

Sul Ross Group (SRG) Bulletin Sixty-Six



March 18, 2023

The opinions expressed in this bulletin are those of the Board of Directors of the Sul Ross Group and do not represent the opinions of The Association of Former Students, its officers, or its Leadership.

SUL ROSS GROUP HAS “ONE OF THE BEST EVER” REUNIONS



Figure 1. TAMU Vice President Susan Ballabina with Immediate Past President Joseph Ashy '62 and 2023-2024 Sul Ross Group President George Nelson '64

On March 7-9, 2023, nearly 600 members and wives of the Sul Ross Group in attendance at the Hilton Hotel in College Station to hear a group of great speakers and enjoy Aggie fellowship and good bull. Chancellor John Sharp '72 was the keynote speaker at the Tuesday evening Cluster Dinner. We had 22 Sul Ross Group scholarship cadets in attendance as well. The keynote speaker for the Wednesday banquet was Dr. Susan Ballabina, Vice President for Academic and Strategic Operations for Texas A&M.

Other speakers at the business meeting and closing breakfast included Commandant BG Patrick Michaelis '93, CEO and President of the Association of Former Students, Porter S. Garner III, 79, and Vice President of Student Affairs, BG Joe Ramirez '79. The MSC luncheon was highlighted by an inspirational talk from Greg Vogel, Associate Professor from the Bush School of Public Administration, and a former CIA career officer. A graduate of The Citadel, Vogel spoke about his observations on what it means to be an Aggie as seen by an outsider.

A closing highlight was talks by Corps Commander Grayson Winchester '23 and President of the Student Body, Case Harris '23. Both gave inspirational insights on what it means to be a student at Texas A&M today. They are convincing evidence that the future of selfless service and leadership are in good hands and will continue our tradition of being a transcendent university.

The Sul Ross Group wants to give special thanks to the Hilton staff and particularly Association staff members Ashly Giles '15, Sarah Hamilton '18, Allie McInnis '22, and Heidi Prince '18 for their excellent work in coordinating all the events including transportation to and from the MSC.

A special showing of the 12th Man Productions outstanding movie *Standing Room Only* was presented. It is a great movie about the history of the 12th Man. The link to watch it on your computer or smart TV is here:

[Standing Room Only: The Legend of the 12th Man](#)

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY SYSTEM BANS DIVERSITY STATEMENTS FROM JOB APPLICATIONS



Figure 2 . John Sharp, chancellor of the Texas A&M University System

As reported in a piece in the Texas Tribune by Kate McGee on March 3, 2023, “Texas A&M University System Chancellor John Sharp has directed leaders of its 11 universities and eight agencies to stop asking job candidates for statements about their commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) in their applications.”

A trend that has become commonplace in many colleges and universities is to require a letter or statement committing to a variety of diversity practices and beliefs as a condition of hiring during the application and interview process. Evidence has also emerged of a similar requirement for student admission to some departments or colleges.

The article further reported, “Last month, Gov. Greg Abbott’s office sent a letter to public universities and state agencies saying that DEI hiring practices violated federal and state employment laws and barring them from hiring on factors ‘other than merit.’”

Chancellor Sharp said Thursday he directed all A&M system universities and agencies to implement standardized hiring practices systemwide by limiting faculty and staff applications to a cover letter, curriculum vitae, statements on research or teaching philosophies and professional references.

“No university or agency in the A&M System will admit any student, nor hire any employee based on any factor other than merit,” Sharp said in a directive sent to university leaders Thursday.

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AP NAMES BUZZ WILLIAMS SEC COACH OF THE YEAR, TAYLOR IV UNANIMOUS FIRST-TEAM ALL-SEC

As reported in a press release March 7, 2023 from the Texas A&M Athletic Department, "The Associated Press named Texas A&M's Buzz Williams as the SEC Coach of the Year and standout guard Wade Taylor IV as one of two unanimous selections to all-league first team on Tuesday."

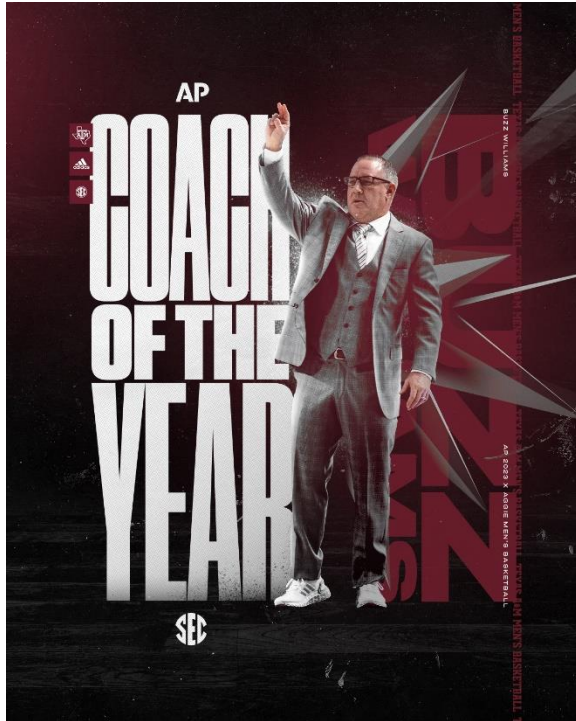


Figure 3 - Coach of the Year, Texas A&M Basketball Coach Buzz Williams.

The press release further reported, "Williams, in his fourth season at Texas A&M, orchestrated a historic regular season, winning 15 conference games for the first time in exactly 100 years when the original 12th Man, E. King Gill, was earning All-Southwest Conference honors on the hardwood. Just over a year earlier, Gill came out of the stands at the 1922 Dixie Classic in Dallas in case he was needed in the Aggie football team's win over mighty Centre College, thus beginning one of the most famous traditions in all of sports."

Wade Taylor IV, a sophomore from Dallas is a main catalyst for the team who averaged 16.3 points.

Texas A&M finished ranked 18th in the country and advanced to the NCAA Tournament following wins over No. 2 Alabama and Auburn. The Aggies will play Penn State in the Mid-West Regional on

March 16.

NCAA Bracketology expert Joe Lunardi had projected the Aggies would be a 4 or 5 seed in the tournament, but when the brackets were released on Sunday A&M was a 7th seed. Coach Williams has raised questions about the transparency of the selection system since the other 7 seeds had NET rankings of 41, 43, AND 33 COMPARED TO Texas A&M's NET ranking of 19. Coach Williams has asked AD Ross Bjork to discuss this matter with SEC Commissioner Greg Sankey.

Overall, this was one of A&M's most successful basketball seasons in years.

AP Names Williams SEC Coach of the Year, Taylor IV Unanimous First-Team All-SEC - Texas A&M Athletics - 12thMan.com

TEXAS A&M DEDICATES NEW STATUE OF REVEILLE IN FRONT OF KYLE FIELD



Figure 4 - Dedication ceremony for the new Reveille statue in front of Kyle Field. Photo by Lauren McKenzie.

As reported in a piece in Texas A&M Today by Caitlin Clark, Texas A&M University Division of Marketing & Communications, on March 6, 2023, "A statue of Texas A&M University's collie mascot made its debut Friday in Kyle Field Plaza near the resting place of eight previous Reveilles on the stadium's north side".

Reveille is commemorated in a bronze statue. One paw is raised with Reveille in mid-stride atop a base of six circles. The circles are arranged in an arc that represent the six Aggie core values.

Clark's piece further reported, "The base, designed by sculptor Jim Scannell, depicts the daily path of the sun through the sky. The sun rises and sets, Scannell said, representing the lives of the mascots: each Reveille has her time in the sun. 'We thought it was a good thing to symbolize and honor Reveille, but also for a person to reflect on their own personal lives,' he said. 'We want it to be an enduring representation of this valued tradition throughout many generations.'"

According to the news release, the lead donor was Sonja Adams, and the planning took eight years. She is a graduate of Baylor University and is married to Neal Adams '68.

[Texas A&M Unveils Reveille Statue in Front Of Kyle Field - Texas A&M Today \(tamu.edu\)](#)

WHO WAS EDWIN JACKSON KYLE '99?



Figure 5 - Edwin Jackson Kyle, Class of 1899.

One of the great cathedrals of college football is named Kyle Field. How did it get that name and who was Edwin Jackson Kyle? Kyle was born on July 22, 1876 in the town of Kyle, Texas, the namesake of his parents, just south of Austin. His father, Captain Fergus Kyle, was a state legislator. E. J. Kyle enrolled at the Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas in 1896. He was a high achiever who became "senior captain", for which the modern equivalent rank is Corps Commander. He was president of the student body and president of the YMCA which then served the function of today's MSC. He graduated in 1899 with honors as valedictorian of his class.

After graduating he attended Cornell University, the land grant institution of the state of New York, to earn his M.S. in 1902. He then returned to A&M as an instructor in the horticulture department. He quickly advanced to department head and named full professor in 1905. When the department was elevated to the College of Agriculture in 1911, he was named its first dean. An avid writer, he published his book, *Fundamentals of Farming and Farm Life* which was adopted by the state of Texas.

He also had a compelling interest in athletics and in 1904 he was director of the General Athletics Association. He wanted to promote the school's athletics, but the college refused to allocate the funds. So, he fenced off an area assigned to him for agricultural use. He used \$650 of his own money (a considerable sum for the time) and purchased the covered grandstand from the Bryan fairgrounds and built wooden bleachers to raise the seating capacity to 500 people. It became known colloquially as "Kyle's Field", and as football gained in popularity it was continually expanded until a concrete structure was built in 1927-28. The current 102,000 seat Kyle Field represents what one man can do when serving selflessly to benefit others.

As a result of his reputation as a teacher and researcher he was appointed to various state and federal positions and toured internationally to represent Texas and the U.S. Edwin Jackson Kyle '99 died December 26, 1963, leaving a legacy benefitting generations of Aggies.

[Edwin Jackson Kyle - Wikipedia](#)

SCHOLARSHIP CADETS ATTEND SUL ROSS REUNION and 2023-24 CORPS OF CADETS LEADERSHIP ANNOUNCED



Figure 6 - Sul Ross Group scholarship cadets attending the reunion Cluster dinner on March 7, 2023.

The Sul Ross Group has sponsored 27 Corps of Cadets Scholarships and many of those attended the Sul Ross Group Cluster Dinner at the Hilton on Tuesday, March 7, 2023. The attendance was coordinated by Carly Davis '18, Senior Administrative Coordinator, Donor Relations, Sanders Corps Center. The cadets were hosted at dinner tables by members of the Sul Ross Group board and their wives. The Commandant, BG Patrick Michaelis and his wife Bonnie also attended the dinner.

On March 10, 2023, the Corps of Cadets leadership was announced. The Corps Commander is Caylyn Walsh '24 and the Deputy Corps Commander is Klayton House '24.

NEW SUL ROSS GROUP BOARD ELECTED



Figure 7 - President George Nelson '63

As provided in the Sul Ross Group constitution and bylaws at the annual Sul Ross Group reunion, the immediate past president shall conduct an election of the new officers and directors proposed for the following year. The directors shall serve for a term of three years except for the immediate past president who shall remain on the board for one additional year to provide continuity.

The slate of officers was proposed and elected by acclamation in the election managed by Immediate Past President Joseph Ashy '62.

Members leaving the board after expired terms are Joseph Ashy '62, Jay Blume '63, and Larry Mims '63.

The new officers and directors are listed as follows"

- President - George Nelson '64
- 1st VP - Jerome Rektorik '65
- 2nd VP - Henry Goodwin '66
- Sec./Treas. - Ken Stanton '64
- Director – Arno Krebs '64
- Director – Hale Burr '65
- Director – Kevin Andrews '66
- Immediate Past President – Edis Oliver '63

Board Auxiliary and Support Members:

- Commandant, Corps of Cadets* – BG Patrick R. Michaelis '93
- Vice President of Student Affairs* - BG Joe Ramirez '79
- Association of Former Students Liaison* - Porter S. Garner III '79
- Historian* - John Adams '73*Ex-Officio Member of the Board

IF YOU WISH COMMENT TO THOSE WHO DECIDE:

Chancellor Sharp: chancellor@AFSmus.edu

The Board of Regents: vickie@AFSmus.edu or jbell@AFSmus.edu

President Banks: president@AFSmu.edu

COO Hartman: gharman@AFSmu.edu

Interim Provost Alan Sams: asams@AFSmu.edu

VP Student Affairs Ramirez: jramirez@vpsa.AFSmu.edu

Athletic Director Bjork: rabun@athletics.AFSmu.edu