THE BATTALION LIFESTYLES

## Roosevelt • Keller • Matlin

# **Students in wheelchairs** not constrained in activities

"We have developed an

should not be afraid."

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overly sensitive society. I am

**KARA WILSON** 

SENIOR AGRICULTURAL JOURNALISM MAJOR

in a wheelchair and people

#### **By MARIUM MOHIUDDIN** Staff writer

ranklin Delano Roosevelt was elected president d for four terms. He led Americans through the dark days of The Great Depression and World War II. He created many aspects of government still recognized today as humane, good and right --- and he did it all from a wheelchair.

Russell Rawlings, a junior computer engineering major, said he was born with Erb's Palsy, a nueral disease that confined him to a wheelchair.

"I have never found my wheelchair to be a hindrance," Rawling said. "People know me for me, and on a whole, people are aware of

students with disabilities. No one treats me differently.' Rawlings said people should

use The Golden Rule when interacting with others. "One thing I want students to

know is to treat each other with respect," Rawling said. "Do not treat people differently. I consider myself to be an ordinary Ag."

At the age of seven, Kara Wilson, a senior agricultural journalism major, came down with

Lyme Disease. At the age of nine, she needed a wheelchair for mobility.

Wilson said she does not like receiving special treatment because of her disability.

"I am the chair of five organizations such as MSC Executive Lecture Series and Vice President of Class of '98" Wilson said. "I do not want to be separate. We have developed into an overly sensitive society. I am in a wheelchair and people should not be afraid. I do not see myself in a wheelchair. I see myself educating thousands of people."

Wilson is from Oregon where her parents own a 17,000 acre ranch. Horses have always been an important part of her life.

PRINCETON

REVIEW

"I have ridden with the Parson's Mounted Cavalry,

and I run barrels," Wilson said. "[Riding horses] has helped me overcome the wheelchair.

Her disability is what brought Wilson to Texas A&M University

"In 1992 I came to A&M for hyperbaric oxygen treatment," Wilson said. "For three months I was at A&M and I got to know Dr. Koldus and student leaders. I fell in love with Aggies.

Dick Williams, the Associate Director for Facilities at A&M, said A&M has always been in the fore front of accommodations for students with disabilities

There are priorities A&M sets for students with disabilities," Williams said. "[These priorities are] to keep the road to their success clear and to make sure all pub-

lic buildings are accessible.

The Americans with Disabilities Act was passed in 1990 and requiring public buildings to acpersons with commodate disabilities.

"A&M handled these issues before the Americans with Disabilities Act," Williams said. "It is difficult for us to equip all the buildings. It would cost us millions of dollars to fix every building. We do try to accommodate all people. If a building does not

have access, then we try to move the class so the student can attend.

Wilson said the only building she encounters problems with is the Military Science Building.

"I have one class in the Military Science Building, and I have to be carried in," Wilson said. "A&M stu-dents are great about that. It does not make me feel uncomfortable.

Rawlings said he has found A&M to be one of the best campuses in Texas for students with disabilities

'I chose A&M because it has the best facilities and it is the easiest in getting around," Rawling said. "I did have difficulty getting into the Psychology Building. On the first day of class, I had to have someone go get a key for a little lift so I could enter the building. But

### **By STEPHEN WELLS** Staff writer

"n the Air Force, a crash is an "uncontrolled flight into the ground." A wild keg party held in a dorm L room is recorded for posterity on an "incident report." In our culture, the hearing impaired are "disabled." None of these labels accurately describe what

One of the myths about being hearing impaired is the classification means to the layperson "deaf." Some people who are hearing impaired experience only

Anne Reber, Interim Coordinator for the Service for Students with Disabilities, said

functional hearing who are classified as hearing impaired. It's kind of a misnomer.'

Scott Getten, a junior mechanical engineering major, described his type of hearing loss.

I'm hearing impaired toward the high-pitched noises, but I can hear low-end noises," Getten said. "I can get along without a hearing aid.'

Sometimes, the stereotypes others impose when they see a hearing aid can prove to be a nuisance to those wearing them.

People look at a hearing aid, and they make an automatic assumption of what you're like, what you can do," Getten said

Jenny Maki, Class of '96, said that sometimes when people try to help too hard it can become a problem. Reading lips is made more difficult when the lip movements are exaggerated.

Never assume that just because a person is hear-

ing impaired we know sign language," Makis never over-enunciate your words because used to it and it makes you harder to under The routines hearing impaired studentsgo

Beethoven • Homer • Char

Hearing impaired: the

misunderstood classificati

"Because I just can't hear all

of what anybody's telling me,

I have to think more. I think

that translates to other things

**JENNY MAKI** 

CLASS OF '96

like friendships."

are not that different from a person who car 'When you are born with a disability liked it's just a part of life," Reber said. "It's just like

Friday • October 17, Frida

glasses is a part of my life.' Getten said he is not embarrassed to asksom to repeat themself.

'I do miss some things said sometimes,' said. "But I can always ask them to repeat the Oa if I want to know what they said."

Maki said she does not mind asking oth help if she needs it.

'If I need to use the pho just walk up to somebody 'Hi, I'm hearing impaired help me make a call?," "And I can say 99% of they'll help me out. I thin shows how enlightened students are.'

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More

Though she is not afraid for help, Maki said studen go out of their way to dothin HEA her when she does not as ing more harm than good Continue

"I want to be treated like everybody else, want any pity," Maki said. "I'm really turnedoff ple who try to pity me."

Maki explained why she thinks college stude more open-minded to the hearing impaired them fre 'When you get to college, the cliques from

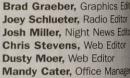
nd Ma school are all gone," Maki said. "You realizeitsa unctio new world and many people are alone forth "I do time in their lives, so they open up to new thin thing," Reber described how hearing impaired to for my or my o

use other cues besides language to help them municate with others

PLEASE SEE HEARING ON

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News: The Battalion news department is managed by students at Texas A&M University in the Dware Publications, a unit of the Department of Journalism. News offices are in 013 Reed McDonald Building phone: 845-3313; Fax: 845-2647; E-mail: Batt@tamvm1.tamu.edu; Website: http://bat-webtamu.ski Advertising: Publication of advertising does not imply sponsorship or endorsement by The Batta offices are in 015 Reed McDonald, and office hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday R Subscriptions: A part of the Student Services Fee entitles each Texas A&M student to pick up a The Battalion. Mail subscriptions are \$60 per school year, \$30 for the fall or spring semester and \$ summer. To charge by Visa, MasterCard, Discover, or American Express, call 845-2611. THE BATTALION (ISSN #1055-4726) is published daily, Monday through Friday during the fall spring set Monday through Thursday during the summer session (except University holidays and exam pe A&M University. Second class postage paid at College Station, TX 77840. Postmaster: Send add The Battalion, 015 Reed McDonald Building, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX 77843-111

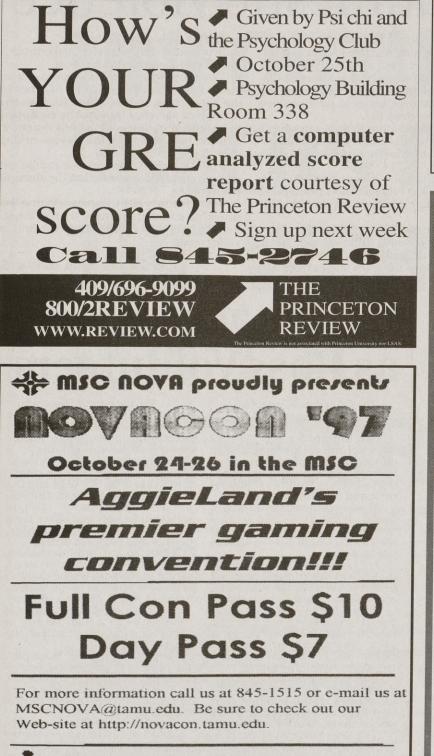
Silver Creek Aggie Spring Break 1998 Ski Package, March 14-18 4 Nights at Silvercreek Colorado \$449.00 Package Includes:

is taking place. small loss in hearing.

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some cases an exaggeration.

the label "hearing impaired" is in "There are some people who are classified as legally blind but still have some functional vision," Reber said. "Just the same, there are some people who still have



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