

Parents of the Year announced at ceremony

Staff and wire reports

Texas A&M University and the Parents' Weekend Committee named Sunday Ken Gayle Cox of Corpus Christi, Texas, as the 1998-99 Aggie Parents of the Year. The South Texas couple received the honor in recognition of their exceptional service to their family, community and A&M University. The selection, announced at Sunday morning's All-University Awards Ceremony, was a surprise. Ken Cox, a member of Texas A&M's Class

of '59, was a senior yell leader and served as lieutenant colonel of his outfit in the Corps of Cadets as a student at A&M. He is now an active member in the Corpus Christi Texas A&M Club and serves on the Board of Directors of the Texas A&M Foundation, an independent fundraising organization.

Gayle Cox is a member and past officer of the Corpus Christi chapter of the Texas A&M Mother's Club.

The couple's son, Bryan, a senior marketing major, nominated his parents for the

award. His nomination letter cited his par-



ents' limitless support and the examples they have set as reasons for their nomination.

"They have always taught me to be proud of who I am," he wrote. "My dad wanted me to make my own decisions with what I wanted to accomplish at A&M. He did not want to relive his glory days in my footsteps."

The couple has opened their home to Aggies on numerous occasions when groups such as the Singing Cadets, the Texas A&M tennis team and participants in Fish Camp were in Corpus Christi.

Cox said his parents are the most caring people he knows.

"They have a sincere love for me and the

people around them and their reward is just seeing a smile on someone's face," he said. "Their love has rubbed off on everyone around them and the effect it has had on me is one I'll never be able to repay."

As 1998-99 Parents of the Year, the Coxes will represent Texas A&M at events both on and off campus and be the guest of the University and its various student organizations during the next 12 months. The Parents' Weekend Committee began choosing the Parents of the Year in 1974, and the award is given each spring.

Bevo brisket



JAKE SCHRICKLING/THE BATTALION

David Meinert, Class of '88, serves barbecue for the Houston A&M Club at the Bevo Burn Barbecue as part of the Parents' Weekend activities on Saturday.

D-2 takes home best outfit award

Corps honors companies, individual leaders

BY COLLEEN KAVANAGH AND RACHEL DAWLEY
Staff writers

The Corps of Cadets' annual Parents' Weekend Review, the final graded review of the year, highlighted the work of all Corps outfits for the past year.

Eli Chavez, a junior business analysis major in Company A-2, said outfits are graded during the year on all events and activities, and outstanding outfits are awarded during the review.

"The whole year comes down to this review," Chavez said. "Everything you work for — the marches, inspections and athletic games — is rewarded today."

Awards are given on the basis of outfit performance, march-ins, grades, recruiting, inspections and outfit improvements by the office of the commandant. Outfit award winners get citation chords for their uniform and an additional flag for their guidon. Second and third place receive guidon streamers.

Company D-2 was awarded the General Moore award for best overall outfit.

Chris Halpin, D-2 commander and a senior accounting major, said this is the outfit's main goal every year.

"We have won this award 12 times,"

Parents' Weekend Review Awards

GENERAL MOORE AWARD:

Company D-2

JOUINE AWARD:

Company E-1

COMMANDANT'S AWARD:

Squadron 2

BEST OUTFIT COMMANDER:

Nolan Barkhouse,
Company K-2

Halpin said. "Last year and the year before, we came in second place. We knew we'd had a good year, but we didn't know we would place so high."

PLEASE SEE AWARDS ON PAGE 9.

Parsons' Mounted Cavalry observe silver anniversary

BY RACHEL DAWLEY
Staff writer

More than 200 former Parsons' Mounted Cavalry (PMC) members and 600 guests attended the 50th anniversary of the unit this weekend. The event was highlighted with a Final Review Drill and Pass-In Review of the unit. Founded in 1973, PMC is the only remaining 4-year college ROTC horse cavalry unit in the United States.

The review took place at Freeman Arena and a banquet was at "Fiddler's Green," the private plot of land where PMC practices.

"There was a good showing of former members and they were impressed with the improvements that we have made in the past 25 years," said PMC member Nick Yates, a senior business administration major.

Col. Tom Parsons, namesake of PMC and commandant of the Corps when PMC was founded, served as the reviewing officer on Saturday.

Mike Ogorchock, a sophomore business management major, said members devoted several weeks to preparation for the review.

"We've worked really hard toward this weekend to try to make it perfect," Ogorchock said. "We want to impress former

members and show them that we still work hard."

Dr. John Fritz, retired executive vice president of the U.S. Equestrian Team and one of the original advisors to PMC, presented the unit with an award from the U.S. Cavalry Association to commemorate the anniversary. PMC is only the second unit in the nation to receive the award.

"Thanks to the efforts of cavalry members, university officials, former students and friends of A&M, the Parsons' Mounted Cavalry is today one of the show pieces of the university and an organization for which we can all be proud," Fritz said.

Artist Benjamin Knox, creator of over 150 paintings depicting Aggie life, painted a tribute to PMC to commemorate the event. Titled "Rain or Shine," Knox said he tried to capture PMC in their various forms, including firing the cannon on Kyle Field, artillery drills and parades.

"PMC is such a prominent part of the Corps and A&M, and the anniversary was a great opportunity for me to do something for the group," Knox said. "PMC has an excellent reputation for instilling a positive work ethic in members, and I tried to portray how special they are to A&M."

PLEASE SEE CAVALRY ON PAGE 10.

3,400 visitors tour Bush library

Parents' Weekend swells visitor numbers as record set over weekend

BY RACHEL DAWLEY
Staff writer

The George Bush Presidential Library and Museum enjoyed record attendance over the weekend as Parents' Weekend visitors flowed through the doors of the facility.

More than 3,400 visitors toured the library and museum on Saturday, second only to Community Day in November that attracted 7,500 non-paying guests.

About 175,000 people have visited the 69,000 square foot facility since its dedication on November 6, 1997.

Patricia Burchfield, curator of the museum, said she was impressed by this weekend's turnout.

"The number of visitors has exceeded expectations," Burchfield said. "We are in high season as far as schools tours go, but

summer will be busy also. The exhibits are holding up and people are leaving happy."

The library and museum is the tenth presidential library administered by the National Archives and Records Administration. The facility, which is dedicated to the preservation, research and exhibit of official records, personal papers and memorabilia of George Bush, contains 38 million pages of documents, one million photographs and thousands of sound and video recordings.

Texas A&M students have participated in the workings of the facility, including assisting in the dedication activities and volunteering at the library and museum.

"The library is such an exciting addition to the campus," said Julie Green, a junior English major. "I've toured it twice, and I always take people that come in to visit out for a look."

Colt Urban, a sophomore political sci-



ence major in Corps of Cadets Company E-1, said he found time between his outfit banquet and Parent's Weekend Review to bring his parents to the library.

"I have classes in the building and I was at the dedication, but this is the first time I've been to the museum," Urban said. "This weekend was a good chance for me to see it with my parents."

PLEASE SEE BUSH ON PAGE 10.

Austin hosts comedy festival, attracts stars by dubious means

AUSTIN, Texas (AP) — Talk about improv.

Not long ago, Mark Pruter was a 25-year-old University of Texas dropout trying to make it on the improv comedy circuit. Discouraged at the lack of a showcase for rising talent, he decided to create one.

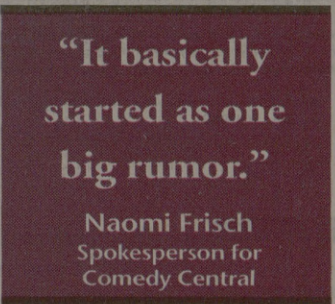
Three years later, the Big Stinkin' International Improv & Sketch Comedy Festival 3 is the foremost improv festival in the country.

The festival, which began Sunday and runs for a week, has sponsors that include Comedy Central, Nickelodeon and Time Warner Cable.

"It basically started as one big rumor," said Naomi Frisch, a spokesperson for Comedy Central. "I don't know what that says about people in the business. I guess if there's heat somewhere, people want to go, even if it's total B.S. But it has gained a lot of notoriety, and we are proud to be sponsors." Not bad for laid-back Austin,

which had none of the improv history other cities could claim.

Chicago, for instance, became the improv capital of America thanks to The Second City, which launched the likes of John Belushi, Bill Murray



and Mike Myers.

Los Angeles spawned The Groundlings, which has produced such names as Pee Wee Herman (Paul Reubens), Steve Guttenberg and Phil Hartman.

Pruter figured there was only one way to get past that major obstacle: Lie.

In 1995, Pruter and John Wylie, members of the improv group Monks Night Out, which is based at the Velveeta Room in Austin, called improv troupes around the country and told them a national festival was kicking off in the Texas state capital.

Pruter told the troupes the trip would be worth the cost because members of "Saturday Night Live" would attend and industry big shots would on hand to scout talent.

He then hung up the phone and called members of "Saturday Night Live," inviting them with the promise that improv troupes would be sucking up to them for a week.

He then called industry executives with an invitation stating that "Saturday Night Live" members would be in Austin along with the best improv talent in the country.

"At the time I made the calls, I didn't have anyone committed," said the 31-year-old Pruter.

Leaders look to duty-free hemisphere

SANTIAGO, Chile (AP) — Leaders of the Western Hemisphere's 34 democracies looked political and economic uncertainties Sunday and forged ahead with a plan for hemispheric duty-free trade by 2005. They directed negotiations to begin in September.

The assembled leaders, at the second summit of the Americas, directed negotiations, covering nine distinct areas of trade, to be held in Miami for the first three years. Here in Santiago the ground has been broken for the largest free trade area in history. Chilean President Eduardo Frei told concluding summit session, where all 34 leaders signed the Declaration of Santiago. "The combined economies would total \$1 trillion," he said.

"Our journey from Miami to Santiago ... from words to deeds," President

Clinton said. "Today we launch comprehensive negotiations for a free-trade area of the Americas."

Clinton, who hosted the first Summit of the Americas in Miami in 1994, said the work to complete a free-trade zone from Alaska to Cape Horn will be difficult.

Clinton cautioned that democracy was still fragile in some parts of the hemisphere.

"We must continue to stand fast for democracy ... with no holdouts and no backsliders."

Communist Cuba, the only country in the hemisphere not invited to Santiago, remained a point of contention.



Clinton

INSIDE

aggielife

New Jennifer Aniston film takes script of *Chasing Amy* and gives it revamping.

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Texas A&M Baseball Team defeats archrival Longhorns in front of 9,000 fans.

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Mireles and Ferguson share views on hand gun regulation in the United States.

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online

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