



Battalion photo by Jeanne Graham

Will it ever end?

Campaigning, yes. But who knows about the rain. It continues to fall as Texas A&M University prepares for student body elections

next Monday and Tuesday. Bryan-College Station received at least 0.92 inch of rain Monday and was under flash flood warnings most

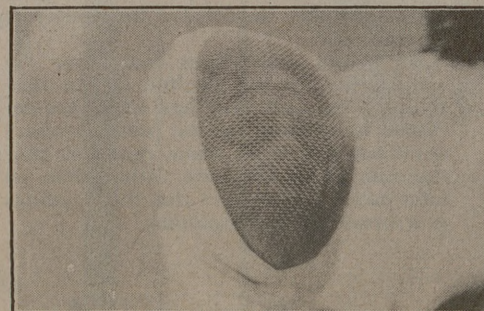
of the day and night. For a closer look at campus, city and school board races, see "For The Voters," in today's Battalion.

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En guard

The powerful hand darts forward and, ah, a hit. This time the hit comes from a 16-year-old junior at Consolidated High School who is already in Olympic competition. See page 12.



Battalion photo by Lee Roy Leshper Jr.

Nuclear power plant Official says reactor 'safer than yesterday'

United Press International
HARRISBURG, Pa. — The crippled Three Mile Island nuclear reactor is steadily cooling down and the dangerous hydrogen bubble that blocked final shutdown efforts appears to have shrunk dramatically, a top Nuclear Regulatory Commission official reported Monday.

"I think it is certainly safer than yesterday," said Harold Denton, NRC operations chief at the site, referring to the bubble which not only blocked final shutdown operations but also posed the risk of an internal reactor explosion.

Thousands of area residents, however, remain poised to evacuate if necessary.

Denton said he still wanted to double-check mathematical equations used to guess at the size of the bubble before saying with certainty the bubble had dramatically decreased in size. He said the calculation had been satisfactory while the bubble size was steady, but may be flawed now because it leaves out other vital considerations.

"It is going down (in size)," Denton said. "We just don't know how much."

He also reported that general radiation levels outside the plant were declining although radiation inside the concrete containment building surrounding the reactor were at lethal levels.

He also announced at a news conference at the nearby Middletown town hall that the NRC has advised the operators of seven other reactors using the same Babcock and Wilcox cooling system to take steps to assure their plants could over-

come the type of pump failure that triggered the Three Mile Island crisis Wednesday. He said some of those reactors reportedly had been shut down.

He also said federal inspectors were being sent to each of those power plants.

Engineers at the site continued the slow process of starting to convert hydrogen gas in the containment building back to water to help cool the reactor.

The improved outlook followed a visit at the plant Sunday by President Carter — himself a trained nuclear engineer — and Gov. Dick Thornburgh. They donned

Please see related story, page 7.

bright yellow protective boots, personally inspected the plant on the Susquehanna River island and reported the situation "stable."

Denton said only two uranium fuel elements in the reactor at midday were over 400 degrees. At the same time Sunday, readings over 500 degrees were reported.

He said the temperature in the containment dome was 90 degrees and the pressure was one pound per square inch below the outside atmosphere, reducing chances of radiation leaks.

The hydrogen bubble, which developed unexpectedly, earlier had been estimated at 850 cubic feet in size. The new estimates Monday were that it was 50 cubic feet.

Earlier, a spokesman for Metropolitan Edison, part-owner of the stricken nuclear

plant, said there was evidence the bubble might be disintegrating.

To remove hydrogen from the surrounding containment, engineers hooked up hydrogen "recombiners" to the vents of the containment building, where the nuclear core is housed, to start Monday's operation.

The recombiners are designed to convert some of the hydrogen gas buildup in the containment building back into water by eating it with oxygen — a process similar to the way steam from a teapot is converted back into water vapor.

Students can file for open positions

There is still time for students to file for positions in the student government, Graduate Student Council and two organizations.

Because no one has entered these races, candidates may file for office until 4 this afternoon in Room 216, Memorial Student Center.

Campus elections will be Monday and Tuesday.

Positions in the senate that still need candidates are:

- education, undergrad and graduate
- engineering, junior and graduate
- geosciences, at large
- liberal arts, senior
- vet school, at large
- Corps, senior

—Spence, Legett and new dorm, at large

- Hart, Law, Puryear and Cain, at large
- off-campus Ward 1, undergrad (5)
- off-campus Ward 2, undergrad
- off-campus Ward 4, undergrad (2)

On the Graduate Student Council, positions that still need candidates are:

- engineering (2)
- geosciences (2)
- liberal arts (2)
- science (3)
- vet med

Two organizations that need candidates are:

- Residence Halls Association, secretary
- Off-campus Students Association, treasurer

Ag college picks cream of the crop

By BECKY LEAKE
Battalion Reporter

Senior Merit Awards were presented to 18 outstanding students in the College of Agriculture at the Students Agricultural Convocation Monday night.

The convocation was part of the Texas Agricultural Conference being held at Texas A&M Monday and today.

Also presented was the \$500 Eva Simmons Potts Memorial Scholarship to Cynthia Roney of Victoria. The speaker was Grady Nutt of Louisville, Ky.

The Senior Merit Awards are presented each year by on the basis of scholarship leadership, and outstanding contribution to the College of Agriculture.

The recipients were Linda Norman of Floydada, Ray Daniels of DeRidder, La.; Thomas Paterson of Silver City, N.M.; Timothy Berry of Barksdale; Susie Williams of Sabine, Ronald Woessner of College Station, Darwin Anderson of Round Rock, William Kuvlesky Jr. of College Station; and Bobby Tucker of Mineola.

Other award winners were Ennis Jetton of Junction; Diana Van Cleave of College Station; Ronald Lastovica of Belton; Susan Cross of Houston; Stephen Seidel of Rosanky; Donna Steig of Malaysia; Alisa Howe of Midland; Catherine Blanton of Irving; and Sharron Sims of Houston.

Dr. Herman D. Brown was named the outstanding professor in the College of Agriculture.

The Collegiate FFA won the Gavel Award for the technical club having the highest percentage of members present.

With a narrative full of humorous incidents, speaker Grady Nutt said that stability and commitment are important whether you're producing a wheat crop or building a worthwhile life.

"There is no way you can be successful and satisfied in your life unless you are deeply active in the things that really matter."

Nutt encouraged agriculture students to apply the knowledge they are learning. "You have a chance to change the world," said Nutt. "Maybe even to save it."

Internationals promoting petition along with culture

By MERIL EDWARDS
Battalion Reporter

Musical instruments, dresses, scarves and silverware are a few of the items displayed today in the Memorial Student Center by 16 Texas A&M international student groups.

This cultural display is part of international week, which began Sunday and continues through Friday.

President of International Students Association Elia Tasca said the purpose of international week is to expose customs and cultures of Texas A&M's foreign students.

"The week was planned to maximize contact between Americans and internationals through politics, culture and an exchange of ideas," Tasca said. "It gives the internationals a chance to display their cultures with pride. We hope each side will become more appreciative of each other."

This week foreign students are also publicizing a petition against a bill in the Texas Senate that will raise tuition for foreign students.

A Special Subcommittee on Higher Education approved a bill March 27 to increase tuition, for all foreign students from \$14 to \$40. "We have some 300-400 signatures now," Tasca said Monday night. "We figure we need about 700 to be effective enough to send to

the Senate in Austin."

Tasca said universities and colleges cannot gain from the bill. He said if tuition costs are tripled as proposed, then Texas A&M's international enrollment would drop from 1,100 to around 700.

"A&M isn't known for internationals, though, so they don't really care," he said.

Tasca said Texas A&M is the only state institution not opposing the bill.

"It's a special problem here," Tasca said, "because A&M cannot afford to oppose Sen. Bill Moore, the main proponent of the tuition raise, since he's been so helpful to A&M in other areas."

Tasca gave two reasons why the Senate is receptive to a tuition raise: "A lot of people are frustrated and annoyed by the behavior of Iranians so it's reflecting on all internationals. Second, the growing scandal of the admittance of foreign students without a valid examination of qualifications has caused some of this feeling."

Tasca said he sees the bill as an excuse to raise tuition for in-state students.

"It's all a merry-go-round effect," he said. "The real reason for all this flak is they want to raise tuition for Texas residents and this is just a preview."



Battalion photo by Colin Crombie

Palestinian Award Maher seems to be enjoying his hookah at the Texas A&M International Students cultural display in the Memorial Student Center. Actually, it's just cigarette smoke that he amuses passers-by with. Maher is a freshman civil engineer major.