

**Sul Ross Group (SRG) Bulletin Twenty**  
**16 December 2020**

**We are all saddened, and we send our SRG prayers and condolences to our TAMUS Chancellor, John Sharp, and his family - "Here!"**

The Texas A&M University System has announced the passing of Charlotte Han Sharp, 67, on Dec. 15 after battling a lengthy illness. Charlotte was the wife of John Sharp, Chancellor of The Texas A&M University System.

Charlotte was very involved in the Bryan and College Station community, as an active member of St. Mary's Catholic Church in College Station and part of the Woman's Club of Bryan.

Charlotte was also renowned for her involvement in many community and humanitarian efforts, particularly for women, children and young people, according to the university system. She was a powerful fundraiser for a variety of organizations, including Texas Children's Hospital and Dell Children's Medical Center. As the Honorary Chair of the 2015 Magnolia Tea, she helped raise a record amount for scholarships for Texas A&M University medical students.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that Charlotte's friends and family make donations to Mobile Loaves & Fishes at St. John Neumann Catholic Church in Austin or to the Woman's Club of Bryan.

Charlotte is survived by her husband and their children, Spencer and Victoria; a daughter-in-law, Brigitte and two granddaughters, Simone and Freya; and her brother, Robert Dale Han Jr.

Services will be at 10:00 a.m. Friday, December 18, 2020 at St. Mary Cathedral in Austin, with graveside services at The Texas State Cemetery immediately following.

**TAMU Receives Another High Ranking - Conservatism**

Dr. Danny Pugh informed us that Campus Reform published an article by Haley Worth on 14 December that ranks all the colleges and universities according to their conservatism. One can access the article at: <https://campusreform.org/article?id=16438>

Dr. Pugh pointed out that there are 5300 colleges and universities in America. TAMU was ranked 50<sup>th</sup> – so that places our University in the top 1%! Thank you, Danny, appreciated!

**David Dunlap Interview, Chair of the 12<sup>th</sup> Man Foundation Board - 8 December**

*Everybody is talking about A&M and A&M football. I think we're all proud of the football team and Jimbo and everything they've accomplished this year.*

*It's been a challenge this year. Our staff has done a good job of trying to be very transparent and upfront with our donors from the start. Back in May and June, we didn't know if there was going to be a season or not. Many season ticket holders had re-upped for the season already, and we went to them to tell them that we'd be upfront. We gave everyone the chance to opt out because of all the challenges that we were facing. I think we've done a great job of sharing with everybody what they could expect.*

*The impact of losing a game is around \$4-5 million, but it's a bigger impact than that. College athletics have been impacted greatly by 2020. Season ticket revenue is the largest source of funding we have for athletics. We typically have about \$76 million of season ticket revenue for all of our sports, and football is about \$65 million of that. That's a massive part of the department's entire budget.*

*We're happy to have anything. We're happy to have 25 percent. We're happy to have all of our donors. We're so appreciative of all of our donors and all of you Aggies listening.*

*When we had the opt-out period, we allowed people to give up their tickets and get a refund. We were honest as Aggies, and some people decided to move their money to the 2021 season. Some people decided to opt out but turn that into a donation. We got \$5 million in donations from those people, which has been so helpful for us. We are so appreciative for them.*

*We're primed for this opportunity because we know the love and passion our fans have for A&M athletics, A&M football and Texas A&M, in general. We understand how this university can impact the world and impacts the world every day.*

*Those fans who opted in for this season have come to Kyle Field and made Dan Mullen mad, beat the Tigers and all of that over just four games. We told them that the season wouldn't be normal. We knew we wouldn't have the usual seven home games. We told them the opportunity. We told them that \$19 million was at risk. We gave them an opportunity to get a refund on those games or move that money to 2021, but we also told them to strongly consider a donation.*

*These gifts help us turn into champions. It's because we're part of the haves and ones who can fund different things, including assistant coaches. We want to continue to be one of the haves. Other universities don't have a fan base, a donor base or a former student base like we do. This is an opportunity for us to rise above them forever.*

*Please consider turning it into a donation and consider donating to Texas A&M Athletics. We've never needed it more than we do right now.*

*We have proven under the leadership of our Athletic Directors and leaders of this university that we are committed to funding scholarships for championship athletics. We are not going to settle for anything less than that. You're seeing it on the football field this year. You're going to see it on the basketball court soon. It's because of that funding, and we need Aggies to continue to step up.*

*There will be some big programs that will have to take a step back because of this bizarre year. Some big universities have already done that. That is not what we want to do. We have been progressing as a university for a long time. Now is the chance for us to step up and step up for good to accomplish what we know we can here at Texas A&M.*

**“We can’t hear you because your actions are so loud that they are drowning you out!” (quote from a great football Coach)**

Reference is made to the above message from David Dunlap - Chair of the 12<sup>th</sup> Man Foundation Board; a recent mailout form letter to donors from Travis Dabney, President of the 12<sup>th</sup> Man Foundation; and numerous, recent evening phone calls to Aggie donors asking for money. First, and one more time, we believe that we have the best University in America for many reasons, and the best Athletics programs along with it – “the front porch of the University.” We also know that most of the funding for athletics is donated NOT by students so much, NOR faculty OR staff – but by Texas Aggie former students. It is no mystery that the cohort of them who we represent believe that we have problems with the above reference, and how the Athletic Director on down in his organization, sometimes acknowledges the majority source of his revenues, resources and facilities.

We have asked in a civil way about this situation, and we believe that we have been totally transparent in our explanations and rationale. There are no better or passionate folks who want our Fightin’ Texas Aggie teams to have the best and succeed. That is embodied in the tradition of the 12<sup>th</sup> Man itself, and unique to this beloved University.

Political protest expressions in Aggie uniforms, on Aggie contest playing fields or courts, by players who are on scholarship and have the best of everything - gladly given and supported by Texas Aggies – is “legal” under 1<sup>st</sup> Amendment rights. There is nobody on the planet earth who knows this any better than Texas Aggie former students. So, we do not need any more lectures and quips about that. But we believe there is a place for everything, including the precious rights to assemble and express oneself.

Your actions are drowning you out, and we can hear you and see you, but disagree with you and your stance on this. And that leads us back to the problem and resultant funding support calls referenced above. COVID has caused some of the problem, but so has this “flip off” to the ones who passionately support you.

We still want to know, as we have previously asked, how you, in the Athletic Department, familiarize your new athletes with our history, values and traditions - recruited on the promise of a fulfilling and successful life after athletics, enabled with support via the Aggie Network. Do you know who is in “The Aggie Network?” How about your coaches and staff including your newly created Diversity function? And we still want to know, since you and your coaches have mentioned it, exactly what “social injustice” to which you refer.

We have offered to help with solutions to what is wrong as Texas Aggie elders. Since Texas Aggies believe we are all on the same team (“We are the Aggies, the Aggies are we” under the 12<sup>th</sup> Man concept, then when in the Texas Aggie uniform, the rest of the 12<sup>th</sup> Man (former students) also get a say, a vote and stake in deciding.

Everybody has a boss, and you will have a new one by June 2021. We shall then see how this all turns out.

## # 10 Ag Women Basketball Team Beat Abilene Christian at Reed, 13 December



And “Black Lives Still Matter” - as expressed.

## Early National Signing Day – 16 December, Texas Aggie Football

Coach Fisher and his superb staff have signed two straight classes that were in the top ten nationally. And this one for 2020/21 will be no exception making a “three sweep” toward winning championships. TexAgs Bully Liucci said that “this three in a row in the top ten is a first!”

The early morning brought in some super news with already committed athletes who sent in their signed Letters of Intent (Lols). All the expected letters were received. Another high-profile player is expected to announce on Friday. We all hope that OL Bryce Foster chooses the good guys! It’s between the Texas Aggies and sooners.

As we have mentioned previously, there are now two football signing days as specified by the NCAA. Today is the early day, and the final signing day is on the first day in February 2021 (Wednesday the 3<sup>rd</sup>). The recruitment of this class will not be complete until that date. You can follow this at – <https://12thman.com/index>. You will see “Signing Day” where you can scroll down the signed players and read about each one.

There is plenty of anticipated good news left until then since the Aggie coaching staff is still very much involved in, and in the running for, signing some remaining great players. They are LJ Johnson, Jardin Gilbert, Elijah Jeudy, JoJo Earle, Brian Thomas, and MJ Daniels. Lots more to come with some exciting times ahead!

## The Bowls and College Football Playoffs (CFPs) – In Review

The College Football Playoff matches the No. 1 ranked team vs. No. 4, and No. 2 vs. No. 3 in semifinal games that rotate annually among six bowl games – the Goodyear Cotton Bowl, PlayStation Fiesta Bowl, Chick-fil-A Peach Bowl, Capital One Orange Bowl, Allstate Sugar Bowl and Rose Bowl Game. This season's Playoff Semifinals will

take place Friday, January 1, 2021, at the Rose Bowl Game and the Allstate Sugar Bowl. The College Football Playoff National Championship will be Monday, January 11, 2021, at Hard Rock Stadium in Miami Gardens, Florida.

## **Ags and Factors for CFB Consideration**

Well, as expected, the big (little -B1G) ten Conference changed on Wednesday the 10th, their own rule that teams playing for their football championship must have played a minimum of six games to be eligible. Big surprise (and gamesmanship). The CFP Committee Chairman, Gary Barta (and who also is the Athletic Director for Iowa in the B1G) had spoken about this the day before. So, this means that Ohio State will probably be playing Northwestern on the B1G championship game in Indy. It also will afford them the opportunity to burnish their resume so as to remain in the top four as they are now.

The debate has raged in the media about this since the Texas Aggies were chosen to be in the number 5 slot, and certainly have remained in the conversation. When one considers OSU's slate of games played and the teams they beat, it is weak at best.

Olin Buchanan of TexAgs points out *“that the Buckeyes’ best win was a 42-35 victory over No. 12 Indiana. Of course, Indiana needed a controversial, advantageous and...OK ... erroneous officials’ call to defeat Penn State (2-5), 36-35. Indeed, Penn State is one of four Ohio State opponents to have managed only two victories in the lackluster Big Ten. Nebraska is 2-4, Rutgers is 2-5 and Michigan State is 2-4. Proponents argue that Ohio State blew out those teams. True. However, so did Iowa, which defeated Michigan State by a wider margin (42 points, 49-7) than Ohio State did (40 points, 52-12).”*

Coach Fisher, on Wednesday the 9<sup>th</sup>, discussed all this on the SEC coaches Teleconference. He said that the Texas Aggies were not going to have a game on the coming weekend, but he told “SEC This Morning” that he would have enjoyed a chance to take on Ohio State with more time to prepare. “You would consider it, but I think on Wednesday you’re being a little bit crazy with it” referring to the importance the game would have at that late date with little prep time.

An update as of Tuesday evening, 15 December: The Aggies held steady in the final poll at the #5 ranking, following Alabama, Notre Dame, Clemson and Ohio State. There are games to be played this coming weekend with a lot at stake affecting the final outcome, including the Fightin’ Texas Aggies!

In the hunt, depending on the games still left to be played are: Iowa State at #6, followed by Florida (who slipped after losing to LSU), then Georgia, Cincinnati and Oklahoma. **The CFP playoff teams will be announced Sunday, December the 20<sup>th</sup>** with the semifinals set to be played on New Year’s Day at the Rose and Sugar Bowls as mentioned above. BTHO everybody and take care of business this Saturday in Knoxville at 1100 on eSipn!!

**SEC leaving CBS for ESPN in US\$3bn deal and contract starting in 2024**

On Thursday the 10<sup>th</sup> of December 2020, The SEC and ESPN announced a new 10-year contract to place SEC Saturday football games and also basketball games onto the ESPN network from CBS, CBS has had the contract for 30 years. The contract also includes airing the SEC football championship games.

The change also is likely to move the ‘game of the week’ into the evening time slot which is a larger profile slot than the afternoon window. Currently, the annual payout from CBS to the SEC is \$55M. Commissioner Sanky and ESPN Chairman Pitaro declined to say what the new payment figure would be, but as reported by Ralph Russo of AP, it is about \$300M. that is significant for sure. Additionally, the new deal will likely permit ESPN and the SEC to set game start times much farther ahead, which would benefit those who watch, but also for the fans who want to travel and attend.

### **LSU Self Imposes Bowl Ban**

It was reported that LSU self-imposed a 1-year postseason ban on its football program this bowl season. This is in addition to self-imposed sanctions already declared in review of NCAA rules violations discovered in the University’s cooperative investigation with the NCAA.

**You can reach us at:** [SRGpresident@aggienetwork.com](mailto:SRGpresident@aggienetwork.com)

**Opt-In 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 to Those who decide:**

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