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TOMORROW

# RHA visiting hours proposal put on hold

By AMANDA SMITH  
Staff writer

The Residence Hall Association (RHA) voted last night to postpone a resolution to extend visiting hours in residence halls on campus.

The resolution said the Residence Hall Association supports visitation hours be extended

from 9 a.m. to 2 a.m. daily in all residence halls on campus. An addendum to the resolution supports the right of each hall to vote for complete 24-hour visitation or for 24-hour visitation on weekends only.

RHA expects to vote on the resolution at the next meeting, March 25.

Rachelle Taylor, hall director of FHK, said extended visitation provides greater freedom to residents

in co-ed halls.

"(Extended visitation) is a wonderful opportunity for residents to make good decisions while enjoying the freedom and responsibility of being an adult," Taylor said. "But I think we would be providing a disservice to our halls if we did not provide options, which includes having some halls without 24-hour visitation."

Michael Haughey, RHA vice

president for programs and a junior mechanical engineering major, said approving the resolution provides an opportunity for residents.

"This has good potential to be looked at by Residence Life because they are looking at making changes," Haughey said.

Rick Turnbough, an area coordinator for the Department of Residence Life, said extended visitation

in co-ed halls has had benefits.

"We have had much fewer discipline problems with extended visitation," Turnbough said, "but I think that the administration is less likely to pass 24-hour visitation all week compared to extended visitation only on the weekends."

Taylor said having 24-hour visitation only on weekends is more confusing to residents.

"It's too confusing to have the hours change from weekday nights to weekend nights," said Taylor. "One recommendation that I would make is that each resident take responsibility for abiding by the visitation and overnight guest or cohabitation and escort guidelines (because) 24-hour visitation ultimately impacts the roommate and the hall community."

## Bringing on the weather



MIKE FUENTES/THE BATTALION

Heiman, a professor of environmental physics in the department of soil and crop sciences, sets up equipment on West Campus Wednesday afternoon for an experiment which will soon measure the carbon flux from the atmosphere in a rice field in El Campo.

## TV is king in recent state primaries

AUSTIN (AP) — Looking at the results of the primaries, one political consultant needed only two words to sum up the secret to success in modern Texas campaigns. "TV rules," he said.

Indeed, candidates who could afford television commercials did just fine.

Those who couldn't, didn't.

In the three most vigorously contested primary races Tuesday, candidates who were on TV either emerged with nominations or advanced to a runoff election.

Republican attorney general candidates Barry Williamson and John Cornyn spent the money to get on television during the campaign's final weeks. A third hopeful, former state GOP chair Tom Pauken, did not.

Williamson and Cornyn will meet in the April 14 runoff.

Republican land commissioner candidate David Dewhurst was a political newcomer, making his first bid for office with an advertising budget of well over \$1 million. State Senator Jerry Patterson, a veteran of the political wars, lacked the cash for a video assault.

Dewhurst is the nominee. And in the GOP race for Railroad Commission, Tony Garza hit the airwaves with a

commercial that gave lots of face time to Governor George W. Bush, who had appointed Garza secretary of state.

Garza, who had failed in a previous bid for the GOP attorney general nomination, faced Steve Stockman. Stockman is a former East Texas congressman who had unseated 21-term Democrat Jack Brooks just four years ago. He was viewed as having grassroots support but little money, and he was not on TV.

Garza won. "This is not a complicated business. Everybody who won outright or made the runoff ran TV," said Mark Sanders, a GOP consultant.

"If you don't have a million dollars, don't even show up at the table," he said.

The primaries again showed the truth in the old adage of money being the mother's milk of politics, said Bill Miller, an Austin consultant who works for Democrats and Republicans.

"Obviously, if you're doing TV, you've got more money than your opponent," Miller said. He said the ideal combination is sufficient money for an air campaign combined with strong organizing efforts among the ground troops.

## A new finish on an old tradition

natural finish on Aggie Ring allows for better construction

By KELLY HACKWORTH  
Staff writer

A new finish is available on the Aggie ring for the first time since 1976.

Called natural finish, this ring is the same as the other two types of rings, rose and gold. It is also available in both 10 and 14-carat and has the same warranty.

Unlike rose and dark, the natural finish does go through any finishing processes. The ring is raw gold and has the same design as the other rings.

The ring was available for ordering beginning in January and the first order containing natural finish rings arrives April 16.

Porter Garner, associate executive director of the Association of Former Students, said the natural finish rings have a smooth finish.

With the natural finish we get a consistent,

all gold finish," he said.

Carolyn Swanzy, Aggie ring program director, said that the introduction of the one-piece ring was the determining factor in adding a



"Since the top is soldered on, it can come loose and crack causing discoloration."

CAROLYN SWANZY  
AGGIE RING PROGRAM DIRECTOR

new type of ring.

Balfour, the company which manufactures

the rings, merged with Artcarver in Austin and is now a division of Commemorative Brands Inc. This company's manufacturing process called for the one-piece rings. All Aggie rings now will be one-piece.

The rings in the past have been two-piece with the base or the top of the ring soldered to the sides or the shanks. This two-piece ring required a finish in order to protect the construction of the ring, Swanzy said.

"Since the top is soldered on, it can come loose and crack, causing discoloration," she said.

Jessica Beezley, a senior human resource management major, said that she ordered the natural finish because it looked better to her.

"It looks more like gold and isn't as yellow as the rose finish," she said. "It's shinier than the rose finish but pretty because it doesn't have the yellow color."

## Binge drinking poses risks to spring breakers

By KELLY HACKWORTH  
Staff writer

As Spring Break approaches, so does the possibility of binge drinking among college students.

Helen Gutierrez, campus-wide coordinator of alcohol education, said binge drinking can be defined as five or more drinks within a 24-hour period for males and four drinks for females.

The drinks are one half-ounce of pure alcohol, one 12-ounce beer, four ounces of wine or one and one half ounces of a mixed drink.

According to an October 1994 Harvard College Alcohol Study, the most recent available, 42.9% of Texas A&M students binged when they drank, compared to 44.4% at large public colleges nationwide and 39.9% at all colleges surveyed. Another study will be conducted this spring.

Alcohol and drug education programs under the Department of Student Life has a first year student alcohol education program.

Cynthia Hernandez, program coordinator, said the purpose of the program is to change the student's perception of alcohol before they reach college and to define binge drinking.

"We're trying to be proactive in our education," she said. "We strive to give students a stronger base for themselves to stand on."

Hernandez said the program speaks at freshman orientations

and camp programs and focuses on the negative affects of alcohol and the impact it can have on grades, work and staying in school.

Students should be careful this Spring Break, Hernandez said.

"Watch out for each other and set and know your own limits," she said.

Dr. Alicia Marshall, an assistant professor in the Department of Speech Communication in health communication, conducted a survey at another college campus on binge drinking.

The name will not be revealed for confidentiality sake, she said. The study looked at the relationship between student's social networks and the perceptions of risk and susceptibility and how they relate to drinking in excess, she said.

"There was a strong relationship (with drinking) to the extent of how students talk to one another about the consequences of drinking in excess, but we cannot attribute causality," she said. "We need to make sure there is education taking place so the students can tell one another what to do."

Students should really think about why they have that need," she said. "They should consider the repercussions of binge drinking including unwanted pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases and hangovers."

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## Iran ordered to pay damages

WASHINGTON (AP) — A federal judge ordered Iran to pay \$247.5 million in damages to the family of an American woman killed in a suicide bombing in Gaza in 1995. "The court is seeking to deter further terrorist actions," said District Court Judge Royce Lamberth.

The ruling Wednesday was the first under a new law allowing Americans to sue nations believed to sponsor terrorism for damages caused by such attacks. While the victim's family is unlikely to collect the damage award any time soon, the ruling could complicate tentative efforts to improve relations between the United States and Iran.

"Terrorists and the countries which sponsor them should know that we will continue to increase the price to be paid for acts of terrorism," declared Rep. Jim Saxton, R-N.J., who heads the House Task Force on Terrorism. "This decision clearly shows that we will ... hit them hard in the wallet as well."

Iran vehemently denies it has any connections to terrorist groups or attacks. Although Lamberth said Iranian representatives had been invited to testify at court hearings on March 3-4, a spokesman for the Iranian mission to the United Nations said Wednesday he was not aware of the court case in Washington.

The two countries have been bitter foes since the 1979 ouster of Shah Reza Mohammed Pahlavi and the taking of U.S. hostages. But since the election last year of a moderate cleric as president of Iran, there have been signs of a possible thaw and reestablishment of cultural and other ties. President Clinton greeted Mohammad Khatami's election as a

"The lunatics who planted the bomb and drove the van that killed Alisa were not acting alone." Stephen Flatlow Alisa's father

"hopeful sign" but demanded that Tehran renounce terrorism and endorse the Israeli-Arab peace process.

The ruling, made under the Antiterrorism Act of 1996, would award the money to the family of Alisa Flatlow, 20, of West Orange, N.J., who was student at a seminary in Jerusalem when she was killed in an attack on a bus in Gaza City on April 9, 1995. Seven Israeli soldiers also

died in the attack for which Islamic Jihad claimed responsibility.

The judge agreed with the Flatlow family that Islamic Jihad is backed by Iran's Islamic government and that Iran therefore is responsible for her death.

"The lunatics who planted the bomb and drove the van that killed Alisa were not acting alone," said Stephen Flatlow, the student's father. "A state sponsor of terrorism such as the Islamic Republic of Iran has to be held to account."

But Lamberth did not specify how the award was to be collected. Flatlow family lawyers said they plan to go after Iranian assets in the United States and elsewhere.

The United States froze Iranian assets valued at \$12 billion in 1979. Most of the funds, however, are controlled by the Iran-United States Claims Tribunal in The Hague, Netherlands, a group of nine judges who decide claims against both Iran and the United States. The United States itself has jurisdiction over only a fraction of the assets, mostly real estate.

Two years ago, the United States agreed to pay \$131.8 million in a settlement to families of Iranians killed on a civilian airliner shot down by the U.S. Navy in 1988. All 290 passengers aboard that flight were killed.

