

Sul Ross Group (SRG) Bulletin Fifty-Four



March 15, 2022

Sul Ross Group Reunion

The 74th reunion of the Sul Ross Group (SRG) was held March 2-4, 2022, at the Hilton Hotel in College Station. The enthusiasm in returning to a live meeting was demonstrated by the attendance of over 700 Aggies and spouses. The meeting commenced with a board meeting attended by six past presidents. The speaker for Tuesday nights Cluster Dinner was Texas A&M System CFO, Billy Hamilton, who served in place of Chancellor John Sharp who tested positive for Covid the day before. Texas A&M president, Dr. M. Kathryn Banks, was the keynote speaker for the Wednesday night banquet. She supports growing the Corps of Cadets to 3,000 and has demonstrated that by appropriating \$50 million to the Corps for scholarships. Dr. Banks reminded the audience that during her administration, we have never lost to Alabama in football. SRG President, Joseph Ashy '62, was named as a Distinguished Alumnus in an accompanying ceremony at the close of the banquet. Bus tours of the campus were provided Thursday afternoon.

Other speakers included the following:

- Porter S. Garner III, CEO of the Association of Former Students
- Dr. Tim Scott, Interim Provost, and Executive Vice President of TAMU
- Ross Bjork, Athletic Director, TAMU was unable to attend due to jury duty
- Natalie Parks '22, President of the Student Body
- Conner Fortier '22, Commander of the Corps of Cadets
- BG Joe Ramirez '79, Vice President of Student Affairs
- Col. Byron Stebbens '78, Interim Commandant of the Corps of Cadets

At the business meeting, the new slate of officers and directors was elected as follows:

- President, Edis Oliver '63
- 1st Vice President, George Nelson '64
- 2nd Vice President, Jerome Rektorik '65
- Secretary/Treasurer, Jay Blume '63
- Director, Larry Mims '63

- Director, Ken Stanton '64
- Director, Hale Burr '65
- Immediate Past President, Joseph Ashy '62
- Corps Liaison *, Byron Stebbens '78
- Student Affairs Liaison *, BG Joe Ramirez '79
- Association of Former Students Liaison *, Porter S. Garner III
- Historian *, John Adams '73

* Ex Officio member of the board

The Sul Ross Group Board particularly wishes to thank the Association of Former Students representatives, Cecilee Herd '95, Mary Miller '87, and Jamie Veazey for their exceptionally hard and diligent work in organizing and administering a highly effective reunion.

Simpson Drill Field



Figure 1 -TAMU workers planting new trees at Simpson Drill Field.

The SRG has been engaged for several years in pressing for maintenance and updating a few items at the Simpson Drill Field. The fifty-two trees and plaques have been a memorial for the Aggies who gave their lives in World War I. They earned and deserved our respect. The SRG recently received this message from BG Joe Ramirez, VP of Student Affairs.

“Sir – just FYI. Additional trees are going in on Simpson to account for the now 70 Aggies who died during WWI. In

addition, plaques are being done for the additional names, and repairs/replacements have been done for the plaques that were either missing or in need of repair.

I will let you know when all is complete but wanted you to know that work has been progressing well on this project. Big kudos to Jerry Smith, Lilia Gonzalez (University Architect), and Byron Stebbins for working this so hard. “

This work is a testimonial to certain SRG board members who have been persistent in bringing the neglect to the attention of administrators.

The Battalion



Figure 2 - Photo by Ishika Samant

President Banks Proposes Changes to The Batt

President Katheryn Banks has proposed changes to the printing arrangement for The Battalion.

While The Battalion has been a printed student newspaper since 1893, President Banks has proposed changing to a digital only format.

Dr. Banks has accepted the MGT report recommendation to create a Journalism Department which will become a part of a new College of Arts and Sciences. Under this proposal, The Batt will become a part of that department instead of a wholly run student newspaper. Opposition has been expressed by the staff of the Battalion, the Student Senate, and the Faculty Senate.

"I believe in the freedom of the press," Banks said. "That's why I've determined, and we've decided to invest in journalism on this campus. We need journalists with integrity and professionalism to allow the country to continue as a free, democratic society."

"Gen Zs and millennials predominantly receive their news [digitally], and that is the market, here in College Station, certainly [among] college students" Banks said. "I do understand why [other university leadership] felt as if you need to have at least one experience ... to understand print media. I'm not a professor of journalism, I don't understand exactly why [print media] is important to the field."

https://www.thebatt.com/news/breaking-president-banks-demands-the-battalion-stop-printing/article_e399ccd2-8b69-11ec-966a-2f696477ceb7.html?fbclid=IwAR1ouWxPMSDRX_5KC8vCq5KBqGnuWNVrW1TFW2jebWNaN2pMwI3MPUftt10

President Banks has subsequently announced that the Journalism Working Group may consider options for the Battalion to continue printing in the future, and she has named two students to the Journalism Working Group.

https://www.thebatt.com/news/president-banks-announces-journalism-working-group-may-consider-options-for-the-battalion-to-continue-printing/article_d5551b44-8e03-11ec-8960-9b0857105a18.html

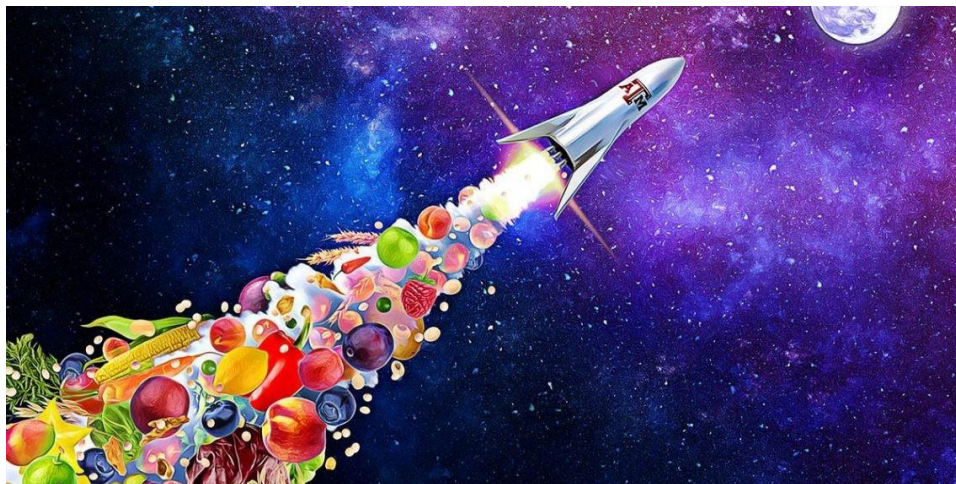
The SRG supports President Banks' decisions with respect to implementation of the MGT report recommendations with the goal of streamlining Texas A&M University and reducing or eliminating waste and duplication in the administration of the university.

Kathryn Greenwade '88

With deep regret, Porter Garner, CEO of the Association of Former Students, announced the death of long-time and valuable member of the staff of the Association, Kathryn Greenwade '88. She fought a long and brave battle with cancer. Kathryn served in several positions since 1999, including Vice President, and leading Communications, Human Resources, and Campus Programs for 22 years.

Porter said *"She brought the same commitment to her personal relationships, making friends everywhere she went and always bringing us humor and joy. This is a profound loss for the Association of Former Students and for every person who loved Kathryn and whose lives she touched."*

The Aggie Food Moonshot



Chancellor John Sharp recently announced the formation of the Institute for Advancing Health Through Agriculture headed up by Dr. Patrick Stover. Stover came to A&M from Cornell (another land-grant institution) and is a fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science and a member of the National Academy of Science.

The Dallas Morning News article by Ryan Clark said "What we've all come to realize in recent years, even those of us who don't count calories, is that, for most of the developed world, the presence of food is almost as much a threat to our health as its absence.

Nearly half of all U.S. adults have some type of cardiovascular disease, according to the American Heart Association. Nothing, not even COVID-19, kills more Americans. More than 70% of American adults are overweight or obese, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. More than 34 million Americans have diabetes. Six in

10 have some type of chronic health condition. Plus, diet-related cardiometabolic diseases cost the U.S. \$50.4 billion annually.

Stover's team is saying it's time for humanity to take the next evolutionary step, creating food systems that don't just keep us fed, but that help keep us healthy, and by extension, keep health care costs down."

"Now, agriculture is expected to support human health, to lower rates of chronic disease, to do it in a way that's environmentally sensitive, and to do it in a way that supports profitability for producers, so we don't keep losing precious land," Stover said.

To see the rest of the article, go to the link for Chancellor John Sharp
chancellor@tamus.edu

The Maroon and White Game

Football Spring Training started on March 6th, and the Spring Game at Kyle Field will be held on April 9. While Coach Jimbo Fisher lost some outstanding veterans to the NFL, a highly skilled team returns. To provide depth at the important quarterback position, Fisher has Haynes King who missed most of last season due to a broken ankle, LSU transfer Mack Johnson, and highly regarded fish Conner Weigman. In addition, two new coaches joined the staff. D.J. Durkin, Defensive Coordinator, replaces Mike Elko, who left A&M to become head coach at Duke, and Steve Addazio who joined the Aggies as Offensive Line Coach. The Aggies preseason ESPN ranking is 4th in the nation. Many fish from the number one recruiting class in the nation will play this season and several may start. The Aggies' home schedule includes Miami, ole Miss, Florida, and LSU, plus the Arkansas game being played at AT&T Stadium in Arlington.

Texas A&M System Moves to Severe Ties with Russia

"The Texas A&M University System has moved to distance itself from Russia amid the country's invasion of Ukraine, apparently becoming the first higher education institution in the state to do so", according to an article by Samantha Ketterer.



Figure 3 - Chancellor John Sharp

Chancellor John Sharp on Wednesday directed school leaders to sever ties with Russian entities by *"immediately" dissolving all agreements related to academics, research, and intellectual property.* He also asked them to review any other non-contractual agreements.

"The Texas A&M University System will not tolerate or support Russia in any way as it continues its brutal, senseless and unjust attack on the sovereign nation of Ukraine and its people," Sharp wrote in a memo to his system's CEOs.

"Sharp said he made the decision after President Joe Biden's announcement of widespread sanctions and restrictions on the transfer of U.S. technology to Russia."

"Texas A&M's move could affect study-abroad programs, research grant agreements and intellectual property licensing agreements, among other things. It was not immediately clear exactly how many programs, students or faculty will be affected at A&M's 11 campuses, eight state agencies, health science center and research campus in Bryan."

"But university officials noted that they believe fewer than 10 research agreements exist across the system. The flagship in College Station only has two non-binding agreements that allow for faculty to discuss possible collaborations with faculty at Russian academic institutions, and those have not led to any signed agreements, they said."

To read the rest of the article by Samantha Ketterer go to the link Laylan Copelin
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NOTES

SRG Bulletin Sign-Up Reminder: Anyone (Ags and non Ags, SRG Ags and all other Ags too) can "opt in" by going to:
<https://www.aggienetwork.com/theassociation/sulrossgroup.aspx> and simply putting in your name and email address, and then clicking on "submit." You will then automatically receive all the SRG Bulletins.

If you wish comment directly to those who decide:

Chancellor Sharp: chancellor@tamus.edu

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

President Banks: president@tamu.edu

Interim Provost Scott: t-scott@tamu.edu

Athletic Director Bjork: rrabun@athletics.tamu.edu

You can reach us at: SRGpresident@aggienetwork.com. The Sul Ross Group (SRG) Board of Directors (BoD) are responsible for producing and editing these SRG Bulletins, with transparency to and advice from The Association of Former Students, under whose auspices we operate. We do so in keeping with one of our four charged SRG Constitution's Purposes, which is keeping our represented SRG Membership informed in a timely manner. To access information about us as the elected SRG Board of Directors, and our Constitution, please refer to our new "**SRG Tab**" (Under "**Programs**") on The Association's website, at: aggienetwork.com. One can access information about us, including the current 2021-2022 SRG Board of Directors, The SRG's Constitution and By-Laws, and the SRG's history and for what we stand.