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Photo by Robert W. Rizzo

Down, But Not Out

Students of the Brayton Fire School take part in a scenario designed to simulate a hazardous materials fire. The fireman on the stretcher is not really injured but rather plays "dead" during the scenario. The

space-styled suits the men wear are self-contained in order to protect them from the potentially hazardous gases produced by a real accident. Participants in the training course come from around the world.

DG residents, official differ on relocation

By Kirsten Dietz
Senior Staff Writer

A housing official and some former residents of Davis-Gary Hall offered differing opinions over how the reassigning of residents should have been handled.

Reassigning the 156 returning residents of Davis-Gary Hall to other dormitories because of excessive vandalism was too drastic, several students who were to live in the dormitory this fall said Thursday.

But this was the only alternative after all other attempts to curb the vandalism failed because residents refused to cooperate to stop vandalism or to pinpoint those responsible for it, Debbie K. Owensby, the Central Area coordinator, said.

Excessive policy violations and vandalism during the 1986-87 school year led to reassignment of the students, said Tom Murray, assistant director of the Department of Student Affairs. The department notified the returning residents of their new hall assignments in a letter dated June 3. New residents, mostly freshman and transfer students, will move into the 254-bed dorm in the fall.

Bruce Jones, a senior economics major who was to be vice president of Davis-Gary, said, "I think it (the reassignment) was overreacting. I think a lot of the intermediate steps were avoided."

Brandon Jacob, a junior business administration major who was to be the hall's president, Darrel Renfrow, a senior agriculture economics ma-

ior, and Jones said they think the office should have billed the entire hall for the damages instead of relocating the residents.

Owensby said the office in effect billed the entire hall by taking money from the hall's activity fund.

"This is not something we like to do," she said, "but the department can't absorb all the costs."

No running total of the vandalism over the past year has been kept, Owensby said. But, for example, she said, close to 100 windows have been broken, each of which cost \$50 to replace.

The department can levy a "common area billing" in which residents of a certain floor or area are billed for the damage. This was done last year when a group of Davis-Gary residents were billed for vandalism. But, Owensby said, vandalism occurred throughout the hall this year and not concentrated in one area, so common area billing was not an option.

The three former residents also said they thought the Central Area office did not try hard enough to track down the individual vandals. Jacobs said that if the office had asked more of the residents for cooperation in identifying the vandals, it would have gotten it.

Renfrow said, "They didn't really try."

All three of the former residents interviewed said they would not have turned in someone they caught vandalizing because most of the people in the hall were friends.

Jacob told of watching a graduating senior trash a hallway. He said he thought about turning him in, but that he didn't think it would do any good.

"I was guilty of the fact that I didn't stop it," he said. "If it had been hinted that I would lose my privilege of living in the dorm, I would have made sure something was done."

Jones said, "I never in my wildest dreams figured they could kick out an entire dorm."

In a May 5 letter to the residents, the student affairs department detailed numerous incidents of vandalism, warned those guilty to stop immediately and asked those with any information about the incidents to contact the Central Area office.

Reports filed with the Central Area office show that between the date the letter was written and the end of the spring term 10 days later, 22 toilet paper dispensers were torn from bathroom walls, a fire was started with charcoal in a second-floor shower, a fire was started in a third-floor trash can, smokebombs were set off in the third-floor hallway, a smoke detector was pulled off its base and firework were set off in a third-floor hallway six times within a few hours after midnight.

Thatcher elected for 3rd straight win as prime minister

LONDON (AP) — Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher was winning a historic third successive victory in Thursday's elections, but with a sharply reduced majority in the House of Commons.

The socialist Labor Party made a strong comeback from its election disaster of 1983, with a more moderate platform and the leadership of Neil Kinnock, eloquent son of a Welsh miner.

With 425 of the 650 House of Commons seats decided, Thatcher's Conservatives had 244, Labor took 169 and the centrist Social Democrat-Liberal Alliance captured 9.

Early in the official count, the British Broadcasting Corp. said the prime minister was "certain" to achieve victory and projected a Commons majority of 74 seats.

Her Tories won a 144-seat majority in 1983.

Independent Television projected a 96-seat majority, and Press Association, the domestic news agency, forecast 91.

Any of the projections would give her the firm control needed to continue her program of dismantling the welfare state.

Of the first 58 seats decided, the Conservatives had 31, Labor 25 and the centrist Social Democrat-Liberal Alliance 2.

Bryan Gould, the Labor Party's campaign chief, said: "If Mrs. Thatcher is re-elected it's a great achievement for her personally, but it's sad for the country as a whole."

The last prime minister to win three consecutive terms was Lord Liverpool in 1826.

With her husband, Denis, 72, and son Mark, the 61-year-old "Iron Lady" of British politics arrived from her 10 Downing Street residence at her constituency of Finchley, north London.

Her aides had baked her a cake iced in blue, her party color.

Initial results showed both Thatcher's Tories and Labor holding their votes, with no gains for the centrist Social Democrat-Liberal Alliance, which had hoped for the balance of power in a stalemated Parliament.

Liberal Party leader David Steel said, "It doesn't look as though it is going to be a riproaring success."

All predictions showed Labor recovering from its 1983 trouncing, when it ran on a far-left platform that alienated many supporters.

Projections of the Labor vote in early results showed that the 80-year-old socialist movement, which narrowly beat the Alliance in popular vote four years ago, easily fended off the centrists and held its place as the alternative ruling party.

Kinnock, 45, led the party in the month-long campaign on a platform of increased public spending and scrapping nuclear arms unilaterally.

Labor could not wrest the key target seat of Basildon east of London from the Tories, however, and Thatcher's party dealt Alliance a blow by retaining Cheltenham, a genteel southern English spa town where the centrists ran a close second in 1983.

Clements signs bill making taverns liable for patrons who drive drunk

AUSTIN (AP) — A bill allowing courts to hold taverns liable for serving alcohol to drunken customers who become drunken drivers and cause damage and death on the highways was signed into law Thursday by Gov. Bill Clements.

"We must crack down on drunk driving, and this measure will do just that," Clements said.

"It will go a long way in helping to save lives," he said. "But even if it saves just one life, I'm all for it."

Reggie Bashur, the governor's press secretary, said Clements approved the measure while reviewing some of nearly 1,000 bills left on his desk by the Legislature.

The so-called "dram shop" measure, which takes immediate effect, was approved on the final day of the regular session.

A conference committee earlier had scrapped a section that would have made party hosts liable for damages or deaths resulting from the actions of drunken drivers who left their parties.

Under the new law, the survivors of a person who is killed by a drunken driver could collect damages from a business that sold drinks to the driver if it was clear that the patron was sold the drinks after he or she had become intoxicated.

The law would not affect cases already in the courts.

But the Texas Supreme Court ruled on June 3 that bars could be ordered to pay damages.

In that opinion, the court said the time had come to hold liquor sellers responsible for the drivers they put on the streets.

The unanimous opinion, authored by Justice Franklin Spears, stated, "Injury to a third person is no longer unforeseeable in an age when death and destruction occasioned by drunk driving is so tragically frequent."

Clements has 20 days from the adjournment of the regular session, which occurred on June 1, to make up his mind on bills passed during the Legislature's final days.

Among bills already signed into law is one making it illegal to drink while driving.

That measure takes effect Aug. 31, the governor's office said.

Also on Thursday, the governor signed into law bills that would:

- Make it a crime to manufacture, sell or possess any document that is deceptively similar to a driver's license or certificate used by the Department of Public Safety.
- Create a mandatory hunter safety program.

Air controllers form union once again

WASHINGTON (AP) — Thousands of air traffic controllers decided overwhelmingly Thursday to form a new union in a vote cast six

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years after President Reagan broke their 1981 strike and fired those who walked off their jobs.

The controllers cast ballots in favor of a union by more than a 2-1 margin.

With 84 percent of the eligible controllers casting ballots, the National Air Traffic Controllers Association was approved as the controllers' bargaining agent by a vote of 7,494 to 3,275, the Federal Labor Relations Authority announced.

Union organizers had predicted victory. Observers from the union and Federal Aviation Administration monitored the vote count at the FLRA's regional office.

Director: College grads need awareness of degree prospects

By Becky Weisenfels
Reporter

College students need to become more aware of what their academic majors entail and what job opportunities await them after graduation before they pick

Jobs after graduation Part two of a two-part series

up their sheepskins and shake hands with the University president.

Ann McDonald, associate director of the Texas A&M Career Planning and Placement Center, says a lot of students don't know what they are getting into when making a career choice.

"Most people are going down a path to a goal that they really don't understand," says Ann McDonald, associate director of the Texas A&M Career Planning and Placement Center.

One way for students to find out what's down that road, McDonald says, is to take summer jobs and internships, but they also should be flexible.

"The world is changing so

quickly with all the technology," she says. "In five or 10 years, lots of us will have jobs that lots of us have never heard of before. So I think one of the keys for graduates is to be a little bit flexible."

And a strong liberal arts background increases flexibility, she says.

"Nobody knows exactly what jobs are out there," she says. "And in liberal arts, you're not going to be trained in a specific area. You are learning to do a lot of things, to be able to adapt, to be flexible, to be open to these ideas. These people, in the long run, are going to be successful."

Just because someone gets a degree in a so-called high-demand major, she says, that doesn't ensure a decent job.

"I really cringe when students say, 'Well, I major in what's going to be hot when I graduate,'" McDonald says. "All majors get jobs. Some of them tend to be sought after more some years than others during that same time period."

Citing the oil and gas business in Texas as an example, McDon-

ald says the industry once could provide jobs for everyone who wanted one, but it can't do that

In three or four years, she says, the business will recover and few graduates will be qualified to fill job openings — the labor supply is always out of sync with demand, she says.

A tool A&M students can use to see what jobs are open and when they're available is A&M's job placement center. More than 500 employers descend upon the University each semester — seeking new employees among the 3,000 seniors registered with the center.

Everyone who registers with the center is given a certain number of points which are used to bid on interview appointments.

"Most employers don't come with enough people to interview every student who might like to interview with them," McDonald says. "That would be ideal, but that's not reality. We would like students to make that decision

(about who gets interviewed). We don't want to make it, we want the student to have some control over the people that he is going to interview with."

Interviews are set up weekly. The center advertises who is coming and students who bid qualify according to their major, degree level, graduation date and citizenship.

"They make the decision about how important it is to them by the number of points they bid," McDonald says.

Employers look at a variety of traits when making hiring decisions, she says, including grades, experience and campus activities.

"It's a combination of all these things," she says. "Some people are real grade-point conscious. And, with the market the way it is right now — a buyer's market — they're being a lot more particular."

But regardless of what specific strengths a company is looking for, communication skills are very important for students, McDonald says.