

# THE BATTALION

Serving the Texas A&M University community

Vol. 74 No. 75  
8 Pages

Tuesday, December 16, 1980  
College Station, Texas

USPS 045 360  
Phone 845-2611

## The Weather

Yesterday

High ..... 60  
Low ..... 46  
Rain ..... none

Today

High ..... 65  
Low ..... 46  
Chance of rain ..... none

## Cabinet decisions may take more time

United Press International  
LOS ANGELES — Ronald Reagan seemed surprised when he named Jackie Presser to a key transition post and he was unaware of allegations the Teamsters official had been named to organized crime.

Reagan, who spent Monday at his ranch near Santa Barbara, indicated he may not be able to finish naming his Cabinet by week's end, as he had hoped.

The president-elect was at his Los Angeles home today, relaxing and going through mounds of paperwork, aides said. He also named trips to his barber and tailor.

The Washington transition office Monday announced the appointment of Presser, a Teamster vice president, as a senior economic adviser.

Presser is a former trustee of the scandal-scarred Teamsters Central States Pension Fund, which is the target of a government mismanagement suit, and his name came up last year in a criminal investigation.

Confessed Mafia hitman James "Jimmy the Weasel" Fratianno testified in San Francisco that Presser was associated with organized crime in Cleveland.

The Teamsters are one of two major unions to endorse Reagan, and its officials are reported to be taking a major role in helping shape Reagan's choice for secretary of labor. The transition team also appointed Teamster President Frank Fitzsimmons as honorary labor chairman for Reagan's inaugural.

Asked by reporters if he was aware of the question about Presser, Reagan said:

"No, I was not aware of that, and if that's true, that will be investigated and brought out."

Only a few hours earlier, Presser told reporters, "I'm positive a U.S. president would not make an appointment without checking the background."

Reagan told reporters, "I don't know what the connection is there. Mr. Presser happens to be an official of the Teamsters organization in Ohio. I think it is a legitimate contact with labor."

Reagan, who still must name seven more Cabinet members and a U.N. ambassador, indicated he may not be able to finish the job this week.

"We hope to be able this week to have at least some more announcements, whether all of them or not, I don't know," he said.

Reagan originally had hoped to name his Cabinet by the first week in December, but because of lengthy security checks and indecision on both sides it may be Christmas before the appointments are completed.

The key unfilled job is secretary of state, for which Alexander Haig is the likely choice, according to reports. Asked if he had decided on Haig, Reagan said Monday with a smile, "We'll find out some time this week, won't we? Really, we will. I hope the next couple of days we will be able to announce some more positions. Maybe that will be among them."

Haig is controversial because of his role as Richard Nixon's last chief of staff during the Watergate scandal.

## Price hike to take effect Jan. 1

# Saudis increase oil \$2 barrel

United Press International  
BALI, Indonesia — Saudi Arabia increased its oil price \$2 a barrel at the OPEC summit and announced a "broad agreement" by other members on increases that would send oil up by \$3 to \$40 a barrel.

The hikes mean at least 2 cents more a gallon for gasoline and heating fuel for U.S. consumers.

Yamani didn't give a figure for the Saudi increase, but Venezuelan Oil Minister Humberto Calderon Berti and Iraqi delegates said the Saudis agreed to hike the price of their benchmark oil from \$30 to \$32 per barrel.

The current top price charged by some OPEC member nations, including such major suppliers of oil to the United States as Nigeria, Libya and Algeria, is \$37 per barrel.

Conference sources said it was likely that figure would go to \$40, meaning a \$3 increase above the \$37 for the largely African crude oil.

The Saudis supply about a fifth of U.S. oil supplies; Nigeria, the second largest U.S. supplier after the Saudis, provides 16 percent; Libya 10 percent and Algeria 9 percent.

The new price range of \$32 to \$40 for OPEC oil is expected to take effect Jan. 1.

United Arab Emirates Oil Minister Mana Saeed Al Otaiba canceled a planned meeting with reporters because of the top-level huddle in which the ministers left their aides outside and moved from a restaurant into a smaller cottage to talk prices.

Delegates said a price agreement would enable OPEC to implement a long-term pricing strategy linking oil prices to inflation rates, while assuring consuming nations of stable supplies.

Yamani has favored such a plan, but Indonesian Oil Minister Subroto asked rhetorically during a press conference Monday "how many inflation rates are there."

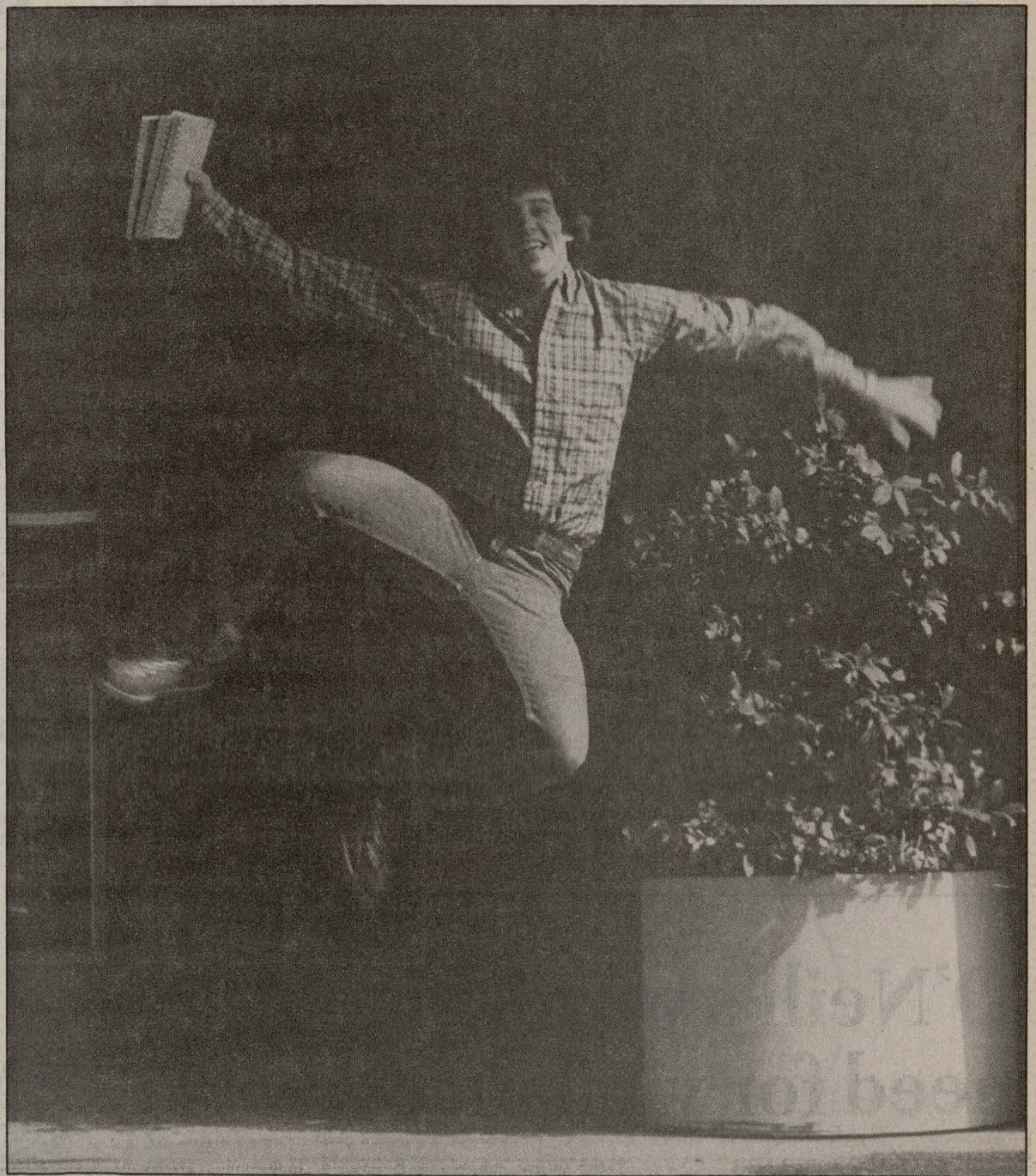


Photo by Laurie Allison

## Jump for joy

A happy Bryan Ellis leaped with joy last Thursday after finishing his last class of undergraduate study at Texas A&M University. Ellis, a pre-dental major, said he has a long way to go, "but it's one step closer to home."

# Teacher competency testing to face fight

United Press International  
AUSTIN — Public school teachers in Texas can expect a significant pay raise from the 1981 Legislature, but they may also get something they hadn't bargained for — a requirement that they pass competency tests on basic skills and the subject matter they teach.

Competency tests for teachers have been recommended by Gov. Bill Clements' Advisory Committee on Education, House subcommittee, the State Board of Education and the Commission on Standards for the Teaching Profession, which recommended a \$1 million appropriation to begin the testing program in 1981.

But proposals for mandatory competency testing for teachers are expected to face tough opposition when the Legislature convenes Jan. 13, primarily from the influential Texas State Teachers Association.

"The idea of having a million dollars set aside for developing a test for teachers after they already have graduated from an approved teacher education program is wasteful," contends James Butler, executive secretary of the TSTA.

"We think it is redundant. The state has procedures for accrediting teacher education colleges now, and we feel if they hold colleges to those standards, that is sufficient.

"If the colleges want to test the students in order to let them into the teaching program, at the end of their sophomore year for instance, we don't object to that and we don't object to the college having some kind of test as part of deciding whether a person is ready to go into teaching. But once a person is sent out of a college program, we think that is sufficient and we don't see the need to spend a million dollars a year."

Clements, who has been at odds with the TSTA since the organization openly backed Democrat John Hill in the 1978 governor's race, suggested earlier this year teachers should be more concerned about doing a

good job and less concerned about lobbying for pay raises.

Clements said he supports "competency testing to be sure teachers are capable of doing the job they are being paid for."

Speaker Bill Clayton also endorses the concept of competency testing for teachers.

"I think it has some merit, but I don't know how to accomplish it," Clayton said. "Apparently we have some teachers who are not as well qualified as others, and if we are trying to attain a professional level there ought to be some method for continuing certification."

Along with the proposals for competency testing for teachers, the 1981 Legislature

also will face proposals to require high school students to pass competency tests before being allowed to graduate from public schools.

Proficiency tests are currently given to students, but passage is not a prerequisite for graduation.

"As far as students are concerned, I don't believe we ought to promote students on a social basis," Clayton said. "I think we have hurt students in the past when social promotions took precedence over attainment. We've sent them out with expectations of having gained something they haven't gained."

## Tomorrow last issue of Battalion

Wednesday's Battalion will be the final one of the fall semester.

The Battalion will publish one issue over the holidays: Wednesday, Jan. 14. Daily publication will resume with the Monday, Jan. 19 issue.

The Battalion's entertainment tabloid, Focus, will resume its weekly publication schedule on Thursday, Jan. 29.

# Most Aggie jokes told by the Aggies

How many Aggies does it take to screw in a light bulb?  
One to hold the bulb and three to turn the ladder.

By KATHY O'CONNELL

Battalion Reporter  
Anyone who is familiar with Texas A&M University has probably heard this joke 100 times and will probably hear it 100 times more.

"What's interesting about Aggie jokes," Dr. Sylvia Ann Grider said, "is that they are a regional phenomenon and the Aggies just have the stereotype of being the brunt of jokes."

Grider, who received her Ph.D. in folklore from Indiana University, has done research on joke telling. She said when she came here in the fall of 1976, she was interested in seeing how widespread the telling of Aggie jokes was and if new ones were being created.

"In the jokes," she said, "it's interesting that Aggie function as an ethnic group." In that, she means they are set apart culturally from other groups in the state.

Grider said the reason for this is probably historical.

"Texas A&M," she said, "is the only land grant school in the state and was the only all-male military school."

"And this fits the way that joke cycles function because it's unique and stands out from other schools."

The oldest form of the ethnic joke is to portray a group of people as being stupid, she said.

"An ethnic joke in international dis-

tribution deals with stupidity and making fun of whoever is regarded as the stupid minority group. That's an international trend and Aggies have been fitted in that category."

Grider, an English professor, said her main interest is to see who tells the jokes. She's found Aggies themselves to be the biggest tellers.

"The people I talked with," she said, "said they told the jokes because it was funny to them to know that the jokes were exactly the opposite of the reality."

Grider pointed out that some of the highest SAT scores in the state are from students at the University. "The jokes portray Aggies as being stupid when they're not," she said.

Grider has also found the jokes to be topical. "By topical," she said, "I mean Aggie jokes have a tendency to pick up whatever is fadish."

"For instance, during the Winter Olympics an old Aggie joke was dusted off and brought out - Did you hear about the Aggie who won a gold medal at Lake Placid? He was so proud of it he had it bronzed."

Grider said she doesn't have any favorite jokes, nor does she want to publish any of her research. To her it's mainly a hobby.

"To any scholar," she said, "he is pleased when theory is proved. When a phenomenon comes to surface and our theories are proved, that's reassuring to a scholar to know our theories are correct, and Aggie jokes reconfirm what we know about jokes."

## Retired oil exec thinks he's located the Santa Maria

# Expedition to look for Columbus' ship

United Press International  
SAND SPRINGS, Okla. — A 52-year-old retired oil industry executive says he knows where to look for one of Christopher Columbus' ships, and possibly the first settlement in the New World and a fortune in gold.

Bill DeGeer, who has spent much of his life reading ships' logs and studying maps of the Caribbean, is so sure he knows the location of the Santa Maria, one of three ships in Columbus' voyage to the New World, he is organizing an expedition to the island of Hispaniola.

If DeGeer succeeds in raising the \$1 million needed for the expedition, it will start in his backyard.

"I've just finished building a sailboat at my place on Lake Keystone," the land-locked Oklahoman said. "I plan to truck it (the sailboat) to the Port of Catosa (near Tulsa) and then sail down the Arkansas Navigation Channel to the Mississippi and then out into the Gulf (of Mexico)."

DeGeer says he was sailing a boat in the Caribbean years ago when he first became fascinated with the history of the area and the lure of sunken Spanish galleons.

"Everybody starts out skin diving and then goes to scuba," he said. "The next thing you know you're looking for sunken wrecks. Some years ago, when I was in the hospital, I read a translation of Columbus' log. That got me started on my search."

DeGeer compares his search to a "detective novel, where the detective and reader has to put all the clues together to solve the mystery."

"The chances of finding anything really valuable are remote," he said. "I have no problem signing papers with the United States government or the Haitian or Dominican Republic governments turning everything over to them. It's not the money — it's just the thrill of finding it."

DeGeer believes the remains of the Santa Maria are on a coral reef off the northern coast of Haiti. Haiti and the Dominican Republic share the island of Hispaniola.

Explorers recently reported they have found the remains of the Pinta, a second Columbus ship, near the Bahama Islands, about 700 miles from Haiti.

DeGeer, however, is skeptical about the reports. He questions the discovery of lead cannon ball at the site because Columbus' ships "used stone shot."

While the primary purpose of the expedition is locating the Santa Maria and the settlement, DeGeer says the expedition may also find a gold cache collected by the crew before Arawak Indians killed them.

"I'm not to say it's not the Pinta, but the reports I've read leave a lot of questions," DeGeer said.

The Santa Maria, flagship of Columbus' tiny fleet, ran aground on a reef off the Haitian coast in 1492 and after constructing a fort, the first recorded European settlement in the Western Hemisphere, the crew was left behind while the other two ships continued on, DeGeer says.

When Columbus returned from Spain with even more ships a year later, he found the settlement had been destroyed by natives.

The exact site of the settlement has never been determined, although historians agree on the general area.

While working as an oil company executive in the Middle East, DeGeer had opportunities to study and examine original documents, maps and logs from Columbus' voyages. In Saville, Spain, he had a chance to research Catholic Church archives relating to Spain's conquest of the New World.

"The Catholic Church was one of the most prolific record keepers," he said. "Most of the material in Saville has not even been catalogued and it's in archaic Spanish and is difficult to translate."

Other people have searched for the Santa Maria and the last "serious" research effort was in 1939, but DeGeer says he believes he knows why the others have failed. "I've zeroed in on errors, especially mistakes in convert-

ing measurements and dates to modern terms," he said. "I'd debate my findings with any scholar. I'm interested in correcting the record."

In addition to his research, DeGeer says while in Spain he found and acquired the first map ever drawn of the Haitian coastline. The map, drawn by a 15th Century Dutch cartographer, shows the location of the native settlement referred to as Port Royal, the settlement near where the Santa Maria went aground, DeGeer said.

While the primary purpose of the expedition is locating the Santa Maria and the settlement, DeGeer says the expedition may also find a gold cache collected by the crew before Arawak Indians killed them.

"According to Columbus' log, he instructed the crew to collect gold from the tribe and to dig a well or a cellar," DeGeer said. "We know Columbus was able to collect some before he left. How much the crew was able to collect is a guess, but it could have been considerable."

Even though DeGeer says he is attracted by the "thrill" of the search, he admits there will be financial rewards if he succeeds in finding the Santa Maria and writes a book about the discovery.

"With the 500th anniversary of Columbus' voyage coming up in a few years, I'm sure Madison Avenue is going to arrange some pretty special promotions," he said. "If I have the movie rights to the book and a few relics to display, I'm sure I can find someone willing to promote them."

To finance the expedition, DeGeer is offering 25 limited liability tax shelter plans at \$40,000 each. So far, DeGeer says he has been able to interest a few fellow Oklahomans in the expedition.

"It's hard to say when this will get off the ground," he said. "Right now, we have to concentrate on raising the money."

Even though it may take months or even years to launch the expedition, DeGeer says he is not worried about someone else discovering the Santa Maria.

"To find it, you would have to know where to look. Oceanographic experts have estimated the remains would be covered by about two and a half feet of coral. I know where to look."