

Bryan couple found dead in home

Police have no suspects in slayings

Two Bryan residents were found dead in their home Thursday morning but Sgt. Dale Cuthbertson said police have no leads in what appears to be a double homicide.

After receiving a call from an unidentified witness at 7:11 a.m. Thursday, officers found Beverly Benninghoff, 25, and Charles Gears, 21, dead in the living room of their house at 408 Foch in Bryan, Cuthbertson said.

He said Benninghoff, a restaurant worker, and Gears, who worked in a movie theater, had just moved into the house Feb. 9.

Cuthbertson said the apparent cause of death for both victims is multiple gunshot wounds, but an exact cause of death won't be available until after an autopsy report is completed.

Because of the nature of the wounds, police haven't determined if one or more suspects were involved in the killings.

Police estimate the time of death to be late Wednesday night or early Thursday morning, he said. Cuthbertson said there are no signs of forced entry into the home.

No suspects are in custody, he said, and no motive has been established for the crime.

Police are in the process of interviewing acquaintances and neighbors of Benninghoff and Gears.



Police detectives remove the body of one of two people found dead Thursday morning in a Bryan house.

Photo by Tom Ownbey

Senator: Reagan OK'd deals for arms

WASHINGTON (AP) — The former chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee said Thursday he believes President Reagan gave advance approval to an Israeli arms shipment to Iran in August 1985, and "ought to stick with" that story he reportedly once told investigators but later retracted.

Sen. David Durenberger, R-Minn., also said White House Chief of Staff Donald Regan was "just making problems" with his actions in the Iran-Contra controversy.

Inside the White House, spokesman Marlin Fitzwater announced that Reagan stands ready to veto any legislation halting aid to the Contra rebels fighting the Nicaraguan government. The Democratic-controlled Senate Foreign Relations Committee approved such a bill on Wednesday, and Reagan's spokesman said the intent of the legislation "is simply to abandon all Nicaraguans struggling to bring democracy to their country."

In Congress, meanwhile, Secretary of State George Shultz offered no response when Rep. Robert Torricelli, D-N.J., told him during a hearing that U.S.-provided weapons were having a "dramatic" impact in Iran's favor in its war with Iraq.

"There is a very real threat the Arab world could be united under this (Iranian) fundamentalist revolution," said Torricelli, just back from a trip to Iraq.

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Education students at A&M score well on new state tests

By Robert Morris
 Staff Writer

With the new legislation governing education in Texas firmly in place, college students last fall were forced to take tests both to enter a college of education and to gain state certification.

The tests pointed out glaring differences in both the quality of education programs and students at different universities in Texas.

Problems with the tests and the manner in which they are administered also became apparent.

Texas A&M education majors scored well on both exams. The last exit exam for which scores are available was given in October, and the Texas Education Agency reports were sent to the schools in early January.

A&M, which now produces more teachers than any other school in Texas, scored well above the state average, said Dr. David W. David, assistant dean of the College of Education.

Out of 616 tests taken — the most in the state — 544 A&M students passed, for an 88 percent success ratio.

Ninety-four percent of the education students at the University of Texas at Austin passed the test.

Most other major universities had scores in that range, but smaller schools tended to score lower.

Tarleton State University, a branch of the A&M system with an enrollment of about 4,500 had an 84 percent passing rate — above the state average.

Prairie View A&M University, also part of the A&M system, with about 250 education majors, had 34 percent.

However, that low score is misleading according to Dr. Paul Mehta, dean of education at Prairie View.

"About 80 percent of the people who took the test in October were the same ones that failed it the previous May," Mehta said. "There were only two, perhaps three, students who were new out of approximately 20 who took the test. And I believe two of those three passed."

Those students that took the test last May did it in a transition period. Because of an injunction, they didn't take the entrance exam (PPST) upon entering the college of education, he said.

"We are sure the ExCet scores will improve now that the PPST has taken hold," Mehta said.

Another problem when comparing the small college to the major university is the speed with which the 1984 standards of education were set in place.

"We operated under 1955 standards for a long time, then came the 1984 standards," he said. "We went through the process throughout 1985 to make sure the 1984 standards were incorporated into the content of all education programs. The people who took the test in May had taken their course work under the 1955 standards."

"Also, minority students as a

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A&M will relocate 32 students

Official: Action needed to combat Walton Hall 'vandalism'

By Carolyn Garcia
 Staff Writer

Residents of Walton Hall's ramp E have until 5 p.m. Saturday to vacate their dorm rooms following a relocation order by University officials.

The housing department's North Area Office has ordered the 32 dorm residents to leave in an effort to combat what University officials call vandalism.

North Area Coordinator Jay Lemons said the students won't be affected financially by the decision. Students can choose to accept alternate dorm assignments at no increase in cost, he said, or can move off campus and receive a prorated rent refund.

Since Nov. 7, residents of ramp E have received four letters from the office demanding that the responsible students come forward and pay for the damage caused by vandalism. The letters also warned the residents to stop the rough-housing.

The damage cleanup included reinstallation of a water fountain that had been ripped from the wall, replacement of two window frames and the installation of two window panes. A memo from Lemons placed the cost of the cleanup at \$718.

The student who damaged the window frames has been identified and is paying for the damage,

Lemons said. However, the students say that they had nothing to do with the water fountain incident.

Hall residents are upset that they must relocate in the middle of the semester. But Ron Sasse, director of student affairs, said the administration is just in its decision to separate and relocate the group.

"We have a responsibility for those buildings," Sasse said. "We're talking about stuff that we could go disciplinary about. We're just trying to solve the problems."

Sasse said the residents took advantage of the appeals process open to them, but University officials did not change their decision.

This is not the first time the housing office has relocated a group of students. Lemon said 12 to 18 students were moved out of Davis-Gary Hall at the end of the Spring 1986 semester.

Ron Latta, a senior finance major, said the residents were just having fun.

"It's kind of a crazy dorm," Latta said. "We've occasionally gotten out of hand. We've had some water fights and stuff, but we've always cleaned up after ourselves. It's nothing that's not done in other dorms."

Since Jan. 30 the North Area Office has been notified of ten incidents of misconduct charged

to ramp E which included water and shaving cream fights, firecracker throwing, ramp flooding, glass objects being thrown from the windows, and an attempted assault of the resident adviser by a group of 10 to 15 masked persons.

Latta said that none of the E ramp residents were involved in the attempted assault.

"We didn't attack the RA," Latta said. "None of us like him, but we wouldn't attack the guy."

Although the students are angered by the decision, Lemons said, the University has to look after itself.

"It is very easy to slip on those stairs when they are wet," Lemons said. "The University doesn't need another liability suit. There is one pending right now for \$500,000 with someone who slipped on some stairs."

Lemons stressed that although the decision may seem like a disciplinary action, it was taken because officials felt the environment wasn't conducive to the students' academic success.

The residents, however, dispute that claim: In a letter requesting that Texas A&M President Frank Vandiver review the action taken by the University, they state that 10 of the 32 students carried a 3.0 grade point ratio last semester.

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A&M's Langford Architecture Center deteriorating, needs major repairs

By Sondra McCarty
 Reporter

Rapid deterioration of the Langford Architecture Center has prompted Texas A&M officials to consider an overhaul of the 10-year-old building.

Professor David Woodcock, head of the architecture department, said apparently there are problems that shouldn't exist and they need to be resolved.

"The problems are a leaking roof, spalling (falling) concrete and a somewhat imperfect air-conditioning system," Woodcock said.

Ted Maffitt, professor of architecture, said architects will present a renovation plan to the facilities planning and construction department Feb. 27.

The plan will outline the requirements needed to repair the building, he said.

Woodcock said the A&M System Board of Regents has appropriated \$2.5 million for the resolution of the problems.

"The program of requirements will decide what the problems are, the cost of fixing them and the cause of the problems," he said.

One of the reasons the problems arose, Woodcock said, is because the building is made of pre-cast concrete.

Large panels were constructed in one place and put together, like Tinker Toys, at the building site.

"This type of building has joints — the more joints the more susceptible to problems," he said.

Inherent flaws in the building's design and improper construction also are sources of the problems, he said.

Maffitt said the damage probably was caused by cold weather.

"Water gets into the cracks in the concrete and expands when it freezes to cause breakage," Maffitt said. "This is not uncommon."

Woodcock also said water causes building damage.

"The extra weight of the water is not a danger," he said. "It is just an irritation."

"It's hard to say if it was a design problem, or if it was the architect's fault or if it was the contractor's fault."

Vela Gregory, a graduate student in urban and regional planning, however, said the building was poorly designed.

"The soil in College Station expands and shifts," Gregory said. "There are cracks in the floor, there is putty in cracks in the wall. It (Langford) is a joke. It's a fire-trap."

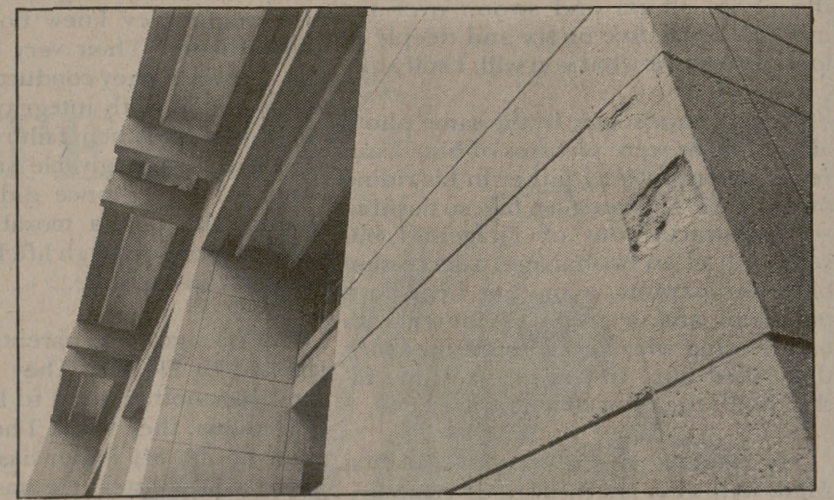


Photo by Doug La Rue

Concrete peels from a wall at the Langford Architecture Center.

In addition, the air-conditioning system is hard to control, she said.

"When it's cold outside, it is cold inside," she said. "When it's hot outside, it is hot inside."

Woodcock denied rumors that the center is going to close.

However, Gregory said the occupants of Langford section A, the administration section, will be

moved into section C, the classroom section.

"It is going to be a real problem in the fall, fitting everyone in," Gregory said. "Some juniors and all seniors, graduate students and faculty are there (section A)."

They are going to put four floors into two floors if they cannot fix the problems one section at a time."