

## Voters head to polls

Seats for state senator and state representative are up for grabs in today's special election.

BY JACKIE VRATIL  
THE BATTALION

Voters in the 5th senatorial district and house district 14 will go to the polls today to vote in a special election for their state senator and representative. When Jim Turner was elected to the U.S. Congress in November, he left a vacancy in the state Senate. Steve Ogden resigned as state representative to pursue the Senate seat, leaving the seat in the House open. Republican Steve Ogden and Democrat Mary Moore are the Senate candidates, and Republi-

cans Richard Smith and Dr. William Roman are the House candidates.

Ruby Freeman, a judge from Precinct 10, said there are 83 precincts within Brazos County and each one has its respective polling place. Freeman helped run early voting booths in the MSC the week before the special election.

"We have had a fairly good turnout," she said. "Quite a few have been students."

Janet Matthews, a registered voter in Brazos County, has followed the special election.

"I think there has been more activity in this election than you would normally see in an election of this kind," she said. "Republicans really want that extra seat, whereas the Democrats do not want to give it up."

Jenny Russell, a freshman general studies major from the Bryan-College Station area, said she only knew about the elections through the

mailouts she received.

"I definitely think student voter turnout will be low," she said, "because students do not pay much attention to these kinds of elections."

Jenny Bellow, a junior political science major, said special elections always produce lower numbers than events such as the presidential election.

"It is a given that there will be low numbers," she said. "It's just like a run-off election or something comparable to that."

Christyn Russell, a junior psychology major, said students may not know much about the election, but the community has an idea of who they want to represent them.

"Because all the candidates are not strangers to the area," she said, "the community has really followed the campaign and the election."

### Polling Locations for Today's Special Election

| Precinct | Polling Place                      | Address                       |
|----------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 8        | South Knoll School                 | 1220 Boswell, CS              |
| 9        | College Station Conference Center  | 1300 George Bush, CS          |
| 10       | Municipal Court Building           | 2611-B Texas Ave S, CS        |
| 11       | Crockett Elementary School         | 401 Elm St., CS               |
| 12       | Manor East Mall                    | Villa Maria @ Texas, Bryan    |
| 13       | Henderson School                   | 801 Matous, Bryan             |
| 20       | Memorial Student Center            | Room 146                      |
| 21       | A&M United Methodist Church        | 471 University Dr, CS         |
| 23       | Johnson School                     | 3800 Oak Hill Dr, Bryan       |
| 24       | College Hills Elementary           | 1101 Williams St, CS          |
| 31       | A&M Consolidated High School       | 701 FM 2818, CS               |
| 32       | Friends Congregational Church      | 2200 Southwood Dr, CS         |
| 33       | Lincoln Center                     | 1000 Eleanor, CS              |
| 34       | College Station City Hall          | 1101 Texas Ave S, CS          |
| 35       | College Station ISD Admin Bldg     | 1812 Welsh St, CS             |
| 36       | Fellowship Freewill Baptist Church | 1228 W. Villa Maria Rd, Bryan |
| 37       | College Heights Assembly of God    | 4100 Old College Rd, Bryan    |
| 39       | Rock Prairie Elementary School     | 3400 Welsh St, CS             |
| 40       | Aldersgate Methodist Church        | 6501 East Bypass, CS          |
| 61       | A&M Presbyterian Church            | 301 Church St, CS             |
| 63       | Brazos Center                      | 3232 Briarcrest Dr, Bryan     |

## Officials restrict Cain Hall computer labs to athletes

BY BRANDON HAUSENFLOCK  
THE BATTALION

Officials of Cain Hall and the Texas A&M Athletic Department have closed the computer lab in the residence hall making it available for athletes only and upsetting the 50 percent of Cain Hall residents who are not athletes.

Cain Hall is owned by the A&M Athletic Department and therefore is considered a separate entity from the other halls on campus.

The computers were installed several years ago and have been accessible by all Cain Hall residents until this semester.

The athletes' increasing demand for the computers caused the Athletic Department to make the 20 computers in the lab exclusive to the athletes.

Wally Groff, Texas A&M athletic director, said the non-athlete residents should

not be bothered by the restrictions.

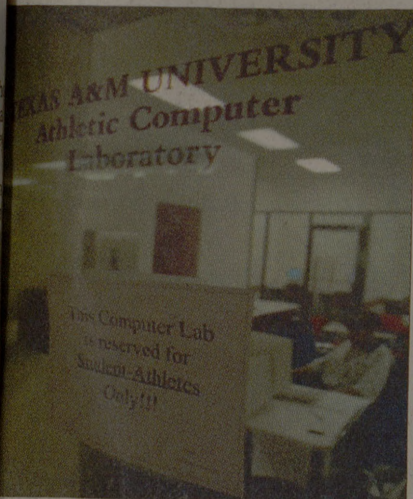
"The computers are [athletes'] computers, not Cain Hall computers," Groff said. "[The lab] was designed to help our athletes ... the lab was never advertised as available to all students. We have simply outgrown it ... And we're sorry, but we didn't have any choice."

The lab, which is furnished with 10 Macintosh and 10 IBM computers, is now manned by two student room monitors. The athletes were given a special logon code and password to use the computers.

The sudden change caused some inconvenience to the non-athlete residents.

Ryan Carpenter, Cain Hall vice president and a sophomore mathematics major, said the change was unexpected.

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Ryan Rogers, THE BATTALION

The computer lab in Cain Hall has been reserved for athletes only.

## Student Senate to decide on health insurance proposal

KEVIN CUMMINGS  
THE BATTALION

Texas A&M students have the option to purchase health insurance from the University, but that could change as early as Fall 1997 if the proposal for a mandatory student health insurance plan is approved by the Student Senate and the University.

The proposal, to be presented to the Student Senate on Feb. 10, includes mandatory accident-only insurance for all A&M students. An estimated 80 percent of students at A&M are insured, but the unprotected minority of the student population worries some.

Dennis Corrington, director of the Department of Recreational Sports, supports mandatory student insurance.

"That unprotected 20 percent is a big risk," he said. "We hate to see students end up spending their life savings on medical care when that money was targeted for a college education."

This coverage plan would be financed by additional student fees. Cost for this student insurance would be considerably less expensive than usual because of what equates to a huge group discount. Corrington said the expected fee should be quite reasonable for students.

"If every student in the system is covered, that

would decrease the cost for everybody," he said. "It's hard to say before a bid is made, but the fee could be as low as \$5."

Foreign exchange students are the only students currently required to have comprehensive health care insurance, because they are not eligible for indigent care in the United States. Optional insurance is available to all other A&M students at a lower rate.

In the process of forming the current policy, several different companies and prices were reviewed by the University, and an optional student policy was formed with Beachstreet, a nationwide insurance network. Under the A&M endorsed policy, students are eligible to receive an affordable insurance rate.

Corrington is working to make affordable health coverage available to students.

"Many students are coming off their parents' medical insurance and don't have insurance of their own," he said. "This plan is really a lot cheaper for parents buying insurance for their kids."

The current plan offers a maximum of \$50,000 of coverage with a \$100-per-year deductible, and pays 80 percent of reasonable customary charges. An optional accident-only plan is also available as a supplement to this coverage for an additional \$31.50 per year.



Ryan Rogers, THE BATTALION

### Little Details

Josh Philipps, a freshman electrical engineering major, Jason Lozano, a freshman general studies major, August Nehring, a freshman computer science major, and John Johnson, a sophomore electrical engineering major, fold a flag in front of the Academic Building Monday afternoon.

## Groups claim college rankings are misleading, inaccurate

BY MARISSA ALANIS  
THE BATTALION

A nationwide college movement is evolving to protest the annual university rankings compiled by U.S. News and World Report magazine.

U.S. News and World Report gathers statistical data from universities and computes the information into a list of rankings for its survey.

The magazine has faced intense criticism this year from officials of universities all over the country who say the methods used to calculate the rankings are misleading and inaccurate.

In an attempt to make U.S. News and World Report eliminate its composite rankings from its survey, the Forget U.S. News Coalition (FUNG) was established last fall at Stanford University.

Nick Thompson, a coordinator of FUNG, said two types of resolutions can be implemented by universities.

Institutions can stop submitting data to the magazine or condemn the rankings in a public letter from a university official.

Thompson, a senior environmental economics and political science major at Stanford, said the representatives from U.S. News and World Report were unresponsive when he met with them to discuss the issue a few weeks ago.

"We're not going to be able to impact them with persuasion," Thompson said.

So far, the coalition has received support from over 70 universities across the country including Yale University, which was ranked the number one school by the survey.

Rice University and Texas A&M, which were sixteenth and forty-eighth respectively, were the only institutions from Texas to be ranked in the top 50.

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## Professional school hopefuls face long application process

BY JACKIE VRATIL  
THE BATTALION

For many students, spring semester starts the year-round process of applying to professional schools at Texas A&M and across the nation.

Professional schools include, among others, medical schools, law schools and dental schools.

The process of applying for a professional school starts with an entrance exam, includes applicant interviews and ends with an acceptance or rejection letter. Law school is the only professional school where interviewing is not part of the process.

Mark Gamber, a senior biomedical science major, said grade consistency is a key factor in obtaining an interview for medical school.

"Being consistent every semester with grades has been the hardest part of getting this far," he said. "You really cannot have a bad semester."

Elizabeth Neugart, a senior biomedical science major, has been through the entire process of applying for professional school said working daily for high grades was the most challenging part of the procedure.

"You never take a semester off," she said, "even when everybody around you is wondering why you are putting so much effort into your grades."

Michael Perez, a senior political science major, said being unique can also help ensure acceptance. Perez said working closely with a professor on campus will prove to be beneficial.

"I'm doing an independent study with a professor on campus," he said. "Law school requires writing in great detail, and this independent study will help."

Dr. Anne Blum, coordinator of the Office of Professional School Advising, said competition is growing. "The competition is steep," she said. "It is amazing."

Blum attributes the competition to the growing number of applicants. The number of students contacting her office has increased by 62 percent since the 1993-1994 school year, she said.

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