

The Battalion

WEATHER

FORECAST for FRIDAY:
Continued partly cloudy and warm with a 30 percent chance of thundershowers.

HIGH:90 LOW:68

Pro-choice groups distribute letters at A&M

By Holly Becka

REPORTER

In an effort to show they're against overturning the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in Roe vs. Wade, which guarantees women the right to have an abortion, Texas A&M campus groups have been distributing pro-choice form letters to be signed and sent to U.S. Attorney General Richard L. Thornburgh.

The form letter was written by the American Civil Liberties Union and says Roe vs. Wade gives every woman the right to a safe, legal abortion and affirms the right of privacy. It also says abortion has helped people raise families when they are most able to provide love and support for them.

The letter concludes by saying, "I have no vote on the Supreme Court. But since you represent my interests there, I hope you will urge the Court not to take away a

fundamental constitutional right."

Bonnie Harris, president of the A&M chapter of the National Organization for Women, said the group received a copy of the letter two weeks ago from the Texas Abortion Rights Action League.

"We made about 40 or 50 copies of the

"I don't necessarily support abortion, but I think the right should always be there. The marchers on Washington who carried coathangers — I think that symbolizes the whole reason why I'm doing it."

— Melissa Cuthbert, English major

letters and a lot of them have been signed by NOW members," Harris, a senior political science major from Pittsburgh, said. "The individuals have been mailing them in on their own."

Harris believes the letters are important.

"They're important because this is an issue of whether or not a woman should have a choice to do what she feels she has to do," she said. "The state should have no say in this and Roe v. Wade should not be overturned because a few vocal people believe

personal decision in detriment."

The Supreme Court began hearing arguments Wednesday in the Webster case, a Missouri abortion case which said that the "life of each human begins at conception." The Bush administration hopes the court will uphold the Webster decision, which could lead to the overturning or limiting of the 1973 Roe vs. Wade decision.

Harris said the letters may be obtained at the second floor of the Pavilion.

"We would like to encourage students to come by and sign the letters because the hearing of the Missouri abortion case is (Wednesday) and usually it takes one to two weeks to make a decision," she said.

Michelle Touchet, former vice president of Pro-choice Aggies, said the organization is encouraging members to fill out a petition that would be sent to members of the state Legislature if Roe vs. Wade was overturned.

"The petition says that we do not want any more legislation restricting abortion rights," Touchet, a senior political science major from Austin, said. "I think the petitions would make a difference, because if it (the decision) goes to the state legislature, I don't see how the senators and legislators could possibly ignore their constituents. The anti-choice people are so vastly outnumbered, there is no way we can be ignored."

She said the petition has at least 200 signatures so far and those who are interested in signing the petition can do so at the NOW/Pro-choice Aggies cubicle.

Harris said Pro-choice Aggies also are affiliated with distributing the form letter.

A&M student Melissa Cuthbert, a sophomore English major from Appleton, Wis., said she obtained copies of the pro-choice letter from a professor.

"I've been handing them out on my own. See Abortion/Page 9

Board approves production of video yearbook

The Texas A&M Student Publications Board Wednesday voted to produce a video yearbook for the 1989-90 school year.

Board Chairman Bob Rogers said bids will be accepted for outside production services to complete production after the yearbook staff puts the product together.

A similar system is used for A&M's print yearbook, The Aggie-land, Rogers said.

Plans for the 1988-89 yearbook, "Aggievision," were scrapped when the editor, Cheryl Pratt, resigned in October.

Pratt said she resigned because the 88-89 staff missed too many events while trying to complete the 1987-88 yearbook.

The 87-88 yearbook was completed in December 1988, Pratt said. Distribution of the video began in January.

The video was scheduled to be completed by June 1, 1988.

Pratt said she thinks the future of A&M's video yearbook is bright.

"I'm excited about (the future of Aggievision)," she said.

"I think the time has come for A&M to do something like this. I think there are enough students who are excited about it, and this offers a great chance for them to work on it."



Photo by Frederick D. Joe

touché

Steve Austin, (right), a sophomore political science major from Arlington, defeats Glenn Kirk, a sophomore recreation and

parks major from Fort Worth, to become the champion of their 1 p.m. fencing class held in the Read Building.

Bush backs S&L bill; notes value of Texas oil

AUSTIN (AP) — President Bush, returning to his adopted home state, Wednesday told Texas legislators he was calling on Congress to pass a savings and loan bill and declared that the United States buys too much imported oil.

Speaking to a special joint session of the Legislature, Bush highlighted the importance of the oil industry to the state.

"No matter how diversified and high-tech Texas becomes, a strong domestic energy industry is important to the future of this state and all of America," Bush said.

"I find it disturbing that nearly 50 percent of America's oil is imported," said Bush, who was in the oil business before entering politics. "This is not good for our national security."

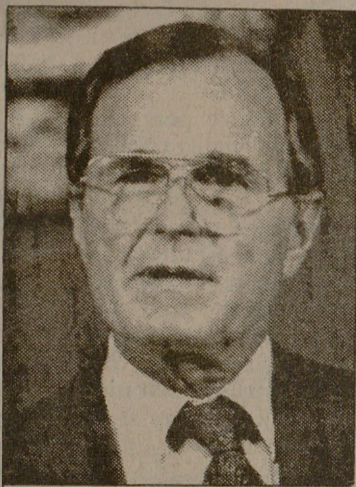
The state's oil industry has been hammered since late 1985, during which time prices plummeted from near \$30 a barrel to less than \$10.

That crisis contributed to the major real estate collapse, and the state has seen more savings and loans fail than any other.

Bush used his speech to reiterate his belief that the recent Alaskan oil spill shouldn't bring cutbacks in oil exploration, adding, "Shutting down our domestic energy production is no answer and would merely increase our dependence on foreign oil. We must and we will maintain a strong energy industry."

Bush said the continuing crisis in the savings and loan industry was among "the few dark clouds" on the horizon.

The president praised the U.S. Senate for acting quickly on an S&L bailout bill and said, "I call on the House of Representatives to pass a responsible S&L bill as



George Bush

soon as possible."

Bush was escorted into the House chamber about 4:40 p.m. by Gov. Bill Clements, a longtime Bush loyalist who headed the president's 1988 campaign in Texas.

After being introduced to the lawmakers by House Speaker Gib Lewis, D-Fort Worth, Bush received a standing ovation.

"It's true, I like Kennebunkport (Maine, where he maintains a house), but I am a Texan," the president said, telling his audience that his driver's license, hunting license and voter registration card all are from the state.

Professing admiration for author Larry McMurtry and his Pulitzer Prize-winning novel "Lonesome Dove," the president said, "There is no place on earth like Texas. Nor is there another Capitol in America quite like this one. . . . And this being Texas, we had to build a Capitol that is exactly one foot taller than the one in Washington."

Chemists plan duplication of fusion tests

WASHINGTON (AP) — Two researchers who say they've mastered fusion, the process that powers the sun and the stars, told Congress Wednesday they will duplicate their experiments for government scientists in hopes of quieting skeptics.

"We have 19 experiments being set up now," University of Utah chemist Stanley Pons told the House Science Committee, including a demonstration of room-temperature fusion for scientists from the Los Alamos National Laboratory.

Pons said the federal scientists will monitor the experiment at Utah, then dismantle it and take it to the national laboratory in New Mexico for further tests.

Pons and his collaborator, Martin Fleischmann, of the University of South Hampton in England, are making the arrangement to silence some of the skepticism about their claim to have discovered a way to

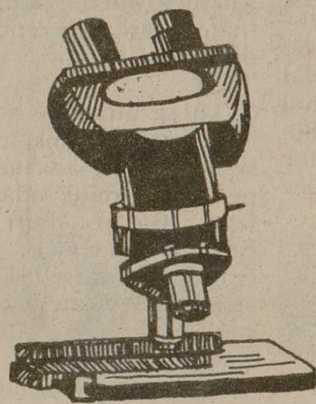
achieve fusion using ordinary lab equipment assembled on a table top.

The two announced their discovery March 23, stunning nuclear physicists around the world who have attempted to achieve fusion for 25 years using multimillion-dollar machines.

The hearing was jammed with journalists, scientists and industrial representatives anxious to learn more about a reaction that some predict could produce plentiful electric power with little environmental pollution or threat.

Pons told the committee how he and Fleischmann had inserted electrodes of platinum and palladium in a flask containing deuterium oxide, or heavy water. Electrical current was applied to the platinum electrode, Pons said, forcing deuterium atoms into the crystal lattice of the palladium.

He said that after the experiment



ran for several hours, the deuterium became compressed and fused, giving off heat almost four times as great as the energy the experiment had consumed.

Fleischmann said that in one endeavor researchers succeeded in causing water to reach the boiling point. He added, however, that there was still much work yet to be done to develop a way of harvesting useful energy from fusion.

The Utah researchers said they built their initial experiment for about \$100,000, but Fleischmann said that "production of a scale-up device will cost about 10 times that" and that the next phase, producing enough energy to be useful, "would cost millions."

Nuclear physicists expressed skepticism that the process described by Pons and Fleischmann is actually fusion. In testimony released to the committee, scientists from the Oak Ridge National Laboratory, Princeton University and Massachusetts Institute of Technology all expressed strong skepticism that the Utah experiments achieved fusion.

Man performs euthanasia on son while holding nurses at gunpoint

CHICAGO (AP) — A father tearfully unhooked his comatose baby son's life-support system early Wednesday, then took him into his arms and kept hospital workers at gunpoint until the child was dead, authorities said.

"I'm not here to hurt anyone, I'll only hurt you if you try to plug my baby back in," police quoted Rudy Linares as saying.

"You can understand the motivation," police Sgt. William Rooney said. "I guess he didn't want his child to continue living under those conditions."

The painter, from west suburban Chicago, was charged with murdering his 16-month-old son, Samuel, said Lisa Howard, spokesman for the Cook County state's attorney's office.

Linares, 23, was held at a police lockup pending an appearance in bond court. His wife, Tamara, who said the couple had planned to see a lawyer Friday about having the child's life-support system disconnected, was not charged.

"This is the best thing," Tamara Linares told radio station WBBM-AM. "Sammy is out of his misery."

The couple have two other children, both under 5.

Linares also unhooked his son's life support system on Dec. 30 but staff members reconnected it, Detective Gary Bulava said. When Linares arrived early Wednesday, he spoke briefly with security personnel but was not searched, Bulava added.

Doctors had notified the parents Tuesday that the child was to be transferred to a long-term care unit, Rush-Presbyterian-St. Luke's Medical Center spokesman Carolyn Reed said.

Police said Linares and his wife walked into the hospital about 1 a.m. and were escorted to the pediatric intensive care unit, where their son's breathing had been sustained by a ventilator since an accident in August.

About 20 minutes later, Linares pulled out a .357-caliber handgun, ordered hospital staff out of the unit, unhooked the infant from the life-support system and sat with his son in his arms.

A&M proposes limiting guests at Bush speech

Graduates will be limited to the number of guests at the 2 p.m. May 12 commencement due to President George Bush's address, but the Office of the Registrar is asking for help in deciding how many seats should be allotted to each.

The proposed number is four or five guests for each graduate. A number of seats are being reserved for local, state and federal officials.

Comments and questions concerning the restrictions should be directed to Don Gardner in the Office of the Registrar at 845-1089.

See Lucy/Page 9