



The Battalion

105 YEARS AT TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

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College Station, Texas

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Campaigning begins

Candidates vie for student-leader positions

BY EMILY R. SNOOKS
The Battalion

Texas A&M's annual election campaign week has arrived, meaning the student body and campus will be inundated with fliers and posters boasting promises, goals and innovative ideas to better the University.

Campaign week officially started Sunday at noon and will end March 31 at midnight.

Forums for each position will be held throughout the rest of the week in the MSC Flagroom. The yell leader forum will be today at noon, and the student body president forum will be Wednesday at noon.

Dawn McGill, Student Government Association election

commissioner and a senior finance major, said candidates and their staffs will be held responsible for campaigning under rules established by the Student Government Association Election Commission.

Formal campaigning, including placement or distribution of promotional material by candidates or other students is prohibited in classrooms, the MSC and the Koldus Building, but this year students and candidates are allowed to wear promotional T-shirts in classrooms but not in Koldus or the MSC.

Voting begins March 31 at 9 a.m. and ends April 1 at 5 p.m. During voting time, no formal campaigning is allowed, but candidates' posters and boards may remain posted.

McGill said the most common campaign violation pertains to visiting and campaigning in dorms before or after the allotted times. She said candidates are allowed only in certain on-campus dorms from 7 to 9 p.m. on designated evenings.

McGill said some candidates and their staffs have accumulated fines due to sign placement along Texas Highway 6, which violates city and state laws and Election Commission rules. The signs have been removed, and the candidates will be fined by the Election Commission.

Candidates have designated spending limits and are not permitted to exceed the limits or misuse funds. Candidate spending limits include \$1,000 for student-body-president candidates,

Spending Limits for Candidates

Student body president \$1,000
Yell leaders \$700
Class presidents \$250
All other candidates \$100

\$700 for yell-leader candidates, \$250 for class-president candidates and \$100 for all others. McGill said many other large universities have no spending limits and most smaller schools have smaller limits.

To eliminate the usual sign clutter on campus during campaign week, the Election Commission is providing sandwich boards for the yell leader and student body president candidates, McGill said. The boards have been placed in high pedestrian traffic areas on campus.

Club's money woes halt expansion plan

BY RACHEL HOLLAND
The Battalion

Plans for a five-club entertainment center at Epicenter will not be implemented because of insufficient parking.

Sri Kandalam, owner of Epicenter, said he is unable to fulfill the original plan for five clubs because it would violate the conditional-use permit, which calculates how much square footage can be occupied in relation to the number of parking spots available.

Epicenter currently consists of a sports bar and a dance club, and Kandalam said a martini bar will open in May.

Lance Simms, a building official with College Station, said under the conditional use permit, only half of the entertainment center can be used because of the insufficient parking.

"There is not enough parking for the amount of club space they want to occupy," he said. "But they are currently in accordance with all regulations."

Kandalam said it is not cost effective to pay for the construction and rent of a building when only half of it is in use. He said he is able to keep Epicenter financially secure through profit from other businesses he has owned.

"The economics of the plan did not come through," he said. "The five clubs did not fall into place. Some people called me crazy for following through, but I am proud of Epicenter and intend to see it through."

Lee Battle, senior planner with College Station, said further expansion of Epicenter would require another conditional-use permit.

He said the permits, however, are issued with the best interest of the city in mind, and requests for use of adjacent parking lots or to decrease the number of required spots are likely to be denied.

Bicycle accident



MIKE FUENTES/THE BATTALION

Richard Williams, a physical plant employee, is put into an ambulance by a College Station Fire Department (CSFD) official. Williams was hit by a Jeep on the corner of University and College Main while riding his bicycle Monday. Williams was treated and released from St. Joseph's Hospital the same day. CSFD officials said charges may be pending against both parties.

National Geographic editor to host lecture

BY APRIL YOUNG
The Battalion

William L. Allen, editor in chief of National Geographic magazine, will present a multi-image video demonstration at 7:30 tonight at the Presidential Conference Center.

Allen, who serves on the board of directors for the Institute of Nautical Archeology at Texas A&M, will exhibit classic National Geographic photography through his presentation, "Eye of the Beholder."

The presentation will focus on the history of the National Geographic Society, its writers and photographers, and their research and exploration. It will feature personal commentary and reflection of the magazine.

Robert Kennedy, vice president for research, said the role National Geographic has played in society makes the program appealing.

"Given the role the National Geographic has had in this country and our society over the years, this is a wonderful opportunity to have Mr. Allen on campus to help increase awareness of natural resources and to increase the involvement of students in science," Kennedy said.

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"This program will broaden student awareness of different social and global environments."

— Robert Kennedy
Vice president for research

Kennedy said the presentation will expand students' knowledge of National Geographic and various societies.

"Most students are familiar with the journal, and it has played a fundamental and important role in broadening their education," Kennedy said. "This program will broaden student awareness of different societies and global environments."

The presentation is free and open to the public, but tickets for admission must be obtained at the MSC Box Office.

Les Miserables' makes presence felt on campus

BY EMILY R. SNOOKS
The Battalion

"Les Miserables," a musical that is performed internationally and one of the largest productions to come to College Station, will begin performances tonight and continue through March 28 and is sponsored by the MSC Opera and Performing Arts Society (OPAS). Robbie Thomas, student chair of OPAS and a senior mechanical engineering major, said "Les Miserables" ranks equally with the other shows OPAS sponsors at Texas A&M in regard to quality and popularity, but it is larger in terms of props, staging, popularity, cast size and number of performances.

Thomas said although OPAS is typically responsible for financing Broadway shows in College Station, "Les Miserables" will fund its own performances.

"In this rare case, 'Les Miserables' is taking the financial risk of producing their musical to College Station; typically we are taking the risk," he said.

"We will be supplying the performance with labor, theater ushering and the distribution of material."

Thomas said the musical has had the largest load of props, staging and costumes of any OPAS event this year.



GUY ROGERS/THE BATTALION

Stage hands unload one of eight trucks in preparation for tomorrow's performance of "Les Miserables." Throckmorton Street was closed in order to accommodate the set-up process.

Throckmorton Street was closed yesterday to allow the musical's trailers to park and unload.

All bus stops on Throckmorton and Coke streets were diverted to Joe Routt Boulevard. Bus operations will return to normal this morning.

Thomas said the MSC Box Office has sold hundreds of tickets for the performances, but tickets are still available. Ticket prices are \$30 to \$48 for weekday shows and \$35 to \$53 for weekend performances.

SEE RELATED STORY ON PAGE 3.

Volunteer Services aids community, students

BY AMANDA STIRPE
The Battalion

The need for additional community-service information for Texas A&M organizations led to the formation of the Volunteer Services Center through the Department of Student Activities in the Koldus Building, Leslie Scott, a coordinator of the program, said.

Scott, a sophomore accounting major, said services will be offered starting next fall and that the center is a link between A&M and the community.

The center's mission is to promote the spirit of community services and act as a liaison between the non-profit community and the Aggie family.

"Organizations have generally chosen a group that is well known such as the Boys and Girls Club and would ignore other volunteer organizations in the community who need help," Scott said.

An informational Web page called the Virtual Volunteer Services Center at <http://vvsc.tamu.edu> was established

to inform organizations about possible community-service options in the Bryan-College Station area and on the A&M campus.

The Web page instructs organizations and individuals on how to get community service started and how to record types of services for award opportunities. Individuals are also able to view other community-service opportunities executed by other organizations.

Sharis Smith, a graduate assistant for community service at the Student Activities Office, said a council of 12 students representing major groups on campus will be established at the end of April. The main focus of the council will be community service within the represented groups.

Smith said the Volunteer Services Center will honor groups in the fall in categories including unique service and member participation.

"Groups whose whole mission is community service will not necessarily win all the time," Smith said. "We will award a variety of groups."