

Weekend showcases college life

BY CYRA GATLING
The Battalion

Just when college students thought they had left them at home, parents by the thousands will flood into Bryan-College Station this weekend to take a look at college life and participate in Parents' Weekend 2000. The Parents' Weekend is April 14-16 and officially begins at Midnight Yell Friday at Kyle Field.

"The goal of Parents' Weekend is to give the parents a picture of what we do here at A&M," said Jeremy Poland, a marketing subcommittee member for Parents Weekend committee and a senior business major. "It serves as a bond and brought my family closer."

The Parents' Weekend Committee is in charge of the overall structure, promotion and scheduling of the weekend. It is made up of 50 members who serve on marketing, special events, barbecue and Parents of the Year subcommittees.

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Student Government Association sponsors Parents Weekend. Funding for the weekend comes from the BBQ ticket sales and T-shirt sales. "This year, Roger Creager will perform at the Bevo Burn Barbecue," said Xavier Resendez, who serves on the barbecue committee and is a senior industrial distribution major.

"Many great barbecue teams from across the state are coming to compete in a cook-off for prizes and to feed lots of people."

Many Aggie parents are looking forward to spending time with their sons and daughters during Parents' Weekend.

"This year is especially exciting for us because we get to attend our daughter's class council awards ceremony," said Pat and Mona Maher, parents of Katie Maher, a sophomore education major. "We

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Minority faculty members face racism in Bryan-College Station

diversity

BY ROLANDO GARCIA
The Battalion

When Dr. Elizabeth West moved to College Station two years ago to take a job as an English professor at Texas A&M, she was eager to make her family feel at home in their new community and enrolled her daughter in Girl Scouts — but encountered an unexpected snag.

"When they found out we were black, the troop that had an opening suddenly didn't have one," West said.

This perceived lack of tolerance and diversity in the Bryan-College Station community is one of the main obstacles to recruiting minority faculty to Texas A&M, some minority professors said.

Mitchell Rice, director of the Race and Ethnic Studies Institute at Texas A&M, said the small minority professional class in Bryan-College Station and dearth of cultural and social activities is a disincentive for

some minority faculty.

"It's a small town, and most minority faculty — especially if you're young and single — would rather live in a big city to participate in the social and cultural amenities a big city can offer," Rice said.

The homogenous cultural atmosphere in the community can also make minority faculty and their families feel isolated, West said.

"If I'm a black person with a family, wanting to my child to grow up with a sense of diversity, that's hard to achieve when they see that most black people are poor and uneducated," West said.

West added the Bryan-College Station community could do more to foster attitudes of diversity and tolerance, beginning in its public schools. For example, she said, during Black History Month in February, her daughter's elementary school class was given the option of reading a story about a prominent African-American or their favorite president.

"They're encouraging a policy of non-participation and saying the contributions of African-Americans aren't important enough to be studied," West said. "It's very subtle, but it makes black kids feel alienated and isolated in the schools."

Royce Hickman, director of the Bryan-College Station Chamber of Commerce, said the community makes extra efforts to make minorities and international students feel welcome.

"We've done a lot to make sure that all people feel included and be a vital part of the community, and we'll continue to reach out to people who may feel uncomfortable because it's important we all work together," Hickman said.

But Finnie Coleman, assistant professor of English, said that while Bryan-College Station isn't the most cosmopolitan community, the University should not use this as an excuse not to recruit more minority faculty.

"The University must demonstrate a commitment to diversity, but instead they use obstacles, real and imagined, when they could do more," Coleman said.

This includes making minority studies a priority, but the University recently passed on an opportunity to host one of the nation's leading African-American literary journals, which would have helped attract minority faculty, Coleman said.

"It would have been expensive, but this University can find money to do things it really wants to do," Coleman said.

West said the lack of minority students can also be a disincentive for minority scholars applying to Texas A&M.

"If you're teaching and involved in research, you want students to mentor," West said.

The paucity of minority faculty can then lead to fewer minority students looking for mentors.

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'Transformation'



JP BEATO/THE BATTALION

At the "Transformation" exhibit in the Langford Gallery, Piotr Krawczyk, a sophomore computer science major, and Alecia Cooper, a sophomore English major, admire an inkjet print series on canvas by Julia Rosenberg titled, "Before, Now and Then..."

Variety of options for filing taxes

BY APRIL YOUNG
The Battalion

As the April 17 tax deadline approaches, students who have not yet filed for their 1999 tax return may seek other alternatives to meet the deadline.

Kenneth Vargas, spokesperson for the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) in Central Texas said the most accurate method of filing is electronically via the Internet.

Nationally, through the end of March, 3.5 million taxpayers had filed their taxes electronically, compared to the 1.8 million taxpayers who filed electronically last year through March.

Since the normal tax deadline of April 15th falls on a Saturday, procrastinators have two more days to finalize their 1999 tax returns, but for some students this still might not be enough time.

Vargas said students who will not have their form completed by midnight on April 17th can file for an extension by filling out a form 4868 by midnight on April 17th.

"The extension gives tax payers who file an extension of four months to file, not four months to pay," Vargas said. "Even if you can't pay, it's best to file an extension because the penalty for not paying on time is much greater than not filing on time."

Vargas said the extension form is only about four to five lines long and an extension form can be obtained on the IRS Website at www.irs.gov.

Some on-line filing companies will also have extension forms that can be submitted online.

Jessica Miranda, a sophomore business major, said she plans to file for her tax return by the deadline to avoid having to file for an extension.

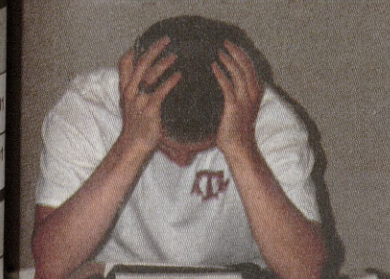
"I've just been so busy that I haven't had time to complete my tax return, but I'll probably file it over the phone on Monday," Miranda said. "I'm a procrastinator. I always wait until the last minute, but I'll fill out a form to get an extension I might as well fill out the form to get my tax return."

Vargas said he cautions all students who cannot complete the form efficiently to file for an extension.

"If students are really pressed for time — and they won't be able to do it and walk away and come back to review it — they should file for an extension," Vargas said. "It only causes more of a delay if the form is not accurately done."

Students like Miranda who decide to wait until the last minute to file their taxes may run into a few problems, but the IRS has set-up a toll-free, 24-hour-help line available to answer any questions. To access the help line, call 1-800-829-1040.

TAX DEADLINE APRIL 17



TAX FORMS MAY BE TURNED TO THE COLLEGE STATION POST OFFICE BY MIDNIGHT. THOSE NOT ABLE TO FILE ON TIME SHOULD FILL OUT FORM 4868 FOR A FOUR MONTH EXTENSION.

BRANDON HENDERSON/THE BATTALION

Senior Corps members, guests gather at 2nd annual dining-in



JP BEATO/THE BATTALION

Lieutenant Governor Rick Perry, Class of '72 and a former head yell leader, addressed the seniors at the Corps of Cadets "senior dining-in."

BY JEANETTE SIMPSON
The Battalion

The Corps of Cadets Association hosted the Class of 2000 Thursday at the 2nd annual Corps of Cadets "senior dining-in," a formal

banquet held exclusively for senior Corps members and invited guests.

Lieutenant Governor Rick Perry, Class of '72 and a former head yell leader, addressed the seniors and reminisced on his years at Texas A&M and the Corps.

"The bonds of friendship you have built these last four years, will be with you for a lifetime," Perry said. "The memories you have shared with the men and women around you are memories you will carry in your hearts as you disperse throughout the world. You will never again experience another four years like the last four years you have just had."

Perry reminded the cadets that it is their responsibility to be the keepers of the Aggie spirit.

"You, as Aggie Cadets, have built over the last years a profound legacy of sacrifice, honor and devotion," Perry said. "Through your leadership, the Aggie spirit is kept alive and strong."

The event is held to thank seniors for their dedication to the Corps.

"This is a special time for the seniors, it is a time to reflect on their time in the Corps," said Forrest Lane, Corps Commander and a senior political sci-

ence major. "This is the Corps of Cadets Association saying 'Thanks' for the four years of contributions the Class of 2000 has made to the University."

As a tribute to his service to A&M, the Corps, to Texas and to the nation, the Corps of Cadets Association presented Perry with a case for his senior boots and a framed picture of the "missing man formation" flown over Kyle Field during the 1999 Texas A&M vs. University of Texas football game.

Neal Adams, Class of '68, took a moment during the festivities of the evening to acknowledge the senior cadets and the Corps in general for demonstrating leadership during the 1999 Aggie Bonfire collapse.

"You have faced the greatest tragedy by this University in its history. Your leadership during the bonfire fall showed other Texans and the rest of the world a little part of what it means to be an Aggie," Adams said.

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