

# Local / State

## Fire-resistant holiday

By JOHN BRAMBLETT  
Battalion Reporter

It's time to deck the halls with boughs of holly — but make sure the holly is fire-resistant. Although the number of fires resulting from Christmas lights or trees has decreased in recent years, people should exercise special caution during the holiday season, said Joey Porter, deputy fire marshal for the College Station Fire Department. "Last year we did not answer any calls resulting from Christmas mishaps," he said. "In the last two years I think we've answered one call which resulted from Christmas decorations and there was no fire." With the sales of flame-retardant artificial trees and safety lighting electrical fires during the holiday season have decreased, Porter said. People who put up live trees should take special care to protect their house, Porter said. Trees should not be put up earlier than two weeks before Christmas because they will dry out, he said.

If candles are displayed in the house, they should be kept away from the Christmas tree, wrapping paper and children, he said. "You're not talking about losing a present, you are talking about a child's life," Porter said. Consumers should check labels on boxes to make sure ornaments and outside lights are fire retardant, he said. Outside lights should be checked for faulty wiring and cracked bulb bases. These can cause

short circuits and fire. But Christmas decorations aren't the only cause of holiday-related fires. Fireworks have been the major cause of fires in the Bryan-College Station area during the Christmas season, Porter said. Possession, selling, storing or transporting fireworks within city limits is illegal, he said. Citations will be given out, especially to people shooting fireworks from cars.

## Christmas decorations can pose threat to kids

The delicate plastic Santa Claus dangles on a low tree bough, enticing the two-year-old boy. He grabs it, puts it in his mouth and realizes it isn't candy. Surprised, the youngster tries to spit it out. But it cracks and a portion of the plas-

tic lodges in his windpipe or is inhaled into his lungs. Aspiration of foreign objects is a leading cause of death and injury among children under six. The holiday season is a dangerous time for toddlers.

## Animal science trip planned

BY LAURA J. LARSON  
Battalion Reporter

One hundred fifty Aggies will take to the road January 10 for a 1,700-mile animal production field study trip through Texas. The seven-day study is designed to allow students to see a variety of Texas livestock units and to hear owners and managers of each unit discuss their management philosophies. Students will tour facilities ranging from feedlots to grain elevators. Dr. Howard Hesby, associate professor of animal science, is organizing the field study for the eighth year. He said each manager or owner not only shares how the unit is operated, but why specific practices are followed. Students quickly see that the reason these people are successful is simply because of themselves. Dr. Hesby encourages students to analyze their field trip hosts as to the characteristics which made them successful. He said the tour is especially valuable for students who want to become a veterinarian, vocational agriculture teacher, county agent or animal producer, but who don't have a varied farm and ranch background.

John Cozad, a senior animal science major from McAllen and past field trip participant, said that getting exposure to so many different animal agriculture industries in Texas was the most significant part of the trip for him. He said it showed that there are unlimited opportunities in agriculture after graduation. Learning that there are many similarities in the management of successful operations even though the type of agriculture or farm is so varied was important to Dorothy Stevenson, a junior animal science major from Copperas Cove, who attended last year.

She also said that getting to know other students interested in animal agriculture was beneficial. The trip costs \$125 and is open to all interested students. To participate, students need to register for animal science 400A and fill out field trip forms with Dr. Hesby. The trip is worth two credits. Students must write thank-you letters to all the facilities toured and two reports for Hesby.

Dr. Hesby is also coordinating a nine-day agribusiness field study trip during spring break. It will cost \$325 and is open to 44 students.

## What's up at Texas A&M

### Monday

**FOOD SCIENCE CLUB:** Club will be selling pecans the week of Dec. 14 through 18 in 338 Kleberg and in the Meadors Student Center Dec. 14 through 16.  
**OFF CAMPUS CENTER:** Roommate session from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. in 137A MSC. Come and find a roommate for the spring semester.

### Tuesday

**FOOD SCIENCE CLUB:** Club will be selling pecans the week of Dec. 14 through 18 in 338 Kleberg and in the MSC Dec. 14 through 16.  
**OFF CAMPUS CENTER:** Roommate session from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. in 137A MSC. Come and find a roommate for the spring semester.  
**CHI ALPHA:** Bible study and Christian fellowship at 7 p.m. in 200 Rudder.

### Wednesday

**FOOD SCIENCE CLUB:** Club will be selling pecans the week of Dec. 14 through 18 in 338 Kleberg and in the MSC Dec. 14 through 16.  
**BRAZOS VALLEY DIABETIC ASSOCIATION:** Meeting will be one week later than usual for the December meeting. There will be a Christmas party for all diabetics in this area. Pooch's Park, College Station, Dec. 16 at 7 p.m. At this time new officers for 1982 will be introduced.

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## Today's almanac

Today is Monday, Dec. 14, the 348th day of 1981 with 17 to follow.  
The moon is moving toward its last quarter.  
The morning stars are Mars, Jupiter and Saturn.  
The evening stars are Mercury and Venus.  
Those born on this date are under the sign of Sagittarius. James (Jimmy) Doolittle, American hero flyer of World War II, was born Dec. 14, 1896.

On this date in history:  
In 1799, George Washington, Revolutionary War commanding general and first president of the United States, died at his Mount Vernon home after asking his doctors to "let me go off quietly."  
In 1819, Alabama was admitted to the Union as the 22nd state.  
In 1974, President Ford arrived in Martinique in the French West Indies for two days of talks with French President Valery Giscard d'Estaing.

## Study predicts students scores in BANA class

By STEPHEN M. WARD  
Battalion Reporter

A classification procedure developed in the business analysis department at Texas A&M University has proven useful in predicting success in introductory computing courses. Dr. Louis W. Glorfeld and George C. Fowler, assistant professors of business analysis and research, have developed a way to classify students as having either high or low aptitude for introductory computing classes. "We're trying to predict before (he's) taken the course how successful a student will be," Glorfeld said. By looking at four variables, Glorfeld and Fowler can usually predict the success an individual student will have in the introductory computing class, BANA 217, a class in which students learn the basics of programming. The four variables studied are: the results of the Wolfe Programming Aptitude Test, SAT math and verbal scores and the student's current grade point ratio. Based on these variables Glorfeld and Fowler can predict what grade a student will make. The variable that was most helpful in predicting success was

the student's GPR, Glorfeld said. "We validated the procedure," Glorfeld said. "We tested students a year later that were in the original study and tried classification procedure on them and found our model to be 75 percent correct." The purpose of the study, Glorfeld said, is to place students in special sections like honors classes, and possibly to counsel them into a particular degree program. "The need to identify a partially successful student is important for reasons such as counseling into an appropriate career path," Fowler said. The increased rate of computer usage placing a greater importance on computer education, he said. This study also might be helpful in determining faculty needs like the number of students might take the course, Fowler said. "If we know more about students coming into the course," he said, "we should be able to better for our courses. From an administrative standpoint, we could figure out the number of sections needed, the number of students in those sections and many professors we will need."

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