

## New child safety, DWI laws to go into effect

By JON NIVEN  
THE BATTALION

New vehicle-safety laws in Texas and go into effect Saturday.

The Texas Cooperative Extension Program began developing the new regulations after a national organization gave a failing grade to Texas' current vehicle-safety regulations, said Marlene Albers, program director for rural passenger safety education.

"The child restraint law in Texas was rated an 'F' by National SAFEKIDS in Washington, D.C., and our legislators took that grade seriously," Albers said. "They stepped up and moved our state forward to bring that grade up."

The new laws address child safety, open containers and DWI's.

Children who are younger than 4 years old or shorter than 36-inches must ride in a federally approved child restraint system. Previously, only children younger than 2 were required to be in a car seat, while children between the ages of 2 and 15 had to be restrained by a seatbelt. The fines for these violations have gone up from a minimum of \$50 to a maximum of \$200.

The new laws also mandate that children younger than 17 may not ride unrestrained in a vehicle, and anyone riding in the bed of a pickup

truck must now be at least 18. Older laws required children younger than 15 to be restrained and be at least 12 years old to ride in the bed of a truck.

The new open-container law makes it illegal to have an open container in the passenger area of a vehicle. The definition of an open container, according to the extension program, is a bottle, can or other container that holds an alcoholic beverage and has a broken seal or partially removed contents.

A new law concerning repeat DWI offenders also will go into effect. It states that anyone who is convicted of a second offense within five years of the first offense can lose their driver's license. The offender will also be required to install an ignition interlock device in their vehicle at their own expense. This device requires the driver to blow into a mouthpiece that will verify that the driver is below the legal alcohol level. If the blood alcohol level registers higher than legal limit, .08 percent, the car will not start.

While no laws are perfect, Albers said this is a step forward for the state of Texas.

"There is always room for improvement," Albers said. "Our legislature has empowered law enforcement to make a difference. Everyone should buckle up everybody on every trip and save a life."

## MINORITIES

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further at the University of Virginia, offering translations of works in Spanish, French, Dutch, Portuguese and other languages. Callaloo now publishes poetry, fiction, plays, critical essays and visual arts from African-American writers across the globe.

"I expect the Callaloo to make a large contribution to the curriculum at Texas A&M," Rowell said. "It will introduce a various scope of literature from African descendants of slaves that live in the Americas and in Europe."

Lawrence Mitchell, head of the English department, said Rowell will be teaching African-American poetry and a course in Southern literature, starting in the spring semester.

Mitchell said Callaloo and Rowell will attract graduate and undergraduate students to the University and raise the national profile of A&M's literary scholarship.

"Professor Rowell will offer an extensive amount of knowledge concerning African-American writers and artists," Mitchell said. "His contributions to our African-American literature and creative writing courses will be invaluable."

The national rankings of a university are determined by the quality of its graduate program and the publications that come out of the program. Rowell has the potential to improve A&M's national rankings by publishing his prestigious journal through the University and offering a wider variety of classes that will attract graduate students, Mitchell said.

The presence of Rowell and his journal at A&M will also help to dispel negative myths about the University as narrow minded and intolerant, Mitchell said.

"Mr. Rowell should indicate to people that Texas A&M is not a homogenous institution," Mitchell said. "He should broaden the horizon of people within the University and change the perception of our University to outsiders."

## MSC

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of MSC Hospitality and a senior recreation, park and tourism sciences major.

The event will allow not only freshmen, but all students, to learn more about the activities on campus.

"I am looking forward to going," said Travis Welch, a freshman general studies major. "I want to become more familiar with campus activities and organizations."

Moffitt said students will need to be patient to reach all of the event tables.

"It will be hot and very crowded, so please be patient, especially since there will be tables inside and outside, and therefore the doors will be opening often with students constantly walking in and out," he said.

Josh Rowan, MSC president and a senior agricultural development major, said Open House also serves as a way for campus organizations to gather together.

"I am always excited to see the large number of organizations and students coming together for this common purpose," Rowan said.

alcohol citations, 212 disorderly conduct citations 23 warning citations and made 95 arrests.

Lt. Dan Jones, public information officer for CSPD, said the task force was formed in 1999.

Jones said he hopes, through the continued team approach to the loud party and alcohol abuse problem, that the task force can further reduce the number of loud parties while increasing awareness to the dangers of irresponsible alcohol use.

## BPD

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someone could hurt you," Montoya said.

The College Station Police Department (CSPD) joined with the University Police Department (UPD) last fall to form a task force addressing the alcohol abuse and noise problem. In seven weekends, the task force issued 620

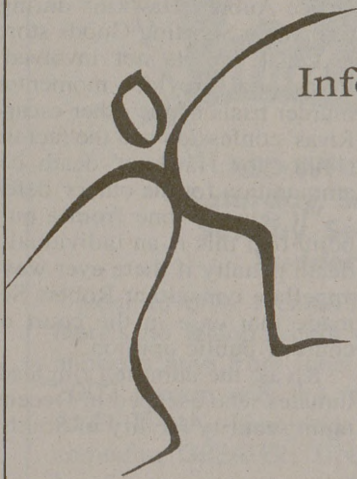
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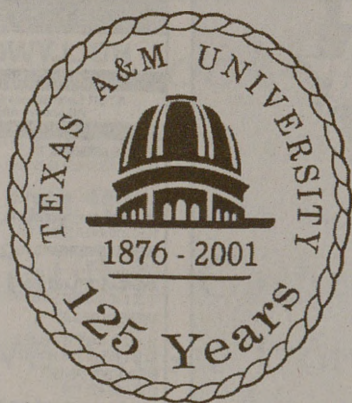
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