



Aggies to host Lamar in NIT

See page 11

Texas A&M The Battalion

Serving the University community

Vol. 75 No. 111 USPS 045360 14 Pages

College Station, Texas

Monday, March 8, 1982

Officials say arson may be cause in fire

United Press International
HOUSTON — Fire officials said newly recovered evidence at the Westchase Hilton Hotel raises the possibility the blaze, which killed 10 people, may have been an arson.

Fire Marshal Eddie Corral said Sunday the hotel could be charged with fire code violations because a night desk clerk, annoyed by the noise, turned off an alarm that could have alerted the victims and 30 who were injured in a smoky blaze.

Investigator Richard Benson told the Houston Chronicle new developments in the form of physical evidence have prompted officials to suspect the fire may have been intentionally set at the 18-month-old building. He would not elaborate, and said no

one has been arrested.

Benson said 35 containers of evidence had been collected from the room where the fire started.

Smoke and soot from the fire spread through the 13-story building each time the clerk shut off the alarm sounding in the hotel office because the automatic ventilation system switched back on early Saturday morning.

Corral said Sunday that misdemeanor charges could be filed against the hotel's management for failing to properly train employees to use the fire alarm system.

Officials had speculated since early Saturday the blaze at the Westchase Hilton Hotel started when the occupants of one room carelessly disposed of a cigarette.



staff photo by John Ryan

Into the wild blue yonder

George Gage, a senior petroleum engineering major from San Juan, Texas, Mike Baker, a graduate student in architecture from Houston, and Eric Ulaga, a sophomore mechanical engineering major from Kennard, hold on to the ropes as Troy Koll, a freshman mechanical

engineering major from San Antonio, prepares for flight during the Texas A&M Hang Gliding Club's training session Saturday in the parking lot adjacent to the Zachry Engineering Building. The club holds these classes to teach the basics of safe hang gliding.

Military-backed candidate leads in Guatemala

United Press International
GUATEMALA CITY — Military-backed Gen. Anibal Guevara took a strong lead in early returns today in Guatemala's presidential race to determine who leads the strategic Central American nation against a growing leftist guerrilla movement.

The United States promised to pour in arms and other assistance to resist the guerrillas if the generals allowed a clean election, but there were immediate suspicions of fraud voiced by at least one opposition party.

"It is strange that in places where we have good communications, the Telexes have not yet arrived," said Rudy Fuentes, assistant chief of the far right National Liberation Movement. He noted results were especially slow from eastern Chiquimula province, the party's stronghold.

The military has been accused of rigging the past two elections, both won by army generals.

An unexpectedly large percentage of Guatemala's 2.3 million eligible voters cast ballots Sunday for one of the four presidential candidates as well as deputies to the nation's Congress.

Guerrillas vowing to disrupt the balloting attacked at widely scattered points across the nation but were not able to deter the heavy voting, officials said.

Guevara, the government sup-

ported candidate, took an early lead in initial results with 30,802 votes, unofficial returns showed. Moderate conservative Alejandro Maldonado Aguirre was second with 25,249 votes, while far-right candidate Mario Sandoval Alarcon was in third place with 22,972 votes.

Guastavo Anzueto Vielmann, a pro-business candidate, was last with 9,730 votes.

Results also showed about 10 percent of the ballots were nullified, either because they were blank, had more than one candidate's name or had null written in. Guerrillas asked people to nullify ballots to protest the choice of candidates.

Local authorities reported clashes Sunday between guerrillas and security forces in the towns of Chisec, Chicaoco, and Zalcuapa, all west of the capital, and bombs in Puerto Barrios, 204 miles northeast of Guatemala City, but no casualty figures were available.

U.S. officials said they did not care who wins, as long as it was through clean and free elections promised by President Romeo Lucas Garcia, who took power in 1978 after an allegedly fraud-ridden vote.

Guevara, 56, is the candidate of the ruling Popular United Front coalition, while Sandoval Alarcon, 58, heads the far-right National Liberation Movement.

Draft registration

Business slack at area post offices; district attorney awaits FBI lists

by Julie Farrar
Battalion Reporter

If you're a male between 18 and 20 years old and haven't registered for the draft, chances are good that you'll be asked to explain why soon.

"I urge them to get down there and register now," U.S. District Attorney Dan Hedges said.

A grace period, which extended through February 1982, allowed men who had not registered to do so with no questions asked. Since that period has ended, men who have not registered are violating federal law and could be sentenced to five years in prison and a \$10,000 fine, he said.

As the grace period approached an end, there wasn't a great rush of men trying to register at the College Station Post Office, Postmaster C.L. Matcek said.

"You couldn't tell the difference

here," he said. "We don't really have a problem because most people send their (registration) cards on time."

Hedges said no registration cases have reached the district attorney's office.

"We are still waiting for a list," Hedges said. "There are still several steps before prosecution."

First, the Selective Service compiles the names of violators. Every effort will be made to notify the subject and give him a chance to respond, he said. If no response is made, then the matter will be passed to the FBI.

If a person refuses to register, the district attorney's office is forced to prosecute, Hedges said. He said he feels the penalty for non-compliance is appropriate.

"It's a serious matter," Hedges said. "You've got to have a fairly stiff penalty."

When registration was reinstated in 1980, there was a high degree of compliance, he said. Since then there has been a slack-off, but Hedges said he doesn't feel the lack of compliance is a sign of protest.

"People just lost track of the thing," he said.

Registration was reinstated July 21, 1980, six months after President Carter expressed the idea in his State of the Union address. At that time, many experts felt a combination of rising costs and the smaller population of young men would make it difficult to maintain the all-voluntary military in years ahead.

In the summer of 1980, young men born in 1960 and 1961 registered. Those born in 1962 registered during the first week of 1981. After that continuous registration of 18-year-olds became mandatory on or about the

day they turn 18.

To register, one simply goes to any local post office and fills out a card provided by the Selective Service. The card bears his name, birth date, social security number, address and phone number. The cards are then processed and the information is sent to the Selective Service Agency in Washington.

Although current legislation doesn't permit a draft, a law provides for the selection of draftees by lottery. In a lottery, a sequence of birth dates are selected at random from the 365 days of the year.

Men will be drafted according to where their birth date falls in the lottery, which first will consider men turning 20 years old in the year the draft resumes. If needed, additional lotteries involving men through the age of 26 will be held.

College accreditation enhances degree

Editor's note: This is the first of a four-part series on Texas A&M University's self-study program.

by Sandra Kay Gary
Battalion Staff

How do you know your degree from Texas A&M University will be worth anything once you've graduated? Why is a degree from Texas A&M better than a degree from John Doe's Institute of Higher Education? The answer to those questions lies in the fact that Texas A&M is an accredited university.

But what does that mean? According to "A Study of Accreditation in Adult and Continuing Education Programs," accreditation functions by:

• certifying that an institution has

met established standards

• assisting prospective students in identifying acceptable institutions

• assisting institutions in determining the acceptability of transfer credits

• helping to identify institutions and programs for the investment of public and private funds

• protecting an institution against harmful internal and external pressures

• creating goals for self-improvement of weaker programs and stimulating a general raising of standards among educational institutions

• involving the faculty and staff comprehensively in institutional evaluation and planning

• establishing a criterion for pro-



fessional certification, licensure and for upgrading courses offering such preparation

• providing a basis for determining eligibility for Federal assistance.

"Almost all universities whose degrees are formally respected are accredited in the U.S.," said Dr. R.J.Q. Adams, coordinator of the Texas A&M self-study program.

Six governing bodies throughout the United States conduct and evaluate university studies to determine which universities and schools meet the standard requirements for accreditation. The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools is the agency responsible for awarding or denying Texas A&M's accreditation.

"It's a self-disciplining organization, and by belonging to the Southern Association ... (a university) agrees to abide by its rules of what is and what is not acceptable under accreditation," said Adams, an associate history professor.

"What one gets out of this so-called accreditation is a kind of clean bill of health in regard to one's programs," he said. "Consequently if you take a degree from Texas A&M in architecture or Spanish or philosophy or mechanical engineering, there is no question that the program from which you came is reputable."

"Very simply (accreditation) works like this: the Southern Association requests that each 10 years the University ... conduct an in-depth study of itself.

"This is a faculty study ... it's not conducted by the administration of the University. It's not conducted by the Southern Association. It's not conducted by presidents and chancellors and people like that. It is of, by

See STUDY, page 5

inside

Classified	10
Local	3
National	7
Opinions	2
Sports	11
State	5
What's Up	9

forecast

Today's forecast: Partly cloudy and warm with a high in the low 70s; low tonight in the upper 40s. Tuesday's forecast calls for warm temperatures again.