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The Other Education Students keep busy at A&M with more than 700 groups

By JANE HOLDEN THE BATTALION

It is the first day of a new semester. The ustle and bustle of preparation is simmerg down as upperclassmen kick back into heir familiar routine and freshmen finally have a chance to catch their breath. Students who have been anticipating today's busy Café Express schedule may find themselves asking, modernized and "What now?"

Certainly, academics, roommates and riends will compete for one's time. the Undergrow However, if students want to participate in e "other education" at Texas A&M, now is g open until the time to get involved.

Open House Sunday, and A&M's 700 clubs and organizations will give students an opportunity to peruse what A&M has to offer, ranging from the Students for a Free Tibet to the Aggie Wranglers.

Nathan Bowden, a senior environmental design major, found an interest in MSC Town Hall his freshman year. Now, a thirdyear member of the organization aimed at showcasing musical talent, Bowden describes it as his "comfortable niche."

Town Hall is a microcosm of the University," Bowden said. "It is not like traditional Texas A&M. I have a lot of karma with everyone there, and it is a quick and easy way to plug into the pipeline of local live music.

Similar organizations are the Opera and Performing Arts Society, Visual Arts Society, Film Society and Cepheid

The Memorial Student Center will host ence fiction conventions and supports student film productions.

Other popular activities include academic organizations within colleges, political-interest organizations and sports-related clubs. There also is a diverse variety of cultural organizations and groups that welcome new Aggies to A&M.

Many freshmen recently have rienced the spirit-filled adventure of Fish Camp and recognize the positive affects of their counselors' efforts.

Mike Cook, a senior industrial distribution major, contributes his time to a similar organization, T-Camp.

"T-Camp is for students who transfer into Texas A&M from other schools," Cook said. "We teach them about our traditions and help them adjust to a new school of about 43,000 students.

Cook said he became involved with T-Camp to return the guidance he

"As a counselor, I have met a lot of people with similar interests as myself," Cook said. "We end up spending a lot of time together, and you leave with friendships you didn't have before.'

Andy Buchmann, a graduate student studying finance, is the co-founder of GUIDE, a new club that pairs freshmen with mentors to aid in the transition from high school to college life. Buchmann said he and his friends have had to work hard to create this organization.

"There were definitely challenges," Buchmann said. "But the University wasn't trying to set up walls to prevent us. They just wanted to help us be certain we knew what we

were doing." Buchmann said that it would have been nice to have started GUIDE earlier.

"I look back now and think there were so many opportunities I could have had and people I could have met," Buchmann said. "I would definitely recommend to the freshmen that they get involved in the University

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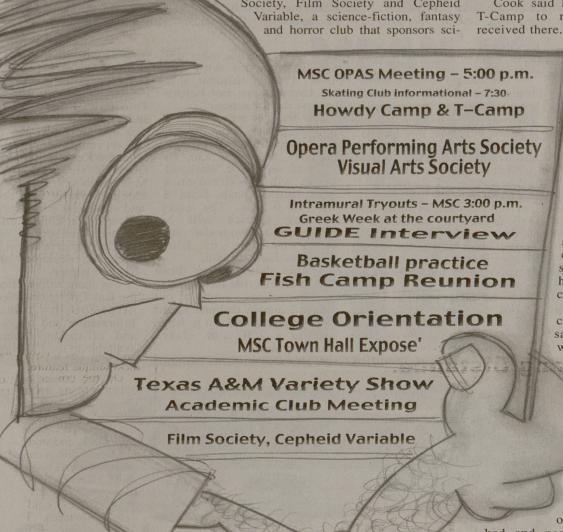
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