

## Hitchin' a ride

Members of CARPOOL spend weekends helping prevent drunk driving in B/CS

By Denise Schoppe  
THE BATTALION

They are seen around AggieLand every weekend, hanging around clubs and bars. Dressed in bright green T-shirts, they are armed with business cards and cellular phones. Now and then, their cars whisk party-goers away.

Their goal: to save lives. Their name: CARPOOL, which stands for Caring Aggies 'R' Protecting Over Our Lives. Lauren Barbier, CARPOOL director of public relations and a junior journalism major, said the organization simply wants to help students get home safely.

"We just want to provide a service that gives students an alternative to drinking and driving," Barbier said.

CARPOOL is a student-run organization which, according to its mission statement, offers "free non-judgmental rides" to students and Bryan-College Station residents who have been drinking and feel incapable of driving themselves home. It operates Thursday through Saturday every weekend, except Thanksgiving Day weekend, from 10:00 p.m. to 3:00 a.m.

Barbier said she hears some students do not use the organization because they are afraid of being turned in to the police.

"It's frustrating when you hear of people not using the service because of misinformation," Barbier said. "Rides are not videotaped or audio-taped. We only take riders' first names, so there is no way to trace them. Being non-judgmental is the heart of CARPOOL."

Eric Martin, CARPOOL member and senior biomedical sciences major, said picking up students who use the organization improperly is the hardest thing for him.

"We work on auto program," Martin said. "People give you an address and you can't call them a liar, even when we have the inclination that they are just trying to go to another party."

CARPOOL members who are not driving the cars work as "herschels," named after Herschel Walker, the 1982 Heisman Trophy winner and a favorite football player of CARPOOL's founder.

The herschels walk around area bars and clubs handing out business cards, or calling rides for people.

CARPOOL operates using 10 cars provided by Enterprise

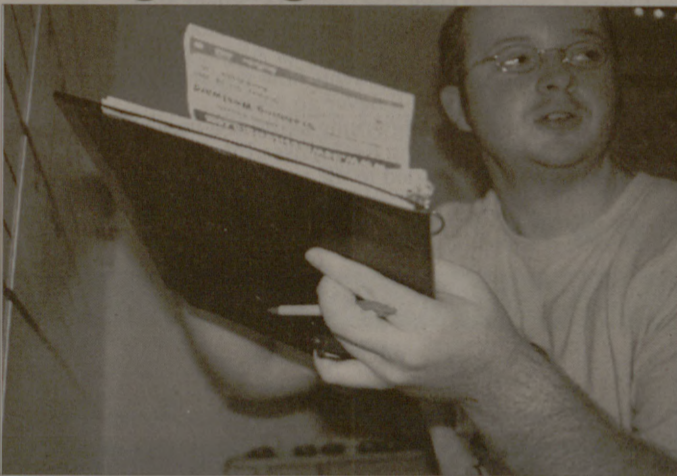
Rent-A-Car. Two members, one male and one female, are dispatched in each car from CARPOOL's meeting place at a Plantation Oaks apartment.

"We have 250 members that must work six nights a semester," Barbier said. "About 40 students work a night."

Members of CARPOOL are trained to handle any situation. The process for becoming a member involves filling out an application which is followed by an interview.

"[The members are] one of the coolest things about the organization," Martin said. "The people who are in it are a pleasure to be with. I haven't had a night that I didn't want to be there. The company in the car has always been nice. It's an organization with a lot of good people in it."

### Taking charge



Senior computer engineering major Peter Rega relays the group assignments to another CARPOOL member.

Barbier said CARPOOL has about 100 members each semester. Students who are chosen to be part of CARPOOL go through six hours of training.

"Drivers go through training so they can be confident and feel safe in their abilities," she said. "Also, patrons can feel safe."

In the years since the organization began, there has never been an incident of someone exerting violence towards CARPOOL members.

"I really don't feel any of our members feel apprehensive about going out," Barbier said. "We recognize the fact that something could happen, but we've never had an incident. We enjoy what we do."

Student's reasons for joining vary from wanting to help the community to having been personally affected by drunk drivers.

Cat Jacobs, CARPOOL member and junior management major, joined because she had family members killed by a drunk driver.

"I'm just trying to keep people from having to go through what I went through by having people killed by drunk drivers, be it family members or friends," Jacobs said.

CARPOOL is affiliated with M.A.D.D. (Mothers Against Drunk Driving) and is supported by Aggie Moms' Clubs and the Bryan, College Station and University police departments.

"We have mutual respect and a good relationship with the police, but we don't report to them. [They] do not receive any information at all," Barbier said. "They will sometimes call us to come pick someone up."

Jacobs said CARPOOL sometimes receives more calls than the organization is equipped to handle.

"It's really hard to get to people as quickly as we would like," Jacobs said. "You feel bad that people have to wait. We get so many calls and try to get to them as fast as we can. Unfortunately, people sometimes end up having to wait awhile before we can get to them."

Barbier said CARPOOL tries to provide as many rides as possible. "In our first three years, we gave 26,353 rides," she said.

The organization kicked off its fourth year on Sept. 5.

Barbier said 130 rides were provided that night. CARPOOL can be reached at 693-9905.

## TEXAS A&M FOOTBALL

### Walk-on / 12th Man Informational Meeting

Wednesday, September 4, 2002  
4:30 p.m.

The Football Team Auditorium on the  
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Career Center Orientation for Liberal Arts Majors	Sept. 10	5:30pm	502 Rudder
Career Center Orientation	Sept. 10 & 12	4:00pm	111 Koldus
Resume Writing	Sept. 10 & 12	5:00pm	111 Koldus
Engineering Resume Writing	Sept. 10	7:00pm	104B Zachry
International Student Work Authorization	Sept. 10	3:30pm	110 Koldus
Marketing International Experience	Sept. 10	4:00pm	502 Rudder
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Career Center Orientation for Liberal Arts Majors	Sept. 11	2:00pm	111 Koldus
Sell Yourself	Sept. 11	4:00pm	111 Koldus
Interviewing	Sept. 11	4:00pm	111 Koldus
Engineering Resume Reviews	Sept. 12	10:00pm	Zachry Lobby
Resume Writing	Sept. 12	5:00pm	111 Koldus
Co-op Orientation	Sept. 12	11:30pm	111 Koldus
Internship Strategies	Sept. 12	3:00pm	111 Koldus
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4. You must be in good standing with the University. (No blocks, etc.)

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1. Your degree must be conferred and posted on SIMS or if you have completed all degree requirements, you may present an original letter of completion from the Office of Graduate Studies.
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