Report to the Board
Texas Student Media
Gerald Johnson, Director

It’s been an exciting and a changing year at TSM. Here are bullets since our last meeting.

**Initiatives:**
1. At the last meeting, you were made aware of [www.supportstudentvoices.org](http://www.supportstudentvoices.org). Our first, annual all entities pledge-drive was a success. I was repeatedly asked what the monetary goal was for our first effort; to which I replied: the only goal is to get all the media units thinking, speaking and evangelizing TSM – ALL at the SAME time. Score!

As you witnessed in the daily updates, Travesty and KVRX were battling to the finish line. End results:

- $11,000+ raised during pledge
- Some interesting/comical social media
- Audience growth
- A 24/7/365 site: donations prior to this effort were clunky and complicated
- 150 new donors to TSM

Gift account balances appear in report.

2. [FarewellPowers.com](http://FarewellPowers.com): The sales teams are covering campus and beyond with display advertising opportunities. Eight ads have sold to date; with all purchases from campus departments. All revenue to date is $6,000. Space deadline is May 15. You can check out our signature progress any time by going directly to the site. And if you are on Team Powers – consider signing.

3. A new transmitter for KVRX (separate memo)

**People and Advertising:**
We are becoming very efficient at hiring. Please welcome Felisha Cockran to the advertising team. She joined us Monday and was most recently a mortgage specialist with BBVA Compass. Felisha replaces Robert M, who resigned March 13.

Most of the Student Selling team is graduating. We have hired five new students, with three starting in the Fall semester. The hiring process will continue.

Orientation editions are currently being sold. $35,000 has been secured for editions that publish June-August. Last year, orientation generated $100,000.
Board Composition:
Effective June 1, 2015

STUDENTS
Moody / Place 1: Mary Dunn will be replaced by Jan Ross Piedad.
Moody / Place 2: If Arthur D. Soto-Vasquez is not graduating, he will return.
Moody / Place 3: Bobby Blanchard is graduating, so a replacement will be needed.
At-large / Place 4: Arjun Mocherla will return.
At-large / Place 5: Pauline Berens will return.
At-large / Place 6: Adam Alloy will be replaced by McKay Proctor.

FACULTY
Matt Eastin will return
Heidi Toprac needs to be replaced (or reappointed for additional two years).
Robert Quigley needs to be replaced (or reappointed for additional two years).

PROFESSIONALS
Todd Ross Nienkerk and Jeff Cohen
These terms should be staggered, but right now they’re both due to expire at the end of May. Whomever they end up being (Todd, Jeff, or someone else), we should appoint one professional to a one-year term and another to a two-year term.

FTE Info:
The table below shows the recent history of Full Time Equivalents (FTE) at TSM
(1.0 FTE = a professional staff member working 40 hours/week all year long).
The italicized numbers represent vacancies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>General Overhead</th>
<th>Advertising</th>
<th>Media Units + Supp.Serv.</th>
<th>Press &amp; Delivery</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2009</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>26.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2014</td>
<td>3.5, 1.0</td>
<td>4.0, 1.0</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td></td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>start of Spring 2015</td>
<td>2.5, 1.0</td>
<td>3.0, 3.0</td>
<td>2.5, 0.5</td>
<td></td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>right now</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>2.5, 0.5</td>
<td></td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015-2016 proposed</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td></td>
<td>13.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Gift Account Balances:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gift Account Balances</th>
<th>KVRX</th>
<th>TSTV</th>
<th>Travesty</th>
<th>Texan</th>
<th>Cactus</th>
<th>General TSM</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9/1/14</td>
<td>$33,125.00</td>
<td>$42,474.00</td>
<td>$60.00</td>
<td>$11,874.00</td>
<td>$30.00</td>
<td>$714.00</td>
<td>$88,277.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KVRX Event</td>
<td>$13,875.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comm Council</td>
<td>$577.00</td>
<td>$2,250.00</td>
<td>$200.00</td>
<td>$123.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/1 to SSV</td>
<td>$160.00</td>
<td>$100.00</td>
<td>$275.00</td>
<td>$95.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSV Pledge Weeks</td>
<td>$3,350.00</td>
<td>$930.00</td>
<td>$2,776.00</td>
<td>$2,475.00</td>
<td>$100.00</td>
<td>$1,140.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-SSV</td>
<td>$320.00</td>
<td>$20.00</td>
<td>$25.00</td>
<td>$180.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td><strong>$51,327.00</strong></td>
<td><strong>$45,814.00</strong></td>
<td><strong>$3,356.00</strong></td>
<td><strong>$14,592.00</strong></td>
<td><strong>$430.00</strong></td>
<td><strong>$2,129.00</strong></td>
<td><strong>$117,648.00</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Gift accounts are not in the operational budget. Speaking of….

**Budget:**

The proposed 2016 budget document is attached. In addition to showing some progress, we have streamlined the data for easier consumption and review. The review displays 2014 actual, 2015 projected and 2016 requested. Use this key to better understand what’s in a particular line item:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REVENUE</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>gift from Moody endowment</td>
<td>Endowment ($1,000,000) from Moody Foundation. Annual proceeds can be invested into operation (not scholarship, etc)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other</td>
<td>Students pay equipment fees to take equipment classes and $11,400 rental fees to KO-OP.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>productions</td>
<td>Productions from TSTV students. IE: Filming ISOJ conference.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>publications</td>
<td>Cactus yearbook sales and subscriptions to Texan ($1600) and Travesty ($100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>advertising</td>
<td>Advertising revenues from Texan ($870,000) KVRX ($15,000) TSTV ($15,000), Travesty ($10,000) and Cactus ($40,000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSBC</td>
<td>Portion of student tuition granted from SSBC. Texan ($271,919), KVRX ($67,720), TSTV ($80,919), Travesty ($8,186) and Cactus ($7,694)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transitional funding</td>
<td>$250,000 offered annually for three years. Funds may be used to balance a budget deficit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President’s office</td>
<td>Funds offered for three years to cover Director salary.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXPENSE</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>retiree fringe</td>
<td>Medical and Teacher Retirement benefits to former employees who retired from TSM. Thirteen individuals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>current employee fringe</td>
<td>Medical and Teacher Retirement benefits for current employees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>professional salaries/wages</td>
<td>Salaries for 13.5 professionals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sales commissions</td>
<td>Commissions paid to professional &amp; student sellers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>student wages</td>
<td>Stipends for student staff of each entity. Texan ($144,000), KVRX ($12,200), TSTV ($17,200), Travesty ($3,000), Cactus ($11,200) and General ($28,200)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>student manager tuition</td>
<td>Maximum potential tuition reimbursement for 6 student managers. Based on total credit hours taken. Texan ($9600), TSTV/KVRX/Cactus ($3600ea), Travesty ($900)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>travel</td>
<td>News coverage and conference.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>printing</td>
<td>Texan, Travesty and Cactus annual printing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>delivery</td>
<td>Delivery of Texan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>phones / data lines / ITS servers</td>
<td>Web hosting, telephones and fiber lines for TV and radio.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT support</td>
<td>Desktop support.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>equipment</td>
<td>Cameras, microphones, headphones, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>promotions</td>
<td>Advertising expense account, food for events, tee-shirts, banners, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>postage</td>
<td>Annual postage cost for mail-out (subscriptions, Cactus, daily mail)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>insurance</td>
<td>Errors and Omissions, Libel and coverage for TV and radio equipment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other</td>
<td>Registrations, subscriptions, professional dues, intellectual property fees (music), online services (url, mailchimp), copier, Associated Press, vehicle (2) parking and gas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>operation contingency</td>
<td>From transitional funding. Recorded as expense for investments such as web development, major equipment upgrades and any final budget deficit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY14 actual</td>
<td>FY15 project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$68,140</td>
<td>$30,060</td>
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<td>$47,233</td>
<td>$30,000</td>
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<td>$8,214</td>
<td>$13,700</td>
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<td>$928,337</td>
<td>$826,000</td>
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<td>$436,438</td>
<td>$536,438</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>$1,488,362</td>
<td>$1,662,198</td>
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<td>-$205,953</td>
<td>$34,011</td>
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<td>$1,694,315</td>
<td>$1,652,187</td>
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<td>$110,834</td>
<td>$108,471</td>
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<td>$136,603</td>
<td>$137,334</td>
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<tr>
<td>$468,769</td>
<td>$514,625</td>
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<tr>
<td>$116,665</td>
<td>$98,213</td>
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<tr>
<td>$186,901</td>
<td>$165,768</td>
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<td>$21,300</td>
<td>$21,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$6,250</td>
<td>$5,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$260,839</td>
<td>$245,436</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$72,412</td>
<td>$56,700</td>
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<tr>
<td>$74,616</td>
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<td>$26,250</td>
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<td>$61,707</td>
<td>$9,800</td>
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<tr>
<td>$11,191</td>
<td>$8,154</td>
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<tr>
<td>$9,786</td>
<td>$10,600</td>
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<tr>
<td>$14,582</td>
<td>$16,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$141,860</td>
<td>$33,937</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$150,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Texas Travesty Report  
TSM Board Meeting April 24, 2015

• Final board report? So sad. 😞

• Since last time we met…
  - We’ve sold our minimum goal of 50 Bill Powers t-shirts (get yours today at: http://teespring.com/bill-powers-commemorative-tee)
  - We held our screening of The Room to an audience of over 170, larger than last year, a great success overall.
  - We’ve had our new/last issue of the semester come out (will be on stands by the time I read this to you).

• Still coming up…
  - Saturday April 25th will be the Moontower Comedy Festival Showcase in the Cactus Café that we’re co-sponsoring
  - And that’s pretty much it.

• Just some numbers to show the growth we’ve had this year:
  - Staff size in September: 20
  - Current/Retained staff size: 34
  - Facebook Likes: Started at 1,740, currently at 3,013
  - Twitter Followers: Started at 4,000, currently at 5,068
  - Highest Viewed Video Before September: 1,670 views
  - Current Highest Viewed Video: 17,300
  - Votes for Travesty Student Government Candidates: 59%

• This type of growth is possible every year, and I know that the editors taking over in the fall, led by Josh Brenner, will be able to continue this trend.

Thanks for a great year everyone!

Chris Gilman
Retiring Texas Travesty Editor-in-Chief
KVRX Student Radio  
Activity Report  
April 20, 2015

To the members of the board,  

Hope everything is going great for you!

- **Support Student Voices**  
  - KVRX raised more than $3,450 during the two week period.  
  - Our staff is very satisfied with this number coupled with the fundraising we did last November.

- **KVRX Presents:**  
  - Dan Deacon - a co-sponsored with Transmission Events at the Mohawk this Thursday April 23, 2015  
  - A few more offers have come down the woodwork for more KVRX Presents shows that we are appropriately considering.

- **Looking forward**  
  - Training my successor  
  - Helping with transition to the summer schedule  
  - Enchilada night – come on down  
  - KVRX end of the year awards

Thank you,  
Rodrigo Leal  
KVRX Station Manager
Board Report for April 24 meeting

Members of the Board:

I spent a recent weekend in Boston learning from other college newspaper editors about their recent developments and struggles in adapting to declining print advertising revenue.

The chorus was the same throughout the conference hall: We wish we could get the ad revenue back.

But some of the papers’ responses to this financial challenge were so far ahead of ours that I couldn’t help but cringe at our own flat-footedness.

One in particular stood out.

I spent a lot of time with the incoming and outgoing editors-in-chief of the Oregon Daily Emerald at the University of Oregon.

As you may know, that paper underwent a self-styled “revolution” a few years ago in which it slashed most of its print production schedule and became a digital-first publication.

They didn’t really need to for financial reasons, explained the editors, but they didn’t want to end up behind the technological curve.

Take a look at their website: http://www.dailyemerald.com. They have a number of cool features such as Quackd (http://www.quackd.com/about/), on college life, and beautifully designed and well reported long-form stories such as this story on the hockey team: http://dailyemerald.github.io/uo-hockey/.

The Emerald knew it would lose revenue when it cut print, but the losses were not that dramatic. They made up the difference by launching an entirely student-run marketing firm called the Venture Department, which now supplements the work of the traditional advertising department.

I was floored when I heard this. I’m not advocating that we make any of the changes the Emerald did; regardless of whether we think cutting print would be a healthy change or creating such a department would be a healthy addition to our portfolio, the fact that they were able to make these changes that seem only to have helped is something to be applauded.

Could we replicate success of that magnitude here? No, because what they have and we lack is nimbleness.

Why?

I’ve been on the Texan longer than anyone currently on staff, and I can’t entirely grasp the differences between us and the Emerald.

They have a large staff (though not as large as ours), they expect a lot of their people and they pay terribly. They’re also a student paper and so they deal with high turnover, too.
They’ve figured out a way to be nimble. We haven’t.

The main difference, I think, is their supportive and empowering management structure.

They have a history of it; we don’t.

We’ve had far too much turnover in the director’s chair in recent years, and a great deal of dissatisfaction with this board, largely for being too ignorant of the inner workings of the organization while still wielding a fair amount of power, has gone unexpressed.

Think about that. Think about how you can repair that relationship and how you can empower us to become more nimble.

Then think about how you can enable Denise and Gerald to help us achieve that goal.

To help TSM, the Texan and the professional staff, devolve more control over the budget and the election certification process (to which any changes should not become effective until a year after their adoption). Don’t let Moody bureaucracy get in the way of achieving success. Meet more often to keep your finger on the pulse of the organization. Show the staff you care by meeting with them, or even just the top editors, in our office, even if only once a semester. I think you would find that the walls would break down fairly easily.

Then consider whether the bifurcated leadership structure of the Texan works. (Answer: It doesn’t.) It works better at a place like the Harvard Crimson, but it doesn’t function all that well here. Keep the editor elected to preserve students’ stake in the paper and allow him or her to nominate candidates for managing editor and editorial page editor whom you can either approve or reject. Then task the editor with overseeing the entire newsroom, meeting regularly with top editors about stories; thinking strategically about long-term vision for the paper; and heading up external relations. It will fall to the managing editor, then, to help enact the editor’s vision. This would make for a clearer chain of command within the paper.

I realize that many of you are not returning next year and so will not have the opportunity to vote to enact any of these changes, but you can continue to support TSM. To those of who you are returning next year, particularly whoever is chosen to be president, have real discussions about these issues. Schedule as many meetings as are necessary until you’ve addressed them all and made some real change.

That’s the leadership I expect to see as I watch from afar next year.

Be nimble and allow us to be so, too.

The Texan’s most ardent supporter,

Riley Brands
To: The Texas Student Media Board of Trustees
From: Jordan Rudner, Managing Editor, The Daily Texan
Date: April 20, 2015

Hello all,

There is no such thing as a typical semester at The Daily Texan. Just as every news cycle brings forth new stories to be told, every semester presents new challenges and opportunities. I won’t go so far as to say this has been an especially challenging semester — every single semester, there are difficulties — but there have, indeed, been complications. With two weeks to go, I am proud of the state of the Texan, and of the Texan’s hardworking staff.

Before I address some of those challenges, here are some of the highlights of the last few weeks:

- The Texan’s coverage has been especially strong this semester, especially in the Life & Arts department. Under Kat Sampson’s dedicated leadership, the department has seemingly effortlessly transitioned to the 24-hour model we launched after spring break.
- Now that the basketball season has ended, and the baseball and softball seasons are winding down, Garrett Callahan has pushed the sports department to be increasingly creative in their coverage. In the last few weeks alone, we’ve had phenomenal coverage of teams that are easy to overlook, including crew, intramural sports and even Quidditch.
- In many departments, but especially news, design and copy, new staffers have received excellent mentorship and grown in skill and knowledge as a result. General reporters, issue-staff designers and copy kittens consistently demonstrate wonderful and hard-working attitudes across the board.
- Lauren Ussery and Dan Resler have taken outstanding initiative to integrate photo and video at all possible opportunities, going above and beyond what is necessary to maximize collaboration.
- The 24-hour news cycle has been a success. Nearly every single day, the website goes through a minimum of five homepage changes — and that’s on a slow day. Most days, we have continuous content being uploaded every hour, which has been a long-time Texan goal. As I’ve said, this is largely because of the efforts of associate managing editors Brett Donohoe and Jack Mitts, who work tirelessly on the Texan’s behalf.
- I would be remiss if I didn’t end the list of highlights by thanking Peter Chen, our phenomenal adviser, whose dedication to the staff — and to staff morale, in particular — has been a huge boon to us all this semester. Peter takes time to encourage staffers across all departments, provides a listening ear, and always asks the right questions. With his encouragement, the office is also just fun. Peter has been outstanding, and I hope future generations of Texan staffers are lucky enough to benefit from his guidance.
There is a lot going well at the Texan — and as I said, I am proud to work for such a dedicated team. But there is also much that could be going better, and I would be remiss if I finished my last letter to the board without acknowledging improvements that I hope are put in place for Texan staffers to come. I’ll keep it short, but feel free to email or call me at any time if you would like elaboration. After three years of work, I know our strengths and shortcomings well.

- We’ve said this for a long time, but our website is unsustainable, inflexible and generally impossible to work with. Because we lack the ability to do basic functions — like auto-schedule posts — the 24-hour publishing cycle has been exponentially more complicated than it needs to be. We need to hire a web developer who knows what he or she is doing, or we’ll never be able to maximize our web potential.
- Staff salaries remain troublingly low, in a way that hinders our recruitment and our leadership in a major way. Department heads aren’t paid fairly for the work they do — and further, they also often buy food and birthday treats for their departments and end up losing money for their time spent in the office. The hours high-level positions require limit the participation ability of students who are supporting themselves to any degree.
- More than anything else I’ve listed here, I’d like to address the board directly about supporting the student managers in a more consistent capacity. This semester, I’ve received significant support from board members on an individual level — especially from Bobby Blanchard, Arjun Mocherla, Robert Quigley, and Jeff Cohen. But the Texan has received almost no support from the board in a formal capacity. Major personnel issues, which I have brought to the attention of multiple members of the board on more than one occasion, have gone entirely unacknowledged in any serious way. If TSM Board members truly want to support student managers, they need to walk the walk, not just talk the talk — or at least be realistic about the Board’s role or purpose. After a semester of submitting these Board reports, I am still not entirely sure what you are here to do.

I have loved my Texan experience, and I feel confident that the newspaper is in good hands going forward. Again, I appreciate individual board members’ support over the course of the last several months. It has been an honor and a privilege to work for this 115-year-old institution, and one I will never forget.

All the best,

Jordan Rudner

Jordan Rudner
Daily Texan Managing Editor
Texas Student TV
Station Manager Report
April 24th, 2015
Edward Stockwell

Productions:

- The Sports and Media, Gwyn David, and ISOJ productions are all wrapped-up! (I only had to miss two days of class). We’re in the process of editing now.
- Convocations are coming up, but we’ll be prepared.

General:

- The person that you just approved for station manager is great and they’ll do a great job!
- Blackmagic released new studio cameras that do not require a black magic switcher. If we went this route, we would be able to upgrade the studio cameras to (potentially) be able to shoot in 4K and it would cost roughly $16,000.
- 24/Seven went about as well as 24/Seven can go.
- What will be done with the money that was set aside for the Broadcast Advisor position this year? It could be spent on improvements for KVRX and TSTV.
- The increase in TV commercial sales has been awesome! One change that could help speed is getting someone in advertising to be able to make the simple edits that the client may require to reduce time until its able to air.
- About to make a big ol’ list of auxiliary equipment to buy with this semester’s comm council allocation.
- Back to Broadcast Advisor. 4th floor really needs one. The managers handling a lot of their responsibility leads less time to focus on innovating and internal matters.
- It’s been an absolute blast doing this for my senior year. Smooches to you all.

It’s budget time, baby!

Edward Stockwell
To the board,

Cactus sent in the final proofs for the publication on Monday, April 20. We expect the books to arrive around May 7.

Sales have been a little difficult because I lost my sales editor this month, but we’re coming up with a game plan to get things back on track.

We have a couple events that we’re in the process of trying to organize:
- Corgis with Cactus: Trying to get an Austin corgi organization to officially agree. Would happen during “dead days,” and students would be able to come pet corgis at the Walter Cronkite Plaza and buy their yearbook.
- Yearbook signing party: We’re reaching out to Events+Entertainment first to see if they would be interested in partnering with us. If not, then we will be looking to reserve a room on campus to allow students to come buy their yearbooks and have them signed by friends.

Otherwise, we’re continuing to table and advertise via social media. We’re also working with Texas Exes to be a part of all of their graduation festivities. Once the books come in we will be tabling heavily and will also be present at graduation.

Other than that, we’re getting ready to start planning next year’s coverage.

Stay prickly,
Tess Cagle
Cactus editor-in-chief