

## Groups to apply task force recommendations

By ROLANDO GARCIA  
The Battalion

Jumping from airplanes and playing the flute may entail different levels of risk, but under new guidelines, all student organizations, from the Skydiving Club to the Flute Choir, will undergo comprehensive safety assessment by the Student Affairs Risk Management Team.

The team, a panel tasked with crafting recommendations to help the approximately 700 recognized student organizations at Texas A&M evaluate risk levels of their activities, released its final report this month.

"We're going to develop and integrate these recommendations into our strategic plans this year, and the goal is to be more

proactive in making organized student activities safer," said Kevin Jackson, director of the Department of Student Activities.

Jackson said being proactive means not waiting for accidents to happen before assessing seemingly mundane activities and identifying potential risks.

"We have to keep into account that some of the things we commonly do and don't consider to be risky actually can be," he said. "A good example of this is travel. Just about every group travels, sometimes out of town."

The report contains 53 recommendations and cost more than \$400,000. Jackson said his department is already revising its Website to include a one-stop resource for ad-

visers and student officers to find information on travel procedures, alcohol policy and hazing.

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of Student Activities

Other steps to make advisers of student organizations more accountable include mandatory training workshops on risk management.

Beginning this spring, student organizations will be required to conduct a self-assessment of their activities as part of the annual process through which organizations apply for University recognition.

"We'll have specific guidelines for the advisers and the student officers to follow when they conduct their assessment, and, depending on the group and their level of risk, we'll review that assessment and see what needs to be done," Jackson said.

The recognition process this spring will separate student organizations into

three categories, using criteria such as the mission of a group and the riskiness of its activities. Groups designated as "sponsored" organizations will be those that routinely represent the University, receive University funding, and engage in high-risk activities.

Because the intimate connection between these organizations and A&M would place the University at greater legal liability, these organizations must appoint a risk-management officer to develop an operations manual, carry additional liability insurance to cover members and events, and send its advisers and officers

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## Freshmen cut candidate pool to two hopefuls

Fee increase passes in student elections

By COURTNEY STELZEL  
The Battalion

Joseph Holloway and Melissa Baumann will face each other Monday in a run-off election for Class of '04 president.

Holloway, a freshman business administration major, said his strategy for the run-off will not differ from his original campaign. He plans to go out and speak with people face to face.

"I am a people person and don't put on a show during the campaign," he said. "I really do want to express the feelings of the students."

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administration major

Holloway said he views at the present position as an opportunity to relay ideas for the whole student body, not just the freshmen.

Baumann, a freshman renewable natural resource major, attributed her first victory to her friends and supporters.

"I don't think I could have done it without them," she said.

Baumann said she attributes much of her campaign success to communication skills developed in high school government positions.

Vice presidential candidates Katie Lowe, a freshman English and anthro-

pology major, and freshman Meredith Tyler also are facing a run-off.

Lowe said she concentrated her campaign on people contact.

"I wanted to build a relationship with various students in order to establish open communication between myself and the Class of '04," she said, adding that she hopes to unite the class through class activities and communication.

Tyler was unavailable for comment. Brice Horgan was elected to serve as secretary with 825 votes; Drew Wadley, a general studies major, as treasurer; John Magruder, a general studies major, as historian with 464 votes; and Christine Haywood, an agricultural science major, as social secretary with 817 votes.

Other announcements included the results for the freshman Student Senate seats. Kyle LaRocque, a business administration major; Scooter Sanchez; Jeremiah Wagstaff, a civil engineering major; and Graham Bass, a business administration major, were elected to the Senate. Their role in the Student Senate will be to write constituency reports based on the demands and concerns of the Class of '04. They will arrange sessions for the freshmen to express their concerns to their senators.

Voting for the run-off candidates will be from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Monday, and the results will be announced that evening.

The Student Center Complex Fee Referendum was passed by approximately 1,200 votes to 200 votes. The referendum will increase the current Student Center Fee from \$30 to \$40, and the money will go toward renovating and funding the Memorial Student Center (MSC).

The passed referendum also permits the University to ask for the Texas Legislature a fee cap increase from \$40 to \$100.

Amanda Arriaga, executive vice president of marketing at the MSC and a senior management major, said the MSC hosts more than 100 meetings per day, and that the fee increase will help maintain and improve the facility.

"The students and the MSC will be directly impacted the most by the referendum because so much activity goes on there," she said.

The fee increase must also be approved by the A&M System Board of Regents in March and, if approved, will be enacted in Fall 2001.

Neil Simpson, election commissioner and a junior recreation, parks and tourism sciences major, said he was impressed with the overall voter turnout.

"We had 2,433 total students vote, including those who voted online and those who visited the poll sites," he said.

## Fund raising for bonfire



PATRIC SCHNEIDER/THE BATTALION

Joseph Hammon, a senior economics major, and Jeff Reed, a freshman business major, sell Keep The Fire Burning T-shirts on the corner of George Bush Drive and Texas Avenue Wednesday in an effort to raise funds for the organization.

## Aggie grads form group to preserve Bonfire

COLLEGE STATION (AP) — A group of Texas A&M graduates has started an organization that hopes to convince school president Dr. Ray M. Bowen to change his mind about making major changes to the 90-year Bonfire tradition after last year's deadly collapse.

The new group wants Bonfire to resume this fall or next year at the latest and is also supporting another organization's efforts to build an off-campus bonfire this fall, despite a two-year moratorium on the tradition that was imposed by Bowen after the Nov. 18 collapse that killed 12 Aggies and injured 27 others.

Among the things Dallas-based Keep the Tradition is asking Bowen to do include:

- Only allowing faculty members who

graduated from A&M to oversee the future of this or any aggie tradition.

- Only allowing firms that are owned or operated by Aggies to be hired to assist in the planning and construction of bonfire, a stipulation that might be unattainable in light of bidding rules for public projects.

- Retracting the design constraints and the two-week limit on construction and appointing a committee made up entirely of Aggies to plan this process.

"Since every tradition in Aggieworld was started, nurtured, passed down and protected by Aggies, we believe that any restructuring made to an Aggie tradition must remain in the control of Aggies," said Robert Steinhausen, Keep the Tradition's founder.

The organization is also supporting efforts by the student-led group Keep The Fire Burning to hold an off-campus bonfire this fall.

The new group sent Bowen a letter on Wednesday detailing its wishes.

University officials could not confirm whether Bowen received the letter because he was not in College Station on Wednesday, said A&M spokesman Lane Stephenson.

"Our position remains the same about the future of Bonfire as announced earlier this year: Bonfire will resume in 2002 once we have maximum assurance that the structure can be built safely," Stephenson said.

Stephenson said A&M officials are still against any attempt to build an off-campus bonfire this fall.

## Forum answers Bonfire questions

By KRISTIN ROSTRAN  
The Battalion

Students who participate in an off-campus bonfire will not be punished by the University unless they act as a Texas A&M-related group, said Vice President for Student Affairs Dr. J. Malon Southerland at an open forum Wednesday night.

Southerland, Memorial Student Center Assistant Director Rusty Thompson and Director of Residence Life Ron Sasse answered students' questions regarding a wide range of bonfire-related topics at the forum, which was held between Moses and Moore Halls.

Students wanted to know whether individual involvement in Keep The Fire Burning (KTFB) would result in punishment.

"You would have to break some law or some University regulation for there to be some action taken by the University," Southerland said.

However, he said, if a student group as a whole were to be involved, punishment could result.

"If 30 people go and act like they are Walton Hall, they are Walton Hall to the public, and therefore, Texas A&M would be involved," Southerland said.

The students also showed concern over what they view as a loss of the Aggie Spirit because of less student involvement in future Bonfires.

"If you are basically prepackaging bonfire, having it shipped to us, not

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## Bush Drive slated for repairs, expansion

By NATHAN ROGERS  
The Battalion

One of College Station's most traversed roadways will receive a series of upgrades designed to make commuting a little more friendly for residents. George Bush Drive is scheduled to undergo two major renovation projects starting before the end of the year, adding a median, additional lanes and bike loops, and costing \$1.5 million.

The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) is completing plans for the rehabilitation of the section of George Bush Drive adjoining Texas A&M's main campus. Randall Grones, TxDOT transportation engineer, said the face-lift project will stretch from Texas Avenue to near Wellborn Road.

"The contractors will bid for the job in November, and when a company is chosen, they have up to 90 days to start construction," Grones said.

"Failures in the road are where there are potholes, or the road surface is breaking, and the new surface is to finish it," Grones said.

Officials will close only one lane at a time to minimize traffic delays and congestion. Estimates are that the project will last six months and cost \$700,000.

The second part of the construction, widening the section of the road that runs from Texas Avenue to Harvey Road and adding bike paths, will be done by the city of College Station. This project, however, contains preliminary details.

"To widen the road, we have to obtain the property rights to the houses and lots along the side of the road," said Mark Smith, director of public works for the city of College Station. "Many of the properties are abandoned, and some of them have been condemned. Until we secure the rights, we are unable to remove those properties."

Othon Engineering of Houston will be responsible for road construction and will begin the project once the land is acquired. Once the construction is completed, the road will provide additional routes from Campus to Harvey Road, and ease the congestion in that area, Smith said.



ANDY HANCOCK/THE BATTALION

Two students embrace after freshman election results were announced Wednesday night.