

# THE BATTALION

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Texas A&amp;M University

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## Students vote down fee increases

By Nicole M. Jones  
THE BATTALION

In a record turnout for voting referendums, students voted down all three proposed referendum fee increases Wednesday and Thursday.

Out of 6,116 voters, 69 percent voted to not increase the Recreation Sports fee referendum; 79 percent voted no for the Student Service fee referendum; and 50 percent said no to the computer access fee referendum.

The Recreation Sports fee referendum would have increased Rec Sports fees from \$78 to \$88 to cover the cost of operation departmental programs and facilities

as well as expand the weight room.

The fee referendum would have raised the Student Service fee \$0.71 to a total of \$12.57 per credit hour per student for the first 12 credit hours each semester.

The computer access fee referendum would have raised computer access/instructional technology fees either \$1.25 or \$3.25 per credit hour. The money would have been used to expand bandwidth and wireless network access at different campus locations.

Erin Eckhart, the election commissioner, said the voting process was very smooth.

"We were very happy with the turnout," she said.

Even though the votes were counted by the same system that calculated the results of the freshman class

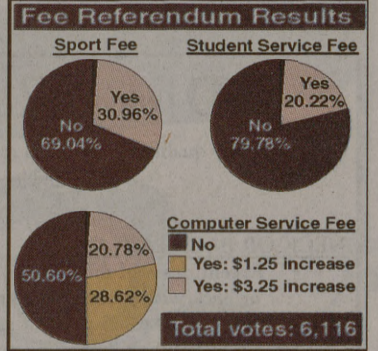
president elections, a new program was written specifically for this election to ensure accuracy, Eckhart said.

Thomas Pack, a junior sports management major, was disappointed when he heard the results of the voting.

"I think the benefits of increasing fees outweigh the costs," he said.

In 1987, students voted to build the Student Recreational Center at a higher cost than \$10 per student.

Other students, such as senior psychology major Karlen Moore, said that students are already on fixed budgets, and raising fees to attend Texas A&M would place a financial burden on many students.

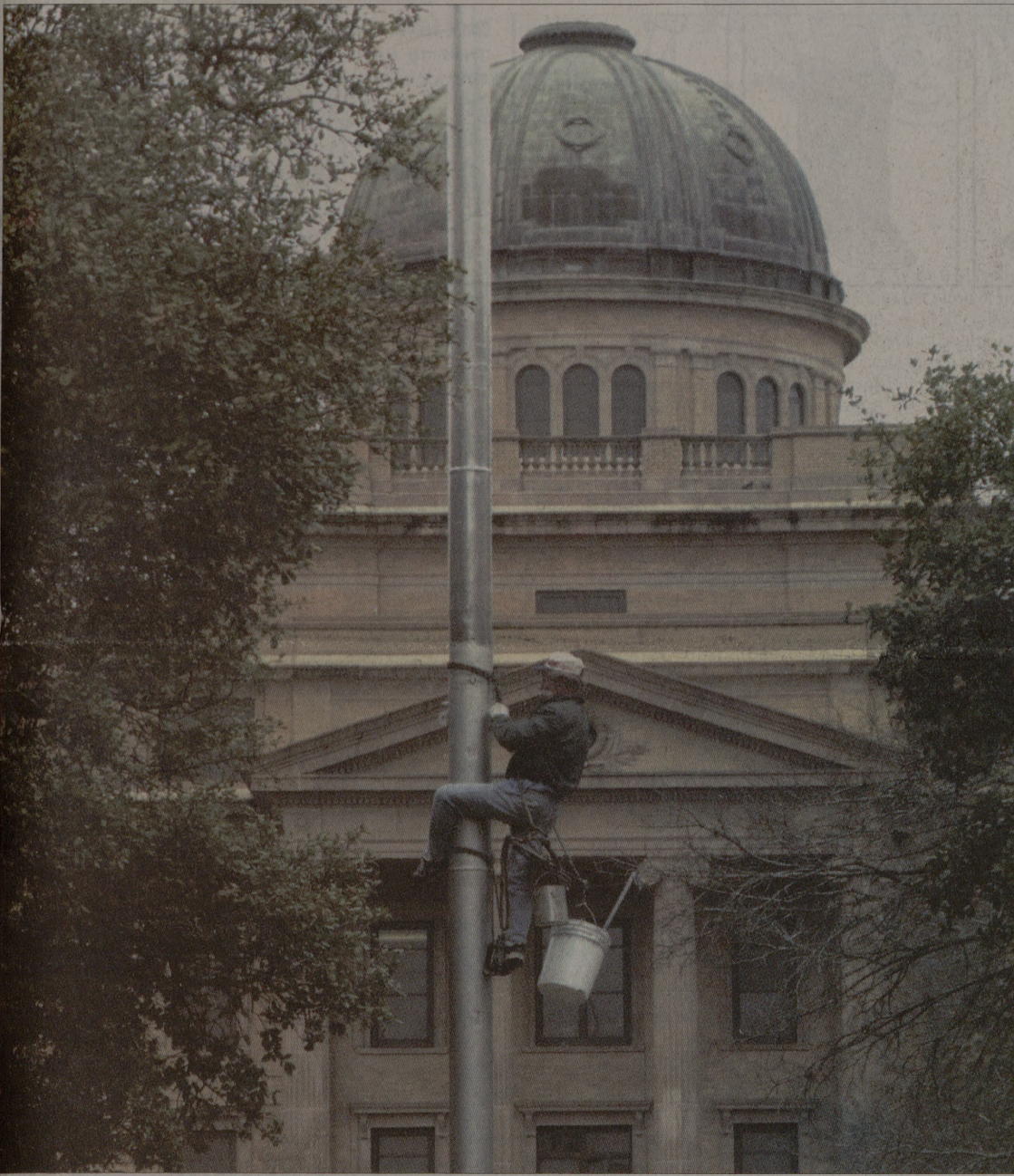


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SOURCE: DEPARTMENT OF STUDENT SERVICES

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## Wet paint



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Painter **Steve Gooding** paints the flagpole by the Academic Building Thursday afternoon. **Gooding** has been painting flagpoles all across America for 27

years and owns a company specializing in painting flagpoles. He will also paint the flagpoles at the Systems building in front of Kyle Field.

## Military buildup reaches 200,000

By Pauline Jelinek  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The U.S. military buildup for war topped 200,000 troops in the Gulf region Thursday while inside Iraq Saddam Hussein was said to be moving some of his best-trained forces into new positions.

President Bush called anew for Saddam's "total, complete disarmament" and defended his father for stopping short of ousting the Iraqi president in the 1991 Persian Gulf War.

Secretary of State Colin Powell urged Arab leaders who are planning to hold a summit meeting this weekend "to issue the strongest possible statement" to Saddam that he must comply with U.N. Security Council disarmament resolutions. Powell also said the Arab League meeting in Egypt might consider urging Saddam to "step down and get out of the way and let some responsible leadership take over in Baghdad."

Meanwhile, Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld rejected the U.S. Army chief's estimate this week that several hundred thousand troops would be needed for a post-Saddam occupying force in Iraq.

"The idea that it would take several hundred thousand U.S. forces is far off the mark," Rumsfeld said at a Pentagon news conference.

Estimating how much a war with Iraq would cost is impossible, Rumsfeld said during a joint news conference with Afghan President Hamid Karzai.

"If you don't know if it's going to last six days, six weeks or six months, how in the world can you come up with a cost estimate?" Rumsfeld said. "There are so many variables that the numbers of possible point answers create a range that simply isn't useful."

Administration officials said that in recent days members of Iraq's northernmost Republican Guard division have moved south in what the United States interpreted as a further effort to protect Saddam's power centers — his hometown of Tikrit and the capital of Baghdad 100 miles south.

Significant parts of the Adnan Republican Guard division, based near the northern city of Mosul, were moving toward Tikrit, according to the officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

Word on that movement followed statements by a senior defense official Wednesday that Saddam has concentrated a substantial number of forces around the Baghdad area in an attempt to draw U.S. forces into high-risk urban combat.

Other such preparations included digging trenches that could be filled with oil to create fires in an attempt to make airstrikes more difficult, Pentagon officials said. Iraq has recently tested a burning trench, the officials said.

The repositioning would leave only one full Republican Guard division in northern Iraq to oppose any invasion from the north by U.S. and Turkish forces as well as forces of Iraq's Kurdish minority, the U.S. officials noted. Seven of Iraq's regular army divisions remain in the north, but they are not as well-equipped and trained as the guard.

It is widely believed that American war plans call for the U.S. Army's 4th Infantry Division, supported by elements of the 1st Infantry Division, to gather in Turkey to Iraq's north for a possible thrust south toward Tikrit and Baghdad.

But the plan to base 60,000 American combat troops in Turkey remained stalled. Turkey's ruling party Thursday delayed a vote on the proposal.

The Pentagon said the number of American troops now deployed to the region stood at 225,000, which includes some 16,000 in and around Afghanistan and the Horn of Africa.



BUSH

## Spire chosen for Ground Zero

By Karen Matthews  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

A spire that would rise hundreds of feet higher than the World Trade Center was chosen Thursday to fill the yawning hole in the city's skyline, opening a complex new phase in the rebuilding of ground zero.

The plan by architect Daniel

Libeskind will restore "lower Manhattan to its rightful place in the world," Mayor Michael Bloomberg said.

The design calls for a cluster of glassy, angled buildings and a 1,776-foot spire filled with gardens instead of office space. It would preserve part of the pit that was the foundation of the twin towers for an as-yet undesigned memorial to the nearly 2,800 people

who died there Sept. 11.

"The plan succeeds both when it rises into the sky and when it descends into the ground. In doing so, it captures the soaring optimism of our city and honors the eternal spirit of our fallen heroes," said John Whitehead, chairman of the Lower Manhattan Development Corp., the agency that picked the design.

## Truman finalists announced

By Lauren Smith  
THE BATTALION

Three Texas A&M students have been chosen as finalists for the Truman Scholarship Foundation, which seeks college juniors with exceptional leadership potential and commitment to careers in public service.

Derek Mercer, Sarah Rubenstein and Adam Williams, are among the 212 finalists selected for scholarships in this year's competition.

"The Truman Foundation asks universities to nominate four students. The preliminary application process begins with eight to 10 students who submit an application including awards won, career aspirations, influences in their lives, and a

policy proposal," said Marcella F. Ellis, student development coordinator for the Office of Honors Programs and Scholarships.

Of the four finalists from A&M, the three were invited to continue in the process with an interview in Dallas this week with a regional selection panel made up of past Truman scholarship winners, university presidents and senior public servants.

For finalist Derek Mercer, a political science major whose aspirations to be a foreign officer for the Department of State in the developing countries of Africa or South America fulfill the "likelihood of making a difference" requirement for the scholarship, the interview process was more bearable than expected.

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## Easterwood Airport boosts development

By Bernhard Hall  
THE BATTALION

Since it opened in 1941, Easterwood Airport has helped Texas A&M and the surrounding areas grow and develop. The airport provides students and faculty with national and international transportation, said Charles Sippial, vice president for administration.

The airport, named Texas Airport of the Year by the Federal Aviation Administration in 1998, also provides students and residents of the Bryan-College Station area with an alternative to driving to larger airports.

"It is more convenient to use Easterwood rather than drive all the way to Houston or Dallas," said Cassie Rutherford, a civil engineering graduate student.

Airport passengers can avoid large crowds in other airports without sacrificing safety.

"(Other airports) are more crowded, plus it takes longer to get through security," Rutherford said. "It is the same security procedures (at Easterwood), but there are less people."

An additional benefit of the airport is the accessibility of the University to international students.

"Many international students say that without the airport, they may not have come to A&M," said John Happ, director of aviation services.

International students are an important part of initiatives such as Vision 2020, and are key to the diversity A&M is

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RANDAL FORD • THE BATTALION

A Continental Express plane prepares for departure at Easterwood Airport.