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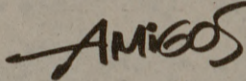
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## Graduate student to be participant on TV game show

By Lauren Naylor  
Reporter

Auditioning to be a contestant on the highest ranking game show on television is not as easy as it sounds. But Texas A&M graduate student Dan Harris did make it, and he'll be competing on the Wheel of Fortune on KCEN-TV, tonight at 6:30.

In August, the petroleum engineering graduate student from Bryan trekked to Los Angeles to audition for "the Wheel," as he fondly calls it.

Harris says the first audition consisted of a written test and an oral test. The written test was comprised of 15 fill-in-the-letter puzzles, including five people, five places and five things. Each would-be contestant had to complete 10 puzzles in five minutes to continue with the auditions. Of 50 people, only eight passed the written test.

"The eight survivors then spun a miniature wheel, solved some puzzles, and tried to look enthusiastic and effervescent in order to check for good stage presence," Harris says.

Next, there was an interview session during which Harris told contestant coordinators that his hobbies are stand-up comedy, gambling and pool.

"This part of the audition," Harris says, "was to make sure the contestants would not stutter or fidget." Four of the eight players passed the oral test.

At the second audition, two days later, Harris says the contestants practiced playing bonus rounds and shopping for prizes. Then the coordinators told contestants they would be contacted within 10 days if they had passed the audition.

Six days later, Harris received a letter congratulating him on passing both auditions. The taping date was scheduled for Dec. 17.

On the day of the show, Harris says that in order to avoid disclosure of the puzzles, the players were warned not to talk with host Pat Sajak, hostess Vanna White or the guests. Guests were told that if they talked to, or even waved at a contestant, the player would be disqualified.

The game was difficult to play, Harris says, but not for academic reasons.

"Well, it's different when you're on the set," he says. "Number one,

the letters are a lot bigger. You're used to watching TV where you can see the whole puzzle at once. When you are on the set, you've got to read across because the puzzle board is so big. You can't count the spaces between the letters. It looks different."

But that wasn't the only difficulty Harris had.

"Well," he remarked with a grin, "Guys like me, who are concentrating on Vanna rather than the puzzle, mess things up, too. When you solve the puzzle, she looks at you and she smiles and we melt. Wow! So, you try to put that out of your mind while you solve the puzzle."

"She is very effervescent. She is very bright and happy."

But Sajak was a different story. "Pat was always cracking jokes," Harris remembers with a smile. "He's a really sharp guy. I was impressed with how he could handle something unexpected that would come up. He did a very nice job."

Harris wasn't nervous on the set of the popular gameshow because of his past experience in performing and because of Sajak.

"I was comfortable," Harris says. "Pat and I were cracking jokes back and forth. I was relaxed. I was having a good time."

Harris says having been a disc jockey on KTAW and performing at the Comedy Club on amateur nights helped him to feel less nervous.

Harris says he spent about \$500 out of his own pocket for travel expenses.

Harris signed a contract restricting him from disclosing the outcome. To find out, tune in tonight — prime time.

## In Advance Town Hall brings Pretenders to A&M

By Karl Pallmeyer  
Music Critic

Your chance to get close to the Pretenders is coming Thursday night when the band will be performing at G. Rollie White Coliseum.

The concert, sponsored by MSC Town Hall, is scheduled to begin at 8 p.m., with special guest Iggy Pop as the opening act.

The Pretenders' latest album, "Get Close," is currently in the 17th position on Billboard's "Hot 100" albums chart. In the past eight years, the Pretenders have had several hit singles, including a remake of the Kinks' classic "Stop Your Sobbing" and original songs "Brass in Pocket," "Precious," "Kid," "Middle of the Road," "2,000 Miles," "Back on the Chain Gang" and "Don't Get Me Wrong." The band's albums, "The Pretenders," "Pretenders II" and "Learning to Crawl" have sold well in the United States and Great Britain.

American-born guitarist, singer and songwriter Chrissie Hynde put together the Pretenders in 1978 while she was living in England. The band, which consisted of guitarist James Honeyman-Scott, bassist Pete Farndon and drummer Martin Chambers, began playing around London and was awarded a recording contract with Real Records in 1979.

The band recorded two albums and an EP before the deaths of Honeyman-Scott and Farndon because of drug-related causes. Guitarist Robbie McIntosh and bassist Malcolm Foster joined the band in 1983 for the "Learning to Crawl" album and tour.

Aside from an appearance at 1985's "Live Aid" concert, the Pretenders haven't appeared on stage in three years. During that time, Hynde married Simple Minds' lead singer Jim Kerr and

had a hit single with a remake of Sonny and Cher's "I Got You (Be True)" with UB40.

For the "Get Close" album, T.M. Stevens replaced Foster on bass and Blair Cunningham replaced Chambers on drums. Keyboardist Bernie Worrell, who played for Funkadelic and Talking Heads, contributed several songs on the new album and will be appearing on stage with Hynde, McIntosh, Stevens and Cunningham.

Iggy Pop has been called the "Godfather of Punk" for a good reason. It was 20 years ago when Pop, then calling himself Iggy Stouge, led a band called the Stooges. While the band played the same style of rough and edgy music the Sex Pistols would make their own in the mid-'70s, Pop would sing, scream and shout angry lyrics at an audience too hung up in the flower power scene of the '60s to understand what the future of rock music hold.

David Bowie was a big fan of the Stooges and produced the critically-acclaimed "Raw Power" album in 1973. When the band broke up, Bowie produced Pop's solo albums "The Idiot" and "Lust for Life." Pop has written several songs with Bowie, including Bowie's hits "China Girl" and "Tonight."

Pop's latest album, "Blah-Blah-Blah," was produced by Bowie and features several songs written by Bowie and ex-Sex Pistols' guitarist Steve Jones. "Blah-Blah-Blah" has been Pop's best-selling album to date.

Tickets for the Pretenders and Iggy Pop are available at the Rudder Box Office for \$13.50. Call 1234 or MSC Town Hall at 1515 for more details.

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## Drug company's president killed; police report no suspects, motive

TEXARKANA (AP) — A bomb exploded and killed a drug company president when he switched on the ignition of his Mercedes-Benz, but police said Tuesday they had no suspects and company officials were baffled as to the motive.

Walsh-Lumpkin Drug Co. President Daryl Crouch, 36, died instantly in the blast Monday night, and his wife and 10-year-old daughter were burned as they frantically tried to pull him from the inferno, police spokesman Earl Cox said.

Walsh-Lumpkin spokesman Ron Gray said, "We literally, honest-to-God literally, have nothing to hang our hats on."

"I was as close to the man as anyone could be, but nobody has any idea why something like this happened."

Jan Crouch, 35, who was treated for burns and released from Wadley Regional Medical Center, would not talk to reporters. The couple's

daughter, Sandy, still was hospitalized in fair condition Tuesday with burns on her face, hands and back, hospital spokesman Ann Beatty said.

Cox said police had no suspects. The Crouches' late-model Mercedes exploded shortly before 7 p.m. Monday in the parking lot outside Walsh-Lumpkin's offices on State Line Avenue, the street that divides Texas from Arkansas.

Crouch, whose charred body was sprawled halfway out of the driver's side door, apparently had just switched on the ignition. Sandy was a passenger in the Mercedes, but Mrs. Crouch already had gotten into her car, which was parked nearby, police said.

Lorann Ables, who works at the Taco Tico restaurant on the Arkansas side of the street, said, "It shook us pretty bad. We thought we were on fire."

Ables said a passerby pulled Mrs.

eventually will be tied into a string of radar stations including aerostat balloons based on land along the 2,000-mile Texas-to-California border. The center also will have contacts with radar platforms in Arizona and California.

It will be opened officially today by Customs Commissioner William von Raab.

"This gives us a set of eyes from Sabine pass to California," said an

unnamed Customs official in Arlington quoted Tuesday by the *Chronicle*.

"We'll be able, for example, look at Corpus Christi day or night and see the marine traffic," he said. "It's the same thing we do in Florida, with the South Florida Force: Bring the radar in, concentrate it in one central location, put it on larger screens if needed in the same location for better operations."

## UT committee to study rules of admission

AUSTIN (AP) — A University of Texas faculty committee has been asked to study proposed admission rules that would be based entirely on a student's school record.

Now, Texas high school graduates in the top quarter of their class are accepted automatically. Other residents are admitted if they score high enough on standardized aptitude tests.

UT President William H. Pritchett proposed UT automatic admission and review of applicants, but also have a by-case review of about 30 percent of the applicants.

The proposal would allow university to turn down applicants in the top quarter of class if their scores were below minimum requirements.

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