

THE BATTALION

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New T-Shirt Sales Policy

After losing funds due to the previous year's chaotic Maroon Out T-shirt sales procedures, Class Councils has implemented numerous changes.

- Shirts will be counted upon delivery and tracked using a bar code system.
- "Buy one, get one free" T-shirt sales will now be expressly prohibited.
- Online T-shirt sales are no longer being handled by Class Councils.
- Money will be counted at the end of every sales day and several times on game days.

ANDREW BURLESON • THE BATTALION
SOURCE • MAROON OUT ACTION PLAN

MSC revamps accounting practices

By Sarah Walch
THE BATTALION

The Maroon Out T-shirts sales mystery that left some combination of cash and inventory — at a minimum value of \$48,000 and a maximum of more than \$61,000 — unaccounted for has caused the Memorial Student Center, whose advisers oversee the independently-run Class Councils, to tighten its controls over inventory, cash handling and financial documentation. In response to the Texas A&M internal auditor's report, the Class Councils committee has drawn up and implemented an action plan to correct several handling problems. Sales now occur through the win-

dows at G. Rollie White Coliseum, where students can purchase tickets that are then taken inside the building to redeem for T-shirts.

Carol Smith, the state auditor who oversees A&M, said this segregation of duties is important to prevent volunteers or leaders from becoming tempted to tamper with documents and inventory or steal funds.

Public schools and universities that run independent student organizations such as Class Councils, where volunteers have no financial training, fall prey to theft occasionally, Smith said.

"I don't think it's unusual," she said. "When you have the ability to handle cash and inventory and reconcile accounts, there are many people who would see the opportunity

and are in financial need for some reason at that time."

The A&M internal auditor's report has been forwarded to the state audit office. A discrepancy of more than 12,000 missing T-shirts was discovered in November by a former Class Councils adviser. In January, auditors began an investigation that lasted until June.

Bill Kibler, interim vice president for Student Affairs, said since student handlers have started hand counting the shirts in each box delivered by the vendor this fall, they have discovered that there are 10 to 12 fewer shirts inside each box than is written on the outside.

"We called the vendor and discovered the number on the outside of the box is a general target," he

said. "They do it by weight. It's not guaranteed."

So far this year, Maroon Out has amassed around \$100,000 in sales, and only \$119 has been unaccounted for so far.

"That's essentially on target," Kibler said.

Problems listed in the auditor's report include:

- no inventory accounting
- security problems in the MSC
- no financial training for advisers
- an unauthorized "Buy one, get one free" policy
- no documentation of who was handling cash and when
- the loss of all monthly

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Aggie Code to reflect academic initiatives

By Dan Orth
THE BATTALION

The Academic Integrity Task Force has announced a new honor system effective Spring 2004 to more strictly enforce the Aggie Code of Honor.

The changes will include the formation of an honor council, which will "investigate and adjudicate allegations of academic misconduct," according to a summary of the proposed honor system.

Martha L. Louder, chair of the Academic Integrity Task Force, said

50 members will make up the honor council, including roughly five members from each college at a ratio of three students to two faculty.

Other proposed changes include expanded definitions of academic misconduct, more student involvement in promoting the honor code, clarified penalties for violation and a remediation program for first-time offenders.

This change was Texas A&M President Robert M. Gates' initiative and was mentioned in his September 2002 convocation speech. Gates said some former students who are now politicians or businessmen have set an example of lying and cheating outside of A&M and the University that "needs to take a more aggressive stand on this."

Louder credits Gates for pushing to promote academic integrity but said professors and students have also been in favor of change.

Focus groups and student surveys show the honor code's importance has dropped, and Louder said she gets a sense from students that it has lost its luster.

Robby Swanson, a sophomore aerospace engineering major, said cheating is not part of the Aggie way

HONOR COUNCIL

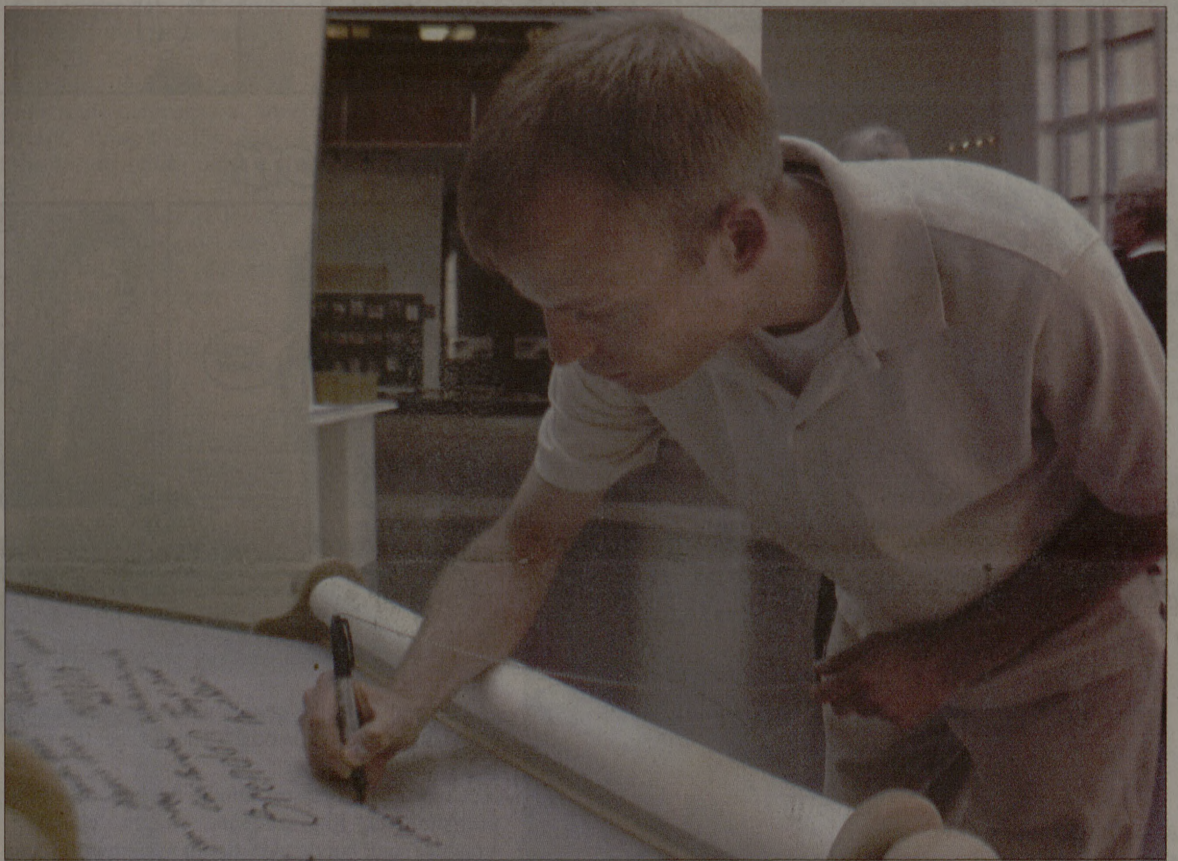
The honor council was created by the Academic Integrity Task Force to investigate and adjudicate allegations of academic misconduct.

- 50 members will make up the council; five members from each college at a ratio of three students to two faculty.
- Students caught cheating can face punishment from their professor or the honor council.
- Cases will be heard by five members.

SETH FREEMAN • THE BATTALION
SOURCE • ACADEMIC INTEGRITY TASK FORCE

See Code on page 2A

Sign here



SHARON AESCHBACH • THE BATTALION

Senior geology major **Wayne Adamcik** signs a mock U.S. Constitution at the George Bush Library and Museum Wednesday afternoon in celebration of Constitution Day. Students from all across Bryan-College Station came to listen to a George Washington impressionist speak about the framing of the U.S. Constitution.

Lawmakers confident about redistricting Maps drafted, but Republicans still bickering over West Texas

By April Castro
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

AUSTIN — Republicans in the Legislature finally have enough Democratic members in attendance to vote on congressional redistricting maps, but new roadblocks are emerging from within the GOP.

At issue is a West Texas district that includes the area from Lubbock

to Midland, Republican House Speaker Tom Craddick, a Midland native, wants his home district to be represented in Congress separate from Lubbock.

Sen. Robert Duncan, R-Lubbock, chair of the Senate Jurisprudence Committee charged with redistricting, wants to keep Midland in the district now represented by U.S. Rep. Randy Neugebauer, R-Lubbock.

Each side has shown little willingness to budge.

"It's hard to negotiate when I haven't seen anything from the Senate," Craddick said. "I've seen 10 different versions people have drawn, but they haven't passed any-

thing yet. We had a meeting last week but didn't get anywhere."

Duncan said he can't vote on a map that his constituents strongly oppose.

The House map, set to be debated Tuesday, would give Midland a separate congressional district. Craddick said he expects the House to pass that map the same day.

Senators have already said the House map wouldn't pass muster in the Senate. That would leave the issue to be hashed out in a conference committee made up of delegates from both chambers.

"They can't afford to be in conference five or 10 days before the end of the session," said Rep. Rick Noriega of Houston, one of the 51 House Democrats who fled to Ardmore, Okla., in May to avoid congressional redistricting during the regular session.

"Here you have these very strong-willed persons and it's silly we're wasting taxpayers' money when Republicans can't agree in their own greed," Noriega said.

The Legislature on Monday

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Bush denies GOP scheme in Texas redistricting push

AP — President George W. Bush said Tuesday he is confident Texas lawmakers will eventually settle the contentious congressional redistricting issue that has led to three special sessions this summer.

"I'm sure they'll work it out," Bush said. "They are all working hard to get it resolved."

Redistricting and Bush's controversial judicial nominations were among the national and regional issues he discussed during a meeting with a dozen reporters at the White House.

During the 45-minute interview, Bush also talked about the economy, energy and conservation policy and the Iraq war. The reporters

who attended were from newspapers nationwide, including the Fort Worth Star-Telegram and the San Antonio Express-News.

Bush briefly touched on Texas redistricting, describing it as state issue that should be handled by state leaders.

On Tuesday, the Texas House gave preliminary approval to a Republican-drawn congressional redistricting map during the Legislature's third special session.

The special session began

Monday after the return of a group of Democratic senators from Albuquerque, N.M., where they stayed for six weeks to protest a Republican-backed redistricting map.

Democratic House lawmakers successfully thwarted a redistricting vote during the first special session when they fled to Ardmore, Okla.

The president dismissed accusations by Democrats that he's behind the GOP redistricting plan that could give Republicans five to six more seats in the House of Representatives.

"I get blamed for a lot of things," Bush said, adding that he doesn't "take it personal."

Bush also touched on his judicial nomination of Texas Supreme Court Justice Priscilla Owens to the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans. Owens' nomination has been blocked by Senate Democrats who accuse her of being pro-business and anti-abortion.

Bush renominated her this year and she moved out of committee, but Republicans three times were unable to get the 60 votes needed on the Senate floor to confirm her nomination.

"She is a great lady. She ought to be a judge. She ought to be confirmed," he said in story for Wednesday's editions of the Express-News.

See Bush on page 2A

RHA rejects TS garage proposal

By Eric Ambroso
THE BATTALION

The Residence Hall Association will not support the Department of Transportation Services' proposal to eliminate reserved spaces in the Southside Parking Garage.

Students with parking spots in the Southside garage pay up to \$390 to have a reserved space. TS is considering changing the garage's status from reserved parking spaces to an open lot.

On Sept. 9, an e-mail was sent to students who purchased a parking spot notifying them of a possible change of plans. The e-mail asked the students to vote by Sept. 15 on whether the change should go into effect immediately or in the fall of 2004. However, another e-mail was sent to the students Sept. 11 notifying them of a task force created to evaluate the situation and make an independent decision.

"The manner in which students were notified of the possibility of change was inappropriate and very abrupt," said Michael Vargo, president of Aston Hall. "The Department of Transportation Services affects everyone who wishes to park anywhere on campus and it is not acting in a manner of a Texas Aggie."

RHA hopes to discourage TS's proposal by adopting a resolution against the change and starting a petition to let TS know how the students feel.

So far, more than 1,000 students have signed the petition, Vargo said, and he hopes more step forward to voice their opinion.

"A bunch of people paid a lot of money to have a guaranteed parking space," Vargo said. "We just want to get them what they paid for."

Students interested in signing the petition can contact Vargo at 847-7088.

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