

# The Battalion



### WEATHER

FORECAST for SATURDAY:  
Mostly cloudy and warmer with a 30 percent chance of lingering morning rain.

HIGH:76

LOW:58

Friday, April 14, 1989

## Schools rush to cash in on fusion breakthrough

NEW YORK (AP) — Universities are racing to cash in on cold nuclear fusion with a haste that shows how scholarly research often is tinged by big business.

A broad patent on cold nuclear fusion could be worth billions of dollars if the invention turns out to provide a new way of producing cheap, clean and abundant energy.

But the lure of money inhibits exploration of cold fusion claims as leading researchers withhold information in order to protect their patent positions, lawyers and scholars said Thursday.

"There is absolutely no doubt in my mind that once you dangle out that pot of gold called a patent, it causes people to publish less and disclose less," Donald Chisum, a patent expert at the University of Washington, said this week.

Scientists trying to test the cold fusion claims announced at a news conference last month have been stymied because the two researchers have withheld important details of their work.

The University of Utah applied for three patents even before the March 23 news conference featuring its own B. Stanley Pons and his co-investigator, Martin Fleischmann of the University of Southampton in England.

Massachusetts Institute of Technology said this week it has applied for patents on work done by a researcher, Peter Hagelstein.

Brigham Young University plans to apply for patents as well, although mainly to establish the credibility of its researcher, Steven Jones, rather than to make money, spokesman Paul Richards said.

Pons and Fleischmann announced last month they had achieved fusion using ordinary laboratory equipment at room temperature — the so-called cold fusion. They said their device produced four watts of energy for every watt it used.

Widespread skepticism about their findings has continued despite partial confirmation by other researchers. Still, the stakes are so high that virtually every major chemical research laboratory is believed to be looking into it.

Fusion is especially attractive as an energy source because it would produce far less radioactive waste than conventional nuclear reactors, which capture the energy released by splitting atoms in fission.

"It's almost unknowable, unthinkable, how much it would be worth," John Bockris, a chemistry professor at Texas A&M

said.

Bockris also said he was upset by the way the focus on patents had disrupted the normal scientific disclosure process.

Patent lawyers usually advise clients to file for patents before they disclose anything publicly. Secrecy helps even after a patent application is filed because it gives the inventors time to modify their application with new findings or to file for more patents.

"The more information you give out, the more can be used against you," Chisum said. "From a patent law perspective, publication is bad."

Richards, the Brigham Young spokesman, said the school applied for patents mainly so that the Patent and Trademark Office has a chance to sort out what he called false allegations that Jones stole

Fleischmann's and Pons' work. Richards said Brigham Young did not believe cold fusion was likely to be very valuable commercially.

Richards claimed University of Utah officials held their March 23 news conference despite an agreement with Brigham Young officials that the schools would keep quiet about their work until March 24, the day they had agreed to ship back-to-back papers on cold fusion to the British journal Nature.

Richards and several patent lawyers said the University of Utah's unusual news conference appeared to be more of a grab for publicity than anything.

"I think they just naively thought they could pull this off and go down in history as the first ones to have done this," Richards said.



### April showers

A student shields himself from the light rain bordering Simpson Drill Field. Drizzle dominated the day. More rain is expected today.

Photo by Kathy Haveman

## Police say students invented story to cover up shooting

By Juliette Rizzo  
STAFF WRITER

Two Texas A&M students who told police they were shot at by a "stranded motorist" about 1 a.m. Wednesday morning approximately 10 miles east of College Station, allegedly fabricated the shooting to cover up an argument that took place in Houston concerning narcotics.

Bob Wiatt, director of security and University Police, said the students, both 20 years of age, will be charged by the Brazos County Sheriff's Office and the UPD with furnishing a false report to a peace officer, a charge which carries a punishment of six months or more in jail and/or a \$1,000 fine.

Wiatt said police determined Wednesday afternoon that the students' original report was false.

He said the students recanted their original story after they realized they had contradicted themselves during questioning at the A.P. Beutel Health Center.

He said that the reports of both students did not seem factual from the beginning because of an unexplained lapse of time between the time they allegedly were shot and the time they arrived at the health center. They arrived at the health center at 5 a.m.

Wiatt said the students originally told officers that they stopped near Millican to help a stranded driver. As they got out of the car, the students said the driver pulled a gun and demanded their money, Wiatt said. As they started running away, they said the driver fired at them.

Wiatt said the students actually drove to an area near Houston to purchase narcotics. After doing so, he said, they parted with a group of individuals after which an argument ensued about the narcotics.

He said one of the partygoers then shot both with a shotgun.

Wiatt said the students then got into their vehicle and fled the area to return to A&M.

The two had superficial wounds from birdshot, Wiatt said, but realized they needed medical attention for wounds in their arms and legs, so they checked into the health center.

Wiatt said the students concocted the story to explain the wounds to medical staff and University Police officers who were called.

Sheriff Ronnie Miller of the College Station Police Department said a complaint of giving a false report to police officers would be filed with the county attorney's office. Miller said warrants for the students' arrest may be obtained as early as today.

## Local officials warn that parents must learn to recognize Satanism

PART 2 OF A 2 PART SERIES  
By Richard Tijerina  
STAFF WRITER

Bryan-College Station parents must learn how to recognize and deal with the harmful effects of Satanism because it is a problem in the Brazos Valley, local officials say.

Local church and police officials say Satanism, a religion that promotes devil worship, is a subject which many parents in the community aren't concerned about se-

riously.

However, they say it is a problem that is beginning to surface in the community and parents must know the possible warning signals their children may be showing.

Susan Dow, associate director for community and government for Brazos County Juvenile Services, says Satanism and the occult, which is the general term for the study of the supernatural, are more than "hobbies."

"It's not just games that kids are playing," Dow says. "It's a real way of life if and when they do become involved in the occult. There are signs of smoke, and when there's smoke,

there's fire."

The Juvenile Services Department sponsored an in-service training March 28 to help inform local professionals who deal with young people on a regular basis of the dangers and warning signs of occult activity.

These local professionals included police, church, counseling and high school officials.

Dow says the most important thing people who attended the program learned was to consider the subject a serious one. She says it's important for parents in the community to talk to their children about Satanism and not to ignore the sensi-

tive subject.

Yvonne Patterson, a guest speaker at the program, founded a community outreach group in San Antonio called Exodus. Exodus serves as a safe haven for young people trying to escape the effects of Satanism as well as providing counseling for children who are victims of child abuse.

The possible danger signs a parent should watch for in a child that may be involved in Satanism or the occult include rebellion, moving away from the family unit, sinister behavior, having suspicious friends, talking about subjects such as death

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## President Bush scheduled to speak at A&M graduation

By Stephen Masters  
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

President George Bush will speak at Texas A&M commencement exercises May 12, Texas A&M officials confirmed Thursday.

Lane Stephenson, director of A&M's office of public information, said Sen. Phil Gramm, R-Texas, announced in Washington Thursday that Bush had accepted A&M's invitation to speak.

Bush is scheduled to speak at the 2 p.m. ceremony for master's and doctoral degree candidates, and the colleges of liberal arts, geosciences and sciences.

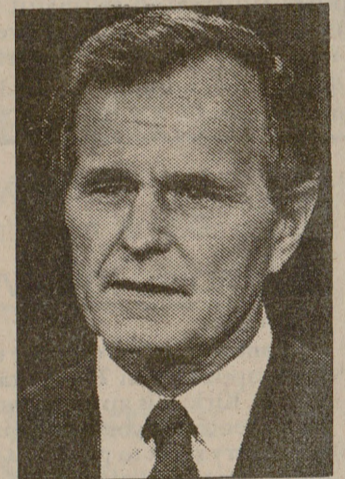
Gary Englegau, executive director of admissions and records, said no decision has been made as to whether the number of guests at the ceremony will be limited.

"It may be some time before we're clear whether changes (in the ceremonies) are going to be necessary," Englegau said.

"There are three ceremonies, but obviously there is going to be greater interest in the president."

Englegau said it likely would be one to two weeks before any announcement is made regarding an attendance limit for the ceremony.

University President William Mobley and A&M Board of Regents Chairman William McKenzie issued a joint statement saying, "We are obviously delighted that President Bush has agreed to



Battalion file photo

honor Texas A&M, its students and former students in this manner."

The ceremony will be the second time Bush has spoken at A&M commencement exercises. Bush gave a commencement address in 1984 while he was vice president.

Two other commencement speakers will be announced later this month, the A&M's Office of Public Information said.

Tom Foster, assistant head of A&M's Fire Protection and Training Division, said processing rainwater is safer than letting it run off the field untreated, even if it results in excess water discharge.

"According to our permit, we can let that rainwater run off and run right down into the creek," Foster said. "But if it's coming off the projects out there, we want it to go through our filtering process."

The Feb. 14 letter to the fire school was based on a water commission report dated Feb. 9 that stated the fire school exceeded its discharge volume limit by 68 percent during May 1988. This percentage increased during the following five

months, and in October the discharge from the fire school was 480 percent above the permitted limit, the report stated.

A Dec. 12, 1988 letter to the water commission from Donovan indicated the school also violated its permit in November by discharging more than 2.5 million gallons of wastewater beyond the permitted amount.

In 1986 the commission considered a cleanup of the fire school under the state superfund program. The water commission investigated the school and decided it did not qualify as a state superfund site, a water commission report stated.

## Tax deadline extended until Monday, April 17

By Juliette Rizzo  
STAFF WRITER

He said taxpayers should check their standard and itemized deductions carefully. He said unreimbursed medical expenses cannot be used as itemized deductions unless they exceed 7.5 percent of adjusted gross income.

Sales taxes also are no longer deductible. He said interest from car loans, personal loans or credit-card purchases is 40 percent deductible.

Hughes said it's never too late to get help with taxes. He recommends that anyone needing assistance, before or after the deadline, refer to the January 1989 issue of Money Magazine. A special informative report on page 91 rates the most commonly used forms from the easiest to use to the most confusing, which people should avoid.

Hughes said that when taxpayers have completed returns, two options are available for sending the return to the Internal Revenue Service: The return can be mailed or sent electronically through the Electronic Filing System (EFS).

Hughes said filing electronically greatly reduces the amount of paper used and lowers the margin of error for returns. He said returns sent by this method are processed faster and thus taxpayers may receive refund checks sooner.

Although the traditional deadline for filing income taxes returns is April 15, this year the deadline will be extended through Monday.

Paul C. Hughes, district manager for H&R Block, said that because the traditional April 15 deadline falls on Saturday this year, the law gives taxpayers an extra two days to file their tax returns. All returns must be post-marked by Monday.

Taxpayers unable to file by this date are allowed a four-month extension of time to file, he said. This, however, does not include an extension of time to pay. Everyone is guaranteed an automatic extension, he said, as long as they file extension Form 4868 and remember to include a check for any back taxes owed.

Having more than 10 percent of your tax liability unpaid at the time of filing will negate the extension application and result in a late filing penalty, along with interest.

The late filing penalty is 5 percent of the unpaid balance per month (or part of a month), up to a 25 percent maximum.

Hughes suggested some helpful tips for taxpayers to help avoid last-minute problems.

## Fire school may face sanctions for violations

By Dean Sueltenfuss  
CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

Texas A&M's Brayton Fireman's Training School faces possible enforcement action by the Texas Water Commission for violating its wastewater discharge permit, according to commission documents.

But officials with the fire school said the matter was resolved in an informal meeting with water commission officials.

Wastewater generated by the school, which is located near Eastwood Airport and is among the largest fire-training schools in the country, results from training exercises in which water is used to extinguish fuel fires. Oil is separated from the water before the water is discharged.

In a letter dated Feb. 14 from Ramon E. Dasch, chief of the wastewater enforcement section of the water commission, to Charles Page, head of A&M's Fire Protection and Training Division, Dasch said that for each month from May to October 1988, the fire school violated its permit by discharging excessive amounts of wastewater.

The Texas Water Code directs the commission to initiate enforcement proceedings against permit holders who violate their permit for four consecutive months.

Water from the fire school normally is reused, but sometimes is discharged into White Creek, a trib-

utary of the Brazos River. The permit held by the school allows a maximum daily outflow of 250,000 gallons and requires reporting of excess water discharges.

The letter requested that Page attend a conference concerning the violations March 7 at the commission's Austin office.

Page was out of town and unavailable for comment.

John Donovan, manager of the fire field at A&M, said he attended the conference and that the water commission is not taking action against the fire school. Donovan said officials at the commission have decided a hearing is not necessary.

"The reason we were exceeding our permit is because we were processing rainwater, which is environmentally more sound than just dumping the rainwater from the projects into the creek," Donovan said.

Donovan said the fire school is seeking to increase the discharge limitations of its permit to 500,000 gallons of water per day.

Previously, rainwater at the fire field was allowed to run into White Creek untreated, he said.

Bill Colbert, director of public information for the water commission, declined to comment on possible enforcement action against the school. Colbert said a hearing "might or might not" occur concerning the violations.

Colbert said Page will send a letter to the commission by today outlining his plans to correct the violations.