

Sul Ross Group (SRG) Bulletin Eighty-One (81)



February 7, 2024

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 leadership. The SRG is a nonpartisan organization. Our intention is in keeping with one of our four charged SRG Constitution's purposes, to keep the Sul Ross Group membership informed on pertinent topics and occurrences at TAMU in a timely manner and enlist their support when required.

Mark your calendar - Sul Ross '24 Reunion will be March 5 – 7, 2024 in College Station

The Hilton Hotel room block is open and ready to book room nights. The Group Code is ROSS24 and the cut-off date to make reservations at the Hilton is February 12, 2024.

Hilton Hotel - 801 University Dr E, College Station, TX 77840

Phone (979) 693-7500

As of February 3, the link to the Online Registration webpage is now repaired and up and running. Go to: tx.ag/SulRoss24. You can also fax your registration to 979-845-9263, attention: 2024 SRG Reunion.

The AFS sent out an email on Saturday, Feb. 3 to the Sul Ross Group email segment notifying everyone that online registration for the Reunion is available. In that email, there is a link that will take you directly to the Reunion registration website. If anyone does not receive that email, let the AFS know and they will get them taken care of. The link to online registration will also be added to the SRG webpage on AggieNetwork.com (tx.ag/SulRoss24)

Due to the on-line issues, the registration deadline for signing up for the Reunion is extended to Friday, Feb. 23. There will be no late fee for registering.

Note To all Class Agents:

For the class hospitality suites for the Reunion, the AFS will provide coolers, ice, cups, and napkins. Each class will be required to furnish ANY and ALL

beverages and snacks that the class may wish to have in the hospitality suites.

For all evening meals at the Reunion, the seating should be by seniority of classes, starting with the classes of the 1940s and by the mobility impaired. Please respect the most senior classes in front of you and let them enter the dining room first.



The Hilton has come a long way in the re-modeling this last year. I hope you will be pleased. They have added a roof-top bar (Reveille-on-the Roof) that is very well done. It has a great view of the campus as well as the rest of the area and is a fun place to get a drink. (As of February 1st, the old elevators have been replaced and are working properly)

Figure 1- Hilton Roof Top Bar view

After lunch on Wednesday the 6th, you will have 2 options in which to participate, should you desire to do so:

1. There will be a tour of the President George H. W. Bush Library and Museum for those who choose and paid for it. The tour will include a display of Texas Aggie football history dating from the first gridiron kick-off in 1894.
The exhibit is a broad collection of sports items and memories as well as a look at some of Aggieland's oldest traditions, ranging from the 12th Man Kick-Off team, Reveille I's first blanket, and John David Crow's Heisman Trophy.
2. Go back to the hotel and see the video, "All-American: The Dat Ngyen Story."

PRESIDENT'S BRIEF – JANUARY 18, 2024



Figure 2 - A&M Campus - Overview

Members of the Aggie Family,

Happy New Year and welcome back to campus for the start of the 2024 spring semester. I'm excited to start a new year here at Texas A&M University and look forward to continuing to work together to make this place the best it can be. ...

Here are a few important things you should know:

QUICK-LOOK IMPLEMENTATION: Our leads continue to make progress on the quick-look assessment decisions. Below are a few highlights:

- Rather than simply reinstating the previous Dean of Faculties role, the committee charged with identifying the best ways to support faculty advocacy has proposed creating a new position, an Associate Provost for Faculty Advocacy. This redefined role would be embedded within Faculty Affairs.
- In December, Dr. Mark Zoran was named Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences after serving as interim since last August. In collaboration with the EVP and Provost, then Interim Dean Zoran, fellow faculty and stakeholders proposed a finalized governance structure for consideration, which I formally approved for the new college on Jan. 2.

LEADERSHIP UPDATES AND ASSESSMENTS: There are a few recent changes to the president's cabinet that transpired over the holiday break, along with updates on our search for permanent dean positions:

- President's Cabinet:
 - I'm happy to report that **Henry Judah** has agreed to step in as Interim Chief Compliance Officer following the retirement of Kevin McGinnis I hope to have a permanent Chief Compliance Officer in place in February.
 - It's with mixed feelings that I share that **Greg Hartman** has announced that he will be leaving the university in March. Greg has been recruited to build and serve as the founding CEO of a new statewide organization focused on the strategic development of the YMCAs across the state of Texas. **Peter Lange**, Associate Vice President of Transportation Services, has agreed to step in as Interim Chief Operating Officer as of March 1. A search for a permanent Chief Operating Officer will begin in

the next few weeks.

- And finally, ... **Ross Bjork** has accepted the role of Athletics Director at The Ohio State University. ... A committee will be formed quickly to identify a new Director of Athletics and I look forward to welcoming that leader to Aggieland as soon as possible.
- Dean Searches:
 - **College of Engineering:** The search advisory committee has completed interviews and will present final candidates to me and Provost Sams this week. I anticipate a new dean will be named in the near future.
 - **School of Performance, Visualization and Fine Arts:** Listening sessions with the search advisory committee, chaired by Law School Dean Bobby Ahdieh, are ongoing.
 - **School of Architecture:** The search advisory committee, chaired by Vice Chancellor and Dean for Agriculture and Life Sciences Jeff Savell, is working to develop the leadership profile.
 - **Bush School of Government and Public Service:** The search advisory committee met for the first time last week and received their charge from Provost Sams.
- Upcoming Leadership Assessments:
 - On a related topic, as part of our efforts to improve professional development at every level of the university, I'm instituting 360-degree assessments for myself, all vice presidents, the Commandant, and the Director of Athletics. ... The intent of the assessments is to ensure we do everything possible to provide the leadership you and this university deserve.

S.B. 17 COMPLIANCE AND REPORTING PROCEDURE: As I mentioned in my December message, it will be incumbent upon all of us to ensure continued compliance with Senate Bill 17, which prohibits diversity, equity and inclusion offices and initiatives at public universities, effective Jan. 1, 2024. The law requires the Board of Regents to certify Texas A&M's compliance to the state legislature and coordinating board annually, and the System Ethics and Compliance Office has developed standard procedures to track and respond to any alleged violations of S.B. 17 going forward.

And finally, on Oct. 4, 2026, Texas A&M will celebrate its 150th birthday! ... To celebrate our university in the manner it deserves, I've asked Julie Mosbo Ballestro and Alexandra González Rainey to co-chair the Texas A&M University Sesquicentennial

planning and execution effort.

General (Ret.) Mark A. Welsh III, President

President's Brief - January 2024 | Office of the President | Texas A&M University (tamu.edu)



R.C. SLOCUM PICKED AS INTERIM A.D. - January 22, 2024

I am happy to let you know that President Mark A. Welsh III chose our old friend R.C. Slocum to serve as interim director of athletics during the search for a new AD.

This is the second time we asked Coach Slocum to help us out in this way. He served in the same role in 2019.



Figure 3 - R.C. Slocum

I cannot think of a better person to help us through this interim period. After all, there may not be another person anywhere in the world with a better understanding of Aggie athletics than Coach Slocum.

As always, thank you for your support.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "John Sharp".



Figure 4 - Task Force 1

A&M TASK FORCE 1 EARNS TOP SCORE

Texas A&M Task Force 1 this week became the first-ever FEMA Urban Search and Rescue Team to earn a perfect score on the Federal Emergency Management Association Task Force Administration Readiness Evaluation.

So once again, Texas A&M Task Force 1 has set

the national standard all others follow. This is the first time in 10 years any of the Urban Search and Rescue Teams across the nation have earned a 100 percent on this FEMA test.

Texas A&M Task Force 1 functions as one of the 28 federal task forces under the FEMA National Urban Search and Rescue System and as a statewide urban search and rescue team under the direction of the governor through the Texas Division of Emergency Management. Texas A&M Task Force 1 also coordinates the state's swift water rescue program and the helicopter search and rescue team which works in conjunction with the Texas Military Department. Since its inception in 1997, Texas A&M Task Force 1 has been on more than 180 deployments.

Chancellor's Century Council News – January 26, 2024



Figure 5 - Corps of Cadets in the Quad

Below is a letter from the Class of 1947 that was sent to us by a member of the Class of 1962. We think it is still relevant today. Enjoy.

A LETTER FROM THE SENIOR CLASS OF 1947 TO THE CADET CORPS

This is it – *that* last chance that we have waited for SO long, to say what is on our minds. Somehow, the words that we had stored up to say don't seem just right-now. The things that flood up in our minds are the little things, the ones that we have been taking for granted ever since our freshman year -the bull sessions in our "holes," Reveille frolicking in front of the band, yell practice at midnight, formal reviews, and meal formations, "thumbing it" on those weekend Corps trips, and the moonlight on Sully's statue.

So maybe these are the big things after all. When you analyze it carefully, it was the little things that taught us some of the biggest lessons.

Maybe that accounts for the peculiar tenacity of the Aggie traditions. Maybe there is something more than a time-honored custom in the way an Aggie shakes hands, and in the way a Fish is taught to say "Howdy." Maybe there is something more in the Twelfth Man tradition, bigger than the will to beat t.u.

These traditions are the precious heritage that we are passing on to you, OL' Army We know that they are the parts that add up to the Spirit of

Aggieland. We don't believe that it's necessary to charge you here with the responsibility of keeping them alive, because we know that consciously or subconsciously, you have already acquired the instinct of preserving them.

So let us suggest, instead, that you do not wait until your Commencement Day to find out what makes the Aggie tradition all that it is. We believe that this understanding is the final step in the process of becoming an Aggie and entitling you to full-fledged membership in the worldwide Aggie brotherhood.

So, it's all yours now, Ol' Army. Sully is yours; Kyle Field is yours; Military Walks is all yours. And so is Silver Taps, the Twelfth Man-and the Spirit of Aggieland. Take care of them.

The Class of '47

Author Unknown



SUL ROSS GROUP

The Sul Ross Group is made up of all Aggies who have attended A&M from the Classes that have celebrated 55 years or more since graduation. They reunite annually each year in College Station. The Reunions are planned and executed by the Sul Ross Group President and the Board of Directors in conjunction with The Association's Class Programs and Events teams.

A common misconception is that the group is comprised of former Ross Volunteers, but that is not the case, nor a prerequisite of being a member of the group. Simply stated, it is all members of the Classes from the Class of '69 (55 years ago) and back who have been added into the group. All are welcome at the Reunion, even if an individual missed his or her induction Reunion.

The Sul Ross Group was informally formed in 1900 when several Classes, who were students in the 1890's during the presidency of Lawrence Sullivan Ross, came together to enjoy one Reunion rather than organizing multiple Class Reunions. Travis L. Smith, Jr., Class of 1898, and a few others are credited with its formation. While Mr. Smith served as General Chairman for the Reunions,

he also funded them! The Group was later formalized in 1947 to include all Classes over 50 years since graduation (later changed as it is now to 55 years from graduation).

Although the Sul Ross Group has evolved over more than 70 years, the general purposes remain the same. One can read these purposes in the Constitution and Bylaws.

Past Sul Ross Group President, Lester Potter 1928 was very instrumental in the growth and early development of the Sul Ross Group. He wrote a book on the group's namesake, Lawrence Sullivan Ross, copywrite 1993, owned by The Association. In it, besides conveying the Ross story of leadership, he expresses incredible wisdom about the future to all of us living it now. Specifically, he describes the challenges of the transit from A&M's past (the "traditional") to the future ("modernity") and the "friction points" that we must deal with.

As we can know and understand, our beloved university is much larger (the largest student body in the United States), immensely more diverse, and way more advanced in breadth and depth than 70 years ago. Mr. Potter charged us as Sul Ross Group members to pay close attention to this challenge of change – understanding that change is inevitable, and that we must adapt and be flexible to successfully deal with it. Some change is good and principled, some not. We, the Sul Ross Group are dedicated to preserving the traditional, "transcendent" part, which Sul Ross started for us (and other great leaders have enhanced) and sets apart as special, while leveraging the development and growth of our institution! We highly recommend that all of you turn to page 97 of Lester Potter's book and read what he told us!

Again, we believe that we have the experience, wisdom, and historical context to contribute in a constructive way as "elder statesmen and stateswomen," and strive to comport ourselves in that manner – dealing in truth and facts – and offering attendant suggested solutions. The history of A&MC / TAMU is rich in service-before-self and the call-to-duty by former students. That was born out of our traditions, core values, and culture. The nation and state need for us, "We are the Aggies; the Aggies are we", to stay that course.

AFS Letter – February 2024



Figure 6 - Reveille X – April 2021 – Texas A&M Today – Jesse Everett /Texas A&M Marketing & Communications

WHO, WHY, AND HOW TO RECEIVE THE SRG BULLETINS?

To provide our thoughts and communication with our membership, the SRG board has decided to communicate directly through bulletins sent by email to the Class Agents who will then share with those in their Classes. Anyone is free to pass these bulletins to any Aggie, friends of Aggies, or just friends. The Board plans to maintain our policy of complete transparency and that is the reason we have inserted the disclaimer on the front page of this bulletin. **You can contact us at: SRGbulletin@gmail.com**

The Sul Ross Group (SRG) Board of Directors (BoD) are solely responsible for producing the SRG Bulletins. We do so in keeping with one of our four charged SRG Constitution's purposes, which is to ensure our represented SRG Membership is kept informed on pertinent topics in a timely manner.

To access information about us as the elected SRG Board of Directors, and our Constitution and By-Laws, and the SRG's history and what we are about, please refer to

our new “**SRG Tab**” (Under “**Programs**”) on The Association’s website, at:
aggienetwork.com.

If you wish to comment to those who decide:

Chancellor John Sharp: **chancellor@tamus.edu**

The Board of Regents: **vickie@tamus.edu** or **jbell@tamus.edu**

President Mark Welsh: **markwelsh@tamu.com**

Provost Alan Sams: **asams@tamu.edu**

Vice President – COO Galveston Mike Fossum: **mfossum80@gmail.com**

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Commandant Patrick Michaelis: **pmichaelis@corps.tamu.edu**
