

Texas A&M The Battalion

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A&M research funding ranks 11th in country

Texas A&M, the leading research institution in the South and Southwest, now is ranked 11th nationally in research funding, according to the latest figures provided by the National Science Foundation.

Based on 1985 figures — the latest period for which comparisons were available — A&M reported \$146.4 million in spending for research and development, just behind UCLA and the University of California at Berkeley.

Only one other university in the South, the University of Texas at Austin, was listed among the nation's top 25 research institutions. UT ranked 18th with \$23.3 million.

University officials said they were pleased and gratified at the rankings since scientific and engineering research is becoming more important to the health of the Texas economy.

"It's no longer a secret that the investment in university research is closely tied to our ability to attract new businesses, spawn new jobs and develop new industry," Chancellor Perry L. Adkisson said.

"The National Science Foundation figures show that we are doing well in comparison with other leading universities throughout the country," he said. "We now know how important research is to our society and our economy and we are competing with the best research programs in attracting support and that can only be good for Texas."

The report showed that 49 percent of A&M's funding came from the federal government, 36 percent from state and local governments, eight percent from private industry, two percent from institutional funds and five percent from other sources.

Research in agriculture and engineering account for nearly 60 percent of the University's total research expenditures.

Researchers find Alzheimer's gene on chromosome

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WASHINGTON (AP) — Government researchers said Wednesday that they have located the gene that makes a protein that may play a key role in Alzheimer's disease.

The gene, a bit of genetic material that triggers protein production, had been sought by researchers worldwide because its products seem to be involved in the deposits that clog the brains of Alzheimer sufferers, scientists said.

Researchers from the National Institutes of Health, in an unscheduled presentation at the annual meeting of the Society for Neuroscience, said they used a genetic key from a product protein to backtrack to the gene.

Dr. Dmitry V. Goldgaber said he and his colleagues found the gene on chromosome 21, a crucial repository of genetic information that previously has been linked to Alzheimer's disease and Down's syndrome.

Other scientists at the meeting termed the work as very important and "brilliant."

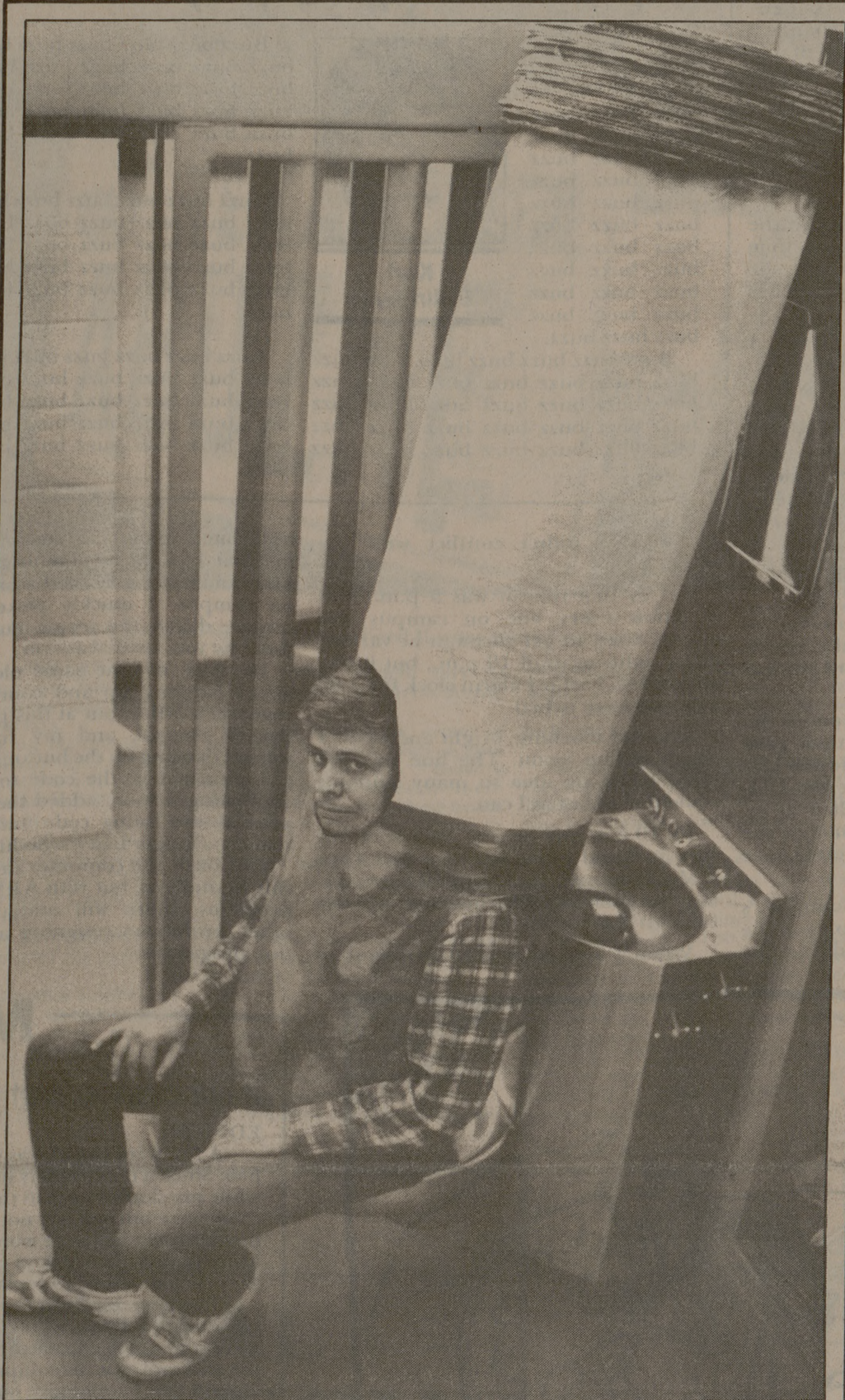


Photo by Tom Ownbey

Last Smoke

Jim Bishop, chairman of the Great American Smokeout, poses as a cigarette on "death row" at the Brazos County Jail Wednesday. Bishop was filming a public service announcement on the dangers of smoking to promote the Smokeout, which is set for Nov. 20.

Reagan briefs leaders on U.S., Iran relations

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Reagan briefed congressional leaders Wednesday on U.S. relations with Iran while his former national security adviser said the Persian Gulf nation is of "enormous importance" to the security of America and its Western allies.

Neither Reagan nor his spokesmen commented on what was said at the White House session.

However, *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*, in Thursday's editions, quoted unidentified administration officials as saying Reagan had acknowledged sending military equipment to Iran and had defended his action as an effort to establish ties with moderate factions vying for power in Tehran.

The *Times* reported that an administration official paraphrased Reagan at the meeting as saying the United States would be at fault if Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini died "and we had not made any preparations for contacts with a future regime. The arms are necessary for that."

The *Post* reported that the covert operation provoked angry exchanges between White House chief of staff Donald T. Regan and national security adviser John M. Poindexter.

The two got into a "shouting match" in front of the president in the Oval Office on Nov. 6 on whether to make some details of the operation public, with Poindexter arguing for secrecy and Regan for some openness, the *Post* said.

Wednesday's briefing was the first since the emergence of reports of a purported administration attempt to complete an arms-for-hostages deal with Iran to spring Americans held captive in Lebanon.

Senate Democratic leader Robert C. Byrd, D-W.Va., after the meeting said, "I have not changed my mind."

Byrd has sharply criticized what he said is the administration's apparent violation of its own policy not to negotiate with terrorists.

Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole, R-Kan., had nothing to say and was

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At least 180 die as ferry sinks in Haiti

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP) — A 50-foot ferry boat sank off Haiti's west coast Tuesday, and at least 180 people drowned while 20 were rescued, the U.S. Embassy reported.

Jeffrey Lite, an embassy spokesman, said he received the information from the Haitian navy.

Radio Soleil, a Roman Catholic station in Port-au-Prince, reported Tuesday night that its correspondent on the island of Gonave, 30 miles west of the capital, reported that the vessel apparently was overloaded.

Government officials said the ferry, the Oklele, had left on its daily trip between Port-au-Prince and Gonave but radioed an SOS between noon and 1 p.m. The distress signal was picked up on Gonave, they said, and rescue vessels were dispatched and picked up the survivors.

Tax reform good news for most A&M students

By Olivier Uyttebrouck
Staff Writer

The new tax law is good news for most students and bad news for some, a Texas A&M accounting professor says.

Dr. Larry Crumbley says a single taxpayer who doesn't itemize deductions in 1987 will get a standard deduction of \$2,540, which is great news for students and other low-income people. He adds that married couples filing jointly will be able to knock \$3,760 off their taxable income next year with a standard deduction.

More good news is a \$1,900 personal exemption for all taxpayers and dependents in 1987, a fat increase over this year's personal exemption of \$1,080, Crumbley says.

But the bad news is that, unlike past years, students claimed as dependents on their parents' tax returns won't be able to claim the exemption for themselves, he says.

And more bad news is that students with scholarships and fellowships won't be able to deduct awards used for living expenses from their taxable income in 1987, Crumbley says.

In the past, any scholarship or fellowship received by a degree-seeking student didn't count as taxable income even if part of the award was used for living expenses, he says. He says that under the new law, stu-

dents can deduct only that part of the award used to pay tuition, fees, books and educational supplies.

The new law also has done away with income averaging, and this may affect some new graduates who have paid their way through school, Crumbley says.

Before 1987, any taxpayer who experienced a sudden growth in income — someone fresh out of school with a new job, for example — could average his income out over four years and take advantage of the lower tax rate.

So under the old law, students who paid at least 50 percent of their educational costs out of their own earnings could use income averaging.

One provision of the new law that may affect parents' saving for their children's education is the elimination of certain income shifting techniques called grantor trusts, Crumbley says.

With a grantor trust, a parent could transfer money or property to a child for a period of more than 10 years, he says. All the income generated by that property was taxed at the child's tax rate, which was of course much lower than that of the parent, he says.

But under the new law, income earned by such trusts will be taxed at the parent's tax rate, eliminating any benefit of opening a grantor trust, Crumbley says.

Offense punishable by 2 to 10 years

Man charged in blow-dart shooting

By Jens B. Koepke
Assistant City Editor

A Bryan man was charged Wednesday in the Oct. 27 blow-dart shooting of two Texas A&M students, says Bob Wiatt, director of the University Police Department.

Michael C. Garner, 18, of Route 5, Box 394G, is charged with two counts of aggravated assault with a deadly weapon, Wiatt says.

The offense is a third-degree felony and carries a punishment of two to 10 years imprisonment and/or a \$5,000 fine.

Wiatt said Garner will be turned over to Detective Will Scott of the University Police Department by his attorney, Roland Searcy Jr.

Garner will then be taken to the Brazos County Jail, where he will be booked, and bond will be set, Wiatt says.

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Wiatt says the police investigation has revealed

that three other individuals were in the white Camaro used in the attacks.

The identities of the individuals are being withheld because the police are still conferring with the district attorney's office on whether to file charges of aggravated assault with a deadly weapon against the other individuals, Wiatt says.

The identity of the driver is being withheld because that individual is a juvenile, he says.

The investigation was a cooperative effort between the University Police Department and the College Station Police Department because one of the attacks happened on campus and one occurred about a block north of campus in College Station, Wiatt says.

Wiatt says several other attacks occurred the night of the blowdart attacks, but no injuries have been reported. He says no one has been arrested in connection with these incidents.

Company unveils new space station simulator

HUNTSVILLE, Ala. (AP) — A full-scale, functional model of a crew module for the U.S. space station was unveiled Wednesday, complete with private quarters for each astronaut, a direct message line to home, and a computerized helper named George.

Engineers have given that name to the electronic voice of a computer system designed to monitor the thousands of systems aboard the space station and warn astronauts of any problem.

The computer system is a key part of the simulator displayed at the Marshall Space Flight Center by Martin Marietta, leader of a team of aerospace companies competing for the space station crew module development contract.

The 43-foot-long cylindrical module is operated by 18 interlocked computers that can simulate malfunctions just as they could occur in space.

When a problem happens, George announces the bad news in a voice heard throughout the module.

"Our goal is to cut down on the time astronauts must spend just on equipment to keep them alive," said Tom Herraca, of Hamilton Standard, one of nine companies on the Martin Marietta team. Having George on watch will give crew members more time to conduct science and manufacturing activities, he said.

Bob Overmyer, a former astronaut, demonstrated George's abili-

ties by turning a switch that shut down a power circuit.

A caution light flashed on a panel and George announced, "Four hundred power system circuit is open."

The voice kept sounding until Overmyer, muttering "Oh, shut up, George," restored the power.

Aboard the space station, the computers will keep up with millions of valves, switches and circuits and such vital details as air pressure.

In addition to warning of problems, the computer system will tell crew members what corrective action to take. A computer screen, controlled merely by a touch, will display what part is broken, where it is located and what tools are needed to fix it.

On the space shuttle, such infor-

mation has to be supplied by radio from the ground.

Overmyer said space station astronauts will have the largest and most comfortable private quarters ever put into orbit.

Each of the eight crew members will have quarters "larger than your typical walk-in closet," Overmyer said.

The bed will be a sleeping bag attached to one wall. On the other wall will be drawers and storage compartments. There also will be a television screen connected to both a personal computer, useful for work or to send and receive personal messages from the ground, and a video recorder for entertainment, Overmyer said.

And unlike the spartan space shuttles, Overmyer said the final de-

sign for the station will include an enclosed shower for the astronauts. With no gravity to drain away the water, users will have to vacuum up the water before leaving.

About 70 percent of the food served in a galley on the station will be frozen and a microwave oven will be used for cooking.

Astronauts would be able to eat their meals at a table beside a picture window with a view of Earth.

The simulator, the first working model of a space station component, was developed by Martin Marietta at a cost of \$4.2 million, and will be a permanent part of the engineering testing and design facility at the Marshall Space Flight Center.

John Vega of Martin Marietta said engineers will use the simulator to

perfect concepts and the placement of equipment. Later, it will train astronauts who may live aboard the space station for months.

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration plans to assemble a space station in orbit by 1994. Crews of up to eight people would live aboard it, with members rotated out every few months aboard space shuttles.

Martin Marietta and its eight team members are competing against a team headed by Boeing Aerospace for the NASA crew module contract.

In addition to the crew module, NASA expects the space station will have similarly sized compartments for science experiments and for manufacturing.