

NASA projects space station built by 1992

See page 3

Ag women hoopsters win season opener

See story page 7

Students help needy with drives, deliveries

See page 3

Texas A&M The Battalion

Serving the University community

Vol. 80 No. 59 USPS 045360 10 pages

College Station, Texas

Tuesday, November 20, 1984



Checkin' it out

Photo by ANTHONY S. CASPER

Showing some 4 year olds from the First Baptist Church Day Care Center around the bonfire site, Scott Lofton, the Head Civilian Redpot, becomes the man of the hour for these fu-

ture Aggies. The bonfire's fourth tier was started last night and these youngsters promised to come back and give their approval so that work could continue.

Mexico City fire sparked by explosions

United Press International

MEXICO CITY — A huge fire sparked by a series of explosions at a natural gas distribution center Monday engulfed a Mexico City neighborhood, sending flames more than a mile into the sky and killing 100 people. Hundreds of others were injured.

Flames raged for hours after the blasts in the northern residential and commercial area of San Juan Ixhuatepec and pockets continued burning into the late afternoon. A strong smell of gas hung over the area.

Streets were littered with rubble from shattered houses, charred vehicles and other debris. Entire blocks of houses were gutted.

Police said 15 people were arrested for robbing abandoned houses and businesses, and army troops wearing gas masks were moved into the neighborhood to stop further looting.

"Everything started a little before six in the morning when there was a strong smell of gas and all of a sudden, everything got very bright, like the sun came out early," one resident said.

A police spokesman said 100 people were killed in the blaze, most of them within seconds of the initial explosion in their homes and on the streets. Authorities said the death toll could rise as rescue workers reached other victims buried under the rubble.

Police said more than 500 people were treated for injuries, many at

make-shift centers set up near the devastated area. Because of the numbers of injured, only victims with third-degree burns were admitted to hospitals.

Police, firefighters and army troops blocked off the area, which is about 1½ miles in diameter. Ambulances and passenger buses raced back and forth transporting injured to hospitals and clinics.

Authorities warned that more explosions could occur as the fire spread, possibly igniting four other gas tanks. About 350,000 people were evacuated, police said.

Witnesses at the scene reported seeing charred bodies lying in the streets. Rescue workers carried out others, still dressed in nightclothes, from under mounds of debris.

"We just ran into the street," said Mario Sanchez Santana, who was asleep with his family when the first explosion rocked their home. "Nobody said anything. Everybody just got out. Then we saw a gas tank blow up. It landed up on the hill and smashed a house."

Police said the first explosion appeared to have come from a gas truck at one of several distribution centers in the area owned by Unigas, a private company that supplies natural gas for domestic use.

The fire set off by the blast leaped to a nearby gas storage center of the state-owned Pemex, police said. Residents said the first blast was followed by at least seven others.

Authorities said some 600,000 people live in the area.

Turkish diplomat slain in Vienna

United Press International

VIENNA — A suspected Armenian terrorist bent on avenging a 1915 massacre of his countrymen shot and killed a Turkish U.N. official Monday as the diplomat stopped his red Mercedes at a busy intersection on his way to work.

A white scarf bearing the words "Armenian Revolutionary Army ARA" written in neat, ball-point pen lettering was found next to the body

of the slain diplomat, Evrin Ergun.

The killing was the second assassination of a Turkish official in Vienna in six months.

Witnesses said a dark-haired, moustached man in blue jeans and a denim jacket ran up to Ergun's red Mercedes at the intersection and pumped six shots through the driver's window.

Ergun, 52, deputy director of the Vienna-based United Nations Cen-

ter for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, died instantly from a 9 mm bullet wound to the head, police said.

Police believed Ergun had disregarded Foreign Ministry warnings to change their routes daily because his assassin apparently lay in wait expecting the diplomat to pass by.

About an hour after the shooting, United Press International received

a telephone call from a man who, in an apparently tape-recorded statement, claimed responsibility for the attack in the name of the ARA.

The man, speaking in accented English, said the ARA "will continue to kill Turkish subjects in the future" in revenge for the massacre of some 1.5 million Armenians by Turkey in 1915.

Police said passersby chased the gunman into a pedestrian passage.

Posthumous degrees awarded each graduation

By ROBIN BLACK
Senior Staff Writer

The programs passed out to people at Texas A&M graduation ceremonies seem fairly run-of-the-mill. The almost endless list of the names of the graduates seems uniform with the exception of an occasional asterisk.

That asterisk signifies a last memorial to a fallen A&M student.

Each year about four posthumous degrees are awarded to students who died just short of completing University graduation requirements. University policy on awarding the

degrees allows the family or academic department of the deceased student to request the posthumous degree. To be eligible for such a degree, a student must have been currently enrolled in or pre-registered for his last semester.

Each case is reviewed by the student's respective department and dean, then by the A&M Faculty Senate and finally by the University registrar's office.

The Faculty Senate approves not only the posthumous degree candidates but also all the other degree candidates for each semester. The

Senate has been doing so since it began a couple of years ago and took over the duties of the Academic Programs Council.

The University has been awarding posthumous degrees for many years, but, Assistant Registrar Donald Gardner says the policy was clarified about ten years ago by the APC because of a growing interest in the degrees.

"It seems like we're awarding the degrees at about every commencement," he says. "That's too many. I'm the one who calls the families and makes the arrangements for

who will pick up the degree, so it gets a little more personal for me."

Gardner says most of the degree recipients were killed in traffic accidents.

"With all the students we have from Houston and Dallas driving back and forth, that's where most of the deaths come from," he says.

"We probably give out four or five of the degrees every year, and these are just from students who died who happen to have completed all their academic requirements."

Some degrees aren't awarded immediately after a student's death.

One of this year's two recipients, Pamela Sue Reynolds, a murder victim, died in March 1978.

Gardner says the family probably wasn't familiar with the University policy on the degrees.

"One of the reasons they never pursued the degree was probably because of the nature of the death," he says.

Gardner says that one of Reynolds' family members was at this summer's commencement ceremonies and noticed the posthumous degree awarded then, and that's when

the family requested one for their daughter.

Reynolds was a physical education major from Valley Mills and was enrolled in her last semester at A&M.

The other student receiving the degree this December is Bill Robinson.

Robinson, a senior journalism major from Austin, was to have been editor of The Battalion this semester.

He was fatally injured in a car accident the night of Aug. 20 and died a week later (Aug. 27) at St. Joseph Hospital.

Grievance group hears women discuss band

By KAREN BLOCH
Reporter

The Student Senate resolution stating that "women should be encouraged to participate in the Fightin' Texas Aggie Band" was discussed at the meeting of Student Government's Issues and Grievances Monday night. The opinions voiced by the nine students in attendance were different.

Susan Giesler, commanding officer of Squadron 14, an all-female outfit, said the women in her outfit were opposed to the resolution. "Women were admitted to the University in 1964. They were allowed to join the Corps in 1974. Now, finally, in 1984, we're being accepted."

"I'm not saying that this (not allowing women to join the band) isn't sexual discrimination. I fully agree that it is. But, this would put us (women in the Corps) back about five years."

Some guys, Giesler said, make a generalization. They resent the girls in the Corps because of the issue of

women trying to get into the band. "They just think you're a girl and we don't want girls in the band."

"I can speak for my whole outfit when I say that women in the Corps are not being affected positively by this," Giesler said. "The minute this (the resolution) started out I had freshmen coming to me crying because a guy told them 'Get away from me.'"

"If you let women in the band hostility will be taken out on us because we're women in the Corps," Keta Roth, a junior in Squadron 14, said. "This just isn't the right time."

"To say that this isn't the right time to let women in the band is selfish of us," said Mandy Schubert, a sophomore in Company W-1, the other female outfit. "The first women in the Corps had to go through a lot to get us to the position that we're in now."

"Sometimes we're just going to have to make sacrifices — even if it isn't what we want — for girls who

want to join the band in the future. We have to make sacrifices for the progress of the University."

Roth said allowing women in the band is inevitable. "But, if women are let in the band they need to have a full unit."

The band is an outfit in the Corps, Roth said. "It's broken into six outfits for administrative purposes, but it acts as one outfit. I understand them not wanting a girl in their outfit. I wouldn't want a guy in mine."

"The guys in the band work together, sleep together, eat together and play together. They're like a family and that's what makes them so good."

Schubert agreed that the band acts as one outfit.

"But," she said, "there are women's outfits in the Corps and there are men's outfits in the Corps. That's a parallel. Just like there are fraternities and there are sororities. There is no parallel to the Aggie Band for women to be a member of."

A&M's emergency staffers ask a lot of good questions

By JOHN MAKELY
Reporter

"Joe Public doesn't really expect our dispatchers to ask as many questions as they do," Captain Steve Ellerbe of the Texas A&M University Emergency Medical Services said.

The University ambulance service currently employs a system adapted by Ellerbe that provides more information about the patient to ambulance crews before they arrive at the scene of the accident. But some people who call seem to think they are getting the third degree.

When you call the University emergency number, (9911 if you are calling from on-campus, 845-1111 for off-campus) the dispatcher on the phone with you will ask a lot of questions, but he is not call-screening, Ellerbe said.

"If you call, then we send — every single time," Ellerbe said.

"If both of our ambulances

we'll take this full information and transfer it to College Station, and make sure you get an ambulance right away."

When you call, the dispatcher will ask some prescribed, basic questions including the caller's name, the phone number from which call is placed, what happened, the exact location of victim, their level of consciousness, whether breathing is controlled or labored and if there is bleeding.

After determining the nature of the injury the dispatcher uses a flip-card system to ask the caller key questions pertaining to the specific nature of the injury.

The card system outlines about four yes or no questions that determine the code for sending the ambulance.

These questions also provide the crew with a more in-depth assessment of how bad the scene is and what specialized medics will be required.

Once the ambulance is sent, the dispatcher calls the person reporting the accident and asks more detailed questions to determine the status of the victim and check if any new information is available.

"When we call them back they wonder right off ... 'Are they call screening? Why does it take so long?'" Ellerbe said.

"We don't screen calls at all and when the dispatcher calls back, it is to get additional information, and also give pre-arrival instructions to persons at the scene to aid the injured person before the ambulance arrives."

Ellerbe said that the ambulance is sent within one or two minutes of the call and is then updated while en-route to the accident.

"That puts us way ahead of the City of Bryan or the City of College Station and a lot of other systems including Houston," Ellerbe said.