to name the machines was made within the Unix system's support group, Cato said.

"We just told the team and they sent me some names," Cato said. "They let me win this time."

Cato said the two machines work together to operate more quickly and efficiently. When users log into Tam2000, a computer shuttles the accounts to one of the two machines depending on the load. This concept is designed to use the two machines to their optimum capacity.

"The goal is that the users won't be able to tell one machine from another," Cato said.

The speed of electronic mail



James Palmer, THE BATTALION

service has not improved because a new file-server machine, TamNFS, has not been implemented,

Kaiser said. The Unix support team plans to name this machine "skinner" after another "X-Files" character. CIS plans to put this machine into service as soon as possible, Kaiser said.

"It just arrived too late for us to be able to put it in before the semester began," Kaiser said.

CIS received an inordinate number of complaints about the previous change from "tamsun" to "tam2000," Cato said.

See **NAMES**, Page 12

'Needs Improvement' Teachers get bad report cards

By REBECCA TORRELLAS
THE BATTALION

Texas public school teachers received a C- for teaching quality in Education Week's state-by-state analysis of U.S. schools in the January 1997 issue.

The report, "Quality Counts," said years of education reform throughout the country have done little to improve the quality of public education in elementary, intermediate and high school levels.

"Basically, we found that public education in this country is riddled with excellence but rife with mediocrity," Ronald Wolk, editor of Education Week, said in a Houston Chronicle article.

None of the states analyzed had an A average overall. West Virginia and Georgia earned B's, and other

states, like California, received D's.

Texas got an A in the area of standards and assessments, a D for failing to fund schools in a fair and equitable manner and a C+ for its adequacy of funding education.

Jean Close Conoley, dean of Texas A&M University's College of Education, said one of the reasons why public schools are getting criticized is because they hire teachers who are either not certified or teach subjects different than their degree of certification.

Conoley said Texas A&M, as well as at other colleges and universities throughout the state, has examples of innovation and high standards in teacher preparation that reflect some of the recommendations made in these reports.

"Our efforts to restructure our teacher education programs have

been recognized regionally and nationally for their innovation in preparing students to teach in today's and tomorrow's schools," Conoley said.

Texas A&M's education program is accredited by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education. Students are required to have a grade-point ratio above the university minimum for entrance into the teacher education program. An even higher GPR is required for the subject areas the students will teach.

Conoley said efforts to improve the system will continue.

"We have a long road ahead to move from rhetoric about the importance of education to action that supports the success of every child," Conoley said. "But we are on that road."

Frat Rush wraps up with bid day

By ERICA ROY
THE BATTALION

Texas A&M spring fraternity rush ended Friday in front of the Systems Building as rushees accepted bids and ran out to join their new fraternity chapters.

Christen Springs, the Interfraternity Council rush chair and a sophomore business major, said 300 Texas A&M men participated in rush and 220 bids were given out.

Almost all of the 220 bids were accepted. Springs said the two-day delay in starting classes did not affect the number of participants.

Eric Vroonland, IFC president and a senior finance major, said this spring's number of rush participants was a little higher than usual.

"We were very pleased with the number of bids accepted," Vroonland said.

Rushees entered through the back of the Systems Building and received their bids. After they signed in with the IFC, they ran out the front of the building where all the fraternities were gathered in a semi-circle around the steps of the building.

Bid-day parties were held that night at the different fraternity houses.

Vroonland said the fraternities this semester were more unified during rush.



Victor Munzi, a member of Phi Delta Theta, jumps into the crowd to congratulate new pledges.

"I think we (IFC) experienced more interfraternalism ... than I have seen in the past," Vroonland said. "You might attribute that to some of the recent bad publicity [of A&M fraternities]. We've all realized we need to work together."

See **RUSH**, Page 12

THE BATTALION INSIDETODAY

REFUGE: The Boys and Girls Club in Bryan gives students an alternative to the street.

Aggielife, Page 3

Toons Page 5
Opinion Page 11
What's Up Page 12

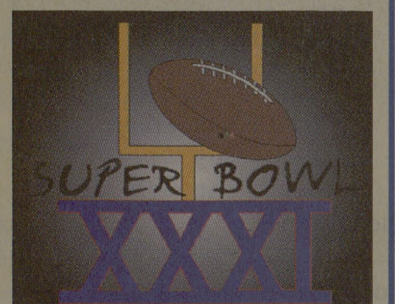
NEW ORLEANS (AP) — The Green Bay Packers finally have a present to go with their past.

The 35-21 Super Bowl victory over the New England Patriots on Sunday hardly brought back memories of Vince Lombardi's grind-it-out champions of the '60s.

Instead, this was a high-powered Pack — doing it with big plays, especially by MVP Desmond Howard — that returned Green Bay to NFL prominence and put the title back in "Titolown, USA."

"I think it's time that the Lombardi Trophy goes home to Lambeau Field, where it belongs," Packers president Robert Harlan said.

See full story, **SPORTS**, PAGE 7



FINAL SCORE
PACKERS 35 PATRIOTS 21