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Run-off candidates, student leaders chosen

By ERICA ROY
THE BATTALION

Run-off candidates and newly elected student leaders were announced in front of the Lawrence Sullivan Ross statue on March 27 as 8,911 Texas A&M students voted. The run-off elections will be held April 3 and 4.

Curtis Childers, a junior agricultural development major, and Eliot Kerlin, a senior finance major, are the two candidates in the student body president run-off election. Kerlin said being elected to the run-off position was an overwhelming honor.

"I told the staff at the beginning, if we were to make it this far it would be by hard work, planning and putting out," Kerlin said. "And the reason we made it this far is because God is smiling on our efforts. God has a big smiley face today."

Childers plans to use more students

in his run-off campaign than in his original campaign.

"I'm proud," he said. "We had a strong staff that worked hard because they believed in something. I'm humbled, but at the same time I'm proud."

"It's just been an exciting 10 days. I'm looking forward to the next two."

Junior yell leaders Brandon Meche, a junior marketing major, and Tim Duffy, a junior marketing major, were reelected as senior yell leaders. Kyle Sparkman, a junior biomedical science major, will be the third senior yell leader.

Brandon Neff, a sophomore business administration major, was elected by a majority to the junior yell leader position. There will be a run-off for the position of the second junior yell leader between Sam Bluntzer, a sophomore accounting major; Chad Henke, a sophomore biomedical science major; Robert Kimmel, a

sophomore mechanical engineering major; and Gregg Nichols, a sophomore agricultural business major.

Meche was pleased to be reelected as a yell leader.

"It's been an honor enough having it for one year," Meche said.

"It's a dream come true to represent the best school in the world for two years. I'm shaking."

Neff said when he came to A&M he did not know any of the traditions, but he saw students who worked hard for what they wanted and that motivated him to give back to A&M.

"I just can't believe I'm standing here after winning an election," Neff said. "It's the best thing that's ever happened to me by far."

There will be a run-off for Resident Hall Association president between Mike Hoy, a sophomore mechanical engineering

major, and Eric Williams, a junior biomedical science major.

Class of '98 president will be Nolan Barkhouse, an international studies major. Kendall Kelly, a psychology major, was elected Class of '99 president and Jeremy Poland, a business administration major, was elected class of '00 president.

Class of '97 graduates will be Jimbo Cross, an agricultural development major, Christina Horz, a marketing major and Matt Mayfield, an animal science major.

Carl Baggett, student body president and a senior accounting major, said all of the candidates should be congratulated for the work they put into their campaigns.

"I commend everyone who took a chance to make a difference at Texas A&M," Baggett said.

"Regardless of the outcome tonight, they all worked hard and they all made a difference to A&M."

Election Results

- Student Body President (run-off)**
Curtis Childers
Eliot Kerlin
- Senior Yell Leader**
Kyle Sparkman
Brandon Meche
Tim Duffy
- Junior Yell Leader**
Brandon Neff
- Run-off between:**
Sam Bluntzer
Gregg Nichols
Robert Kimmel
Chad Henke



Quackers Lauren Hickey, daughter of Senior Associate Athletic Director Lynn Hickey and Assistant Baseball Coach Bill Hickey, and Megan Allison, enjoy an afternoon with Lucky and Ducky at the track and field complex Saturday.

Women's Week

Activities to celebrate women's achievements

By BENJAMIN CHENG
THE BATTALION

Celebrating women and their accomplishments will be the focus of Women's Week '97 at Texas A&M, which begins today and runs through the end of the week.

The theme for this year is "Images of Women: Visions and Voices." The week kicks off with an opening ceremony at the Memorial Student Center Flagroom beginning at 1 p.m.

Patricia Russell-McCloud, national president of Links Inc., will deliver the keynote address at an awards presentation for Women's Week today at 5 p.m. in 226 MSC.

Jane Schneider, Women's Week committee chair and the assistant vice president for administration, said the week will focus on the diversity of women.

"Women are diverse and we all have different opinions," Schneider said. "That's all right."

The topics for the workshops and lectures range from women executives to women's health care. A pan-

el discussion on cross-cultural understanding will be held at 11:30 a.m. Thursday in 501 Rudder Tower.

A photo and art exhibit will be on display beginning Monday at noon in the MSC Flagroom.

Nancy Lugo, who acquired the artwork for the exhibit and is program coordinator of race and ethnic studies, said the photo exhibit is intended to show the roles women perform.

"The photos show women in different roles as mothers, wives and students," Lugo said. "It's not famous women in the photos. It's 'Jane Doe.'"

The week will conclude with a poetry, dance and song presentation by MSC Town Hall at Rumours Coffeehouse Friday at 7 p.m.

Schneider hopes women will learn more about each other and appreciate the differences among each other. The image of a successful woman is different for everybody, she said.

"As long as you're happy with yourself, you're a success," Schneider said.

"Women are diverse and we all have different opinions. That's all right."

Jane Schneider
Women's Week
committee chair

A&M conducts research on fetal alcohol syndrome

Researchers are investigating the possibility that nicotine lowers the blood alcohol concentration.

By JOEY JEANETTE SCHLUETER
THE BATTALION

The Texas A&M College of Medicine is helping the fight against fetal alcohol syndrome with a study on the effects of alcohol and nicotine on fetal brain development.

The study found that blood alcohol concentration in rat pups is reduced by the presence of nicotine, although the combination is still fatal.

Dr. James West, head of the Department of Human Anatomy and Medical Neurobiology, said his lab has made a significant breakthrough with its findings.

The study was conducted in the

Alcohol and Brain Research Laboratory, which West supervises.

"We wanted to find out what alcohol does to the brain," West said. "This disease (fetal alcohol syndrome) is different than others, such as Parkinson's disease. We know what causes it — alcohol."

Dr. Wei-Jung A. Chen, an assistant research scientist, and Scott E. Parnell, a lab assistant and junior zoology major, assisted West with the research.

Chen said the main theme of the experiment is polydrug use — the use of several drugs at once — and the potential to cause fetal alcohol syndrome.

"The rationale for choosing nicotine and alcohol is because many people smoke and drink at the same time, including some pregnant women," Chen said.

Although the findings show that nicotine may reduce the blood alcohol concentration in rats, Chen emphasized that the research showed the combination of the two proved more fatal than either drug alone or no drugs at all.

"The results regarding nicotine's action in lowering the BAC are still very preliminary and it requires further investigations, especially in clinical settings," Chen said.

The experiment, conducted on rats 4- to 9-days old, revealed that the combination of alcohol and nicotine creates a higher death rate in baby rats than a single drug or no drugs.

Parnell said, at this stage, the brain in rats correlates with the third trimester stage for humans, the stage when the brain is most vulnerable to alcohol. The nicotine findings have prompted further research, he said.

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Easter messages focus on cult suicide

RANCHO SANTA FE, Calif. (AP) — As dawn peeked through the clouds, 300 Easter worshippers gathered in a high school stadium and praised God as the only keeper of heaven's gate.

The group gathered near the site where 39 Heaven's Gate cult members committed suicide last week, seeking redemption in a spaceship trailing the Hale-Bopp comet.

"Jesus Christ is the gate, he's the only way. There's no UFO waiting behind a comet," Pastor Bob Botsford told his non-denominational flock, wearing straw Easter hats while shivering in the early morning chill.

His sermon was titled "The Key to Heaven's Gate." In it, he warned the entrance was narrow, "only one person can pass through at a time. You can't get in because you belong to some group."

Meanwhile, CNN and Time magazine reported that cult members killed themselves because leader Marshall Herff Applewhite convinced them he was dying of cancer. Newsweek reported in its April 7 issue that Applewhite may have only had six months to live, and that he told his followers his body was "disintegrating."

Computer disks sent to the former cult member identified in news reports as Rio D'Angelo contain a message from an unidentified female cult member: "Once he is gone ... there is nothing left here on the face of the Earth for me ... no reason to stay a moment longer." The disks were reviewed by CNN and Time.

San Diego mass suicide

The 39 members of the Heaven's Gate cult apparently died in shifts over two or more days — 15, then 15 more and then the final nine. They mixed barbiturates and alcohol, then lay down to die in their \$1.6 million rented mansion.

Who they were ...

- A quasi-religious group that designed Internet sites for businesses. Members worked together more than 20 years and answered to "Father John."
- Members had buzz-cut hair and wore collarless black shirts.

They believed ...

- They were sent to Earth as angels and met in "middle America."
- It was time to "shed their containers," to rendezvous with a UFO traveling behind the Hale-Bopp comet.

How many and where they were ...

- Many of the 21 bodies found in the second floor bedrooms were on bunk beds.
- The first floor included computer rooms, where the cult ran its Web site business. Eighteen people died there.
- Pool
- Colina Norte mansion (9,200 sq. ft.)

With all of the autopsies completed, the coroner said that Applewhite, 65, did not suffer from terminal cancer.

"Marshall Applewhite has no gross physical evidence and no visual evidence of cancer in his liver or any other organs," Dr. Brian Blackburn told The Associated Press.

Also Sunday, former cult member Nick Cooke told interviewers he wished he had joined his wife, Suzanne Sylvia Cooke, in committing suicide. He belonged to the cult "off and on" for 23 years and left three years ago.

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McVeigh trial to begin with jury selection

DENVER (AP) — Nearly two years after the bombing that destroyed the federal building in Oklahoma City, jury selection begins today to pick a panel of 18 people from a pool of about 400.

Lawyers expect jury selection to take about two weeks.

"I think it will be quite involved," defense attorney Stephen Jones told The Associated Press. He refused to elaborate, citing a federal judge's gag order.

On Sunday, former FBI deputy

director Weldon Kennedy played down concerns that the government's case is weak and said he was not concerned about allegations that the FBI's lab had mishandled some evidence.

"In fact, I'm anxious for the trial to begin so the actual facts in this case can be brought out," he said on NBC's *Meet the Press*.

Appearing on the same program, Oklahoma Gov. Frank Keating said the Oklahoma County district attorney would monitor the case to

determine whether Timothy McVeigh later could face murder charges in state court.

"I would expect the state of Oklahoma very definitely would be interested in doing that," he said.

Prospective jurors were expected to be questioned individually before U.S. District Judge Richard Matsch and attorneys for both sides.

After the field is reduced to 64 people who are death-qualified — meaning they have agreed to con-

sider the death penalty as a punishment — each side may dismiss 20 without giving a reason.

Finally, after 12 jurors have been selected, six alternates will be chosen, with each side allowed to dismiss three candidates without cause.

Jones will focus on finding out if the jury pool has been "poisoned" by recent stories that McVeigh had confessed to the bombing, and failed a lie-detector test about co-conspirators.

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