

## BRIEFS

### Texas A&M to host graduate conference

The Program in Foreign Policy Decision Making is sponsoring the second Regional Graduate Student Conference today in 2115 Academic Building-West. The conference is on decision making of the president of the United States and the use of military force. The conference is co-sponsored by the James Baker Institute at Rice University and supported by the Department of Political Science at A&M. Graduate students from A&M, Rice, University of North Texas, University of Colorado, University of Texas and University of Rochester will present their research. The conference is open to the public.

### Students asked to recycle phone books

The Environmental Issues committee of the Student Government Association is asking Texas A&M students to bring old phone books for recycling to Rudder Fountain today from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. The committee also is encouraging students to pledge to recycle through the Internet at <http://www.texasrecyclesday.org>.

### RHA selected as Top Ten Program

The Residence Hall Association (RHA) of Texas A&M University was selected as a "Top Ten Program" at the Southwest Affiliate of College and University Residence Halls (SWACURH) conference last weekend. Peter Schulte, RHA vice president of administration and a sophomore meteorology major, said Texas A&M's program "Bringing RHA into the 21st century" focused on the RHA Web site at <http://reslife.tamu.edu/rha/> and its use of e-mail to link A&M members with members of other schools across the nation. Texas A&M RHA presented its program to colleges and universities from Texas, Arkansas, Louisiana and Oklahoma.

### Commissioner wins education award

The Texas A&M annual Administrative Leadership Institute presented Texas Commissioner of Education Mike Moses with the Golden Deeds of Education Award Wednesday. The award recognizes educators who have improved the education system and lives of Texas public school students.

### A&M-UT tickets go on sale Monday

Due to the Thanksgiving holidays, tickets to the Texas A&M-University of Texas football game will go on sale next week. Tickets will be available Nov. 17 for seniors and graduate students, Nov. 18 for juniors, Nov. 19 for sophomores and Nov. 20 for freshmen.

## INSIDE lifestyles

Brecht's "Good Woman of Setzuan" presented by Department of Theater Arts.

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## sports

The Texas A&M Soccer Team hosts SMU in round one of the NCAA Tournament.

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## opinion

Future of NEA could be secured by the use of private donations.

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## online

<http://battalion.tamu.edu> look up with state and national news through The Wire, AP's 24-hour online news service.

# Rudder to host Diversity Conference

By COLLEEN KAVANAGH  
Staff writer

The 9th annual Texas Higher Education Drive In For Diversity Conference is today from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. in Rudder Tower. The conference is a call to action for students and higher education professionals to increase their knowledge and awareness of current issues unique to college campuses. Sandra Mitchell, a 1997 conference member and administrative assistant in the Department of Residence Life, said the conference tar-

gets a variety of diversity issues. "Many people hear about the conference and assume it is just about ethnic issues," she said. "The issues this year are inclusive, and topics include gender, sexual orientation and disabilities in addition to race issues." Dr. Maura Cullen, a full-time educational consultant and instructional speaker, is the keynote speaker. Cullen said she wants people to treat each other with respect, even if their differences make them uncomfortable. "The basis of my reflections will

be creating a just community and not just a community," she said. Cullen said the lessons people learned growing up have introduced the ideas of being fair and just, and she wants to expand people's comfort zones. "My take-away message is that we are all different, but unfortunately, not all differences are created equal," she said. Mitchell said Cullen has worked with residence life issues for six years. Mitchell, a member of Residence Life since the conference began nine years ago, said the confer-

ence used to deal with campus life only, but in the last nine years it has expanded to include other aspects of university life. "The conference has grown to include the educational components of residence living," she said. "A lot of the sessions are interactive and allow people to express themselves. Hopefully, people at the conference will learn more about other people's culture and why they choose to act or believe the way they do." Students who want to attend the conference can register beginning

at 8 a.m. today for \$10. Becky Pettit, conference chair and coordinator of diversity education for Residence Life, said faculty from other universities attend to learn ways to make schools more tolerant of differences. "The interesting thing about the other schools is that every year they send a representative," she said. "Even though someone at their school has already been to the conference, they consistently have someone getting information and networking with faculty from A&M and other universities."

## Poker face



Phil Crowell, an area police officer, plays video poker as he passes time at the Scrub Pub Thursday afternoon.

RONY ANGKRIWAN/THE BATTALION

# RHA considers new pet policy

By AMANDA SMITH  
Staff writer

The Residence Hall Association (RHA) supported a proposal Nov. 13 for a one-semester trial policy permitting hall directors to keep animals in their rooms during the spring 1998 semester. Adam Collett, a graduate hall director and an education administration graduate student, supported the pilot program. He said that RHA's support for the program is a positive step for the graduate students who want companionship.

"The nature of being a graduate student is that we are more likely to come from further away (from home)," Collett said. "We don't have the option of having a roommate unless we have a spouse (living with us)." Roy Erickson, RHA financial development director and a freshman business administration major, said that he anticipates possible problems with the pilot program, including allergic reactions and flea and sanitation problems. David Rickerson, RHA facilities and

operations director and a sophomore computer engineering major, sponsored the pilot pet proposal. He said that the proposal must now win the approval of

begin housing pets in their rooms on a trial basis beginning on Jan. 1, 1998. During the trial semester, three meetings would be held to evaluate the pilot program.

Lindsay Thompson, a RHA delegate from Spence Hall and a sophomore general studies major, said that the pilot program will put keeping pets in residence halls in the context of the Texas A&M environment.

"It (keeping pets in residence halls) has been successful at some universities and not at other universities," Thompson said. "If they are going to try it for a semester, then I do not think that it will be a problem. We do not know until we give the program a try."

The RHA Crime Stoppers Committee and Moshier Hall will sponsor Safety Week next Monday through Thursday to promote safety among students living on campus.

Kara Wilson, a member of RHA Crime Stoppers and a senior agricultural journalism major, said that Safety Week includes speakers and activities designed to inform Texas A&M students of safety issues.



the staff council. "This was essentially a pat on the back from RHA," Rickerson said. "The proposal has to go through staff council." If the staff council supports the pilot program, residence hall directors could

PLEASE SEE POLICY ON PAGE 5.

# A&M students prepare for end of 'Shack-a-thon'

Project to raise local awareness of substandard housing to wrap up with ceremony tonight

By RACHEL DAWLEY  
Staff writer



Senior business major Andre Cruz helps build a shack Tuesday as part of the Habitat for Humanity Shack-a-thon.

ROBERT MCKAY/THE BATTALION

Texas A&M students braved rain and cold weather this week to promote Habitat for Humanity International with "Shack-a-thon." Participants constructed "Shack City" Wednesday night at Rudder Fountain and have lived in the shacks for the last two days. Shack-a-thon will end this evening with a ceremony and a tear down of the shacks. Campus groups, including class councils, Freshman Leaders in Progress (E.L.I.P.) and Aggie Leaders of Tomorrow (A.L.O.T.) bought shacks to pro-

vide Habitat for Humanity. Chris Akin, a senior environmental science major and a member of Alpha Phi Omega, said Shack-a-thon makes him thankful for what he has in life. "You realize that there is a lot you take for granted, simple things like warmth, heating, housing and a roof," Akin said. "We often don't think how lucky we are." Akin, who spent three nights at Shack City, said the Shack-a-thon increased awareness of Habitat and substandard housing in the area. "Habitat is a great organization," Akin said. "It is a

great feeling to go out to an empty lot and build a house over a period of weeks. A&M students walking by ask questions about Habitat and the Shack-a-thon." Representatives from organizations bought shacks through a bidding process for spots. Each group spent about \$200 dollars to buy a shack. Robert Kimmel, a junior mechanical engineering major and a Southside senator, said the Shack-a-thon was a good excuse to get together as a group and camp out, as well as to support the Habitat group. "It is important for campus

groups to show their support for other organizations," he said. "The funds raised by this go to a super organization. A couple of us will curl up in the cold and get a little wet to support their work in building homes." Shack City organizers offered participants games like "spin the bottle" and "Aggieopoly," as well as bands and a talent show. The shacks varied in appearance, but all were built by organization members. Some shacks were made from wood and nails while others were constructed with cardboard and tape. "It is important for campus

PLEASE SEE SHACK ON PAGE 5.

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