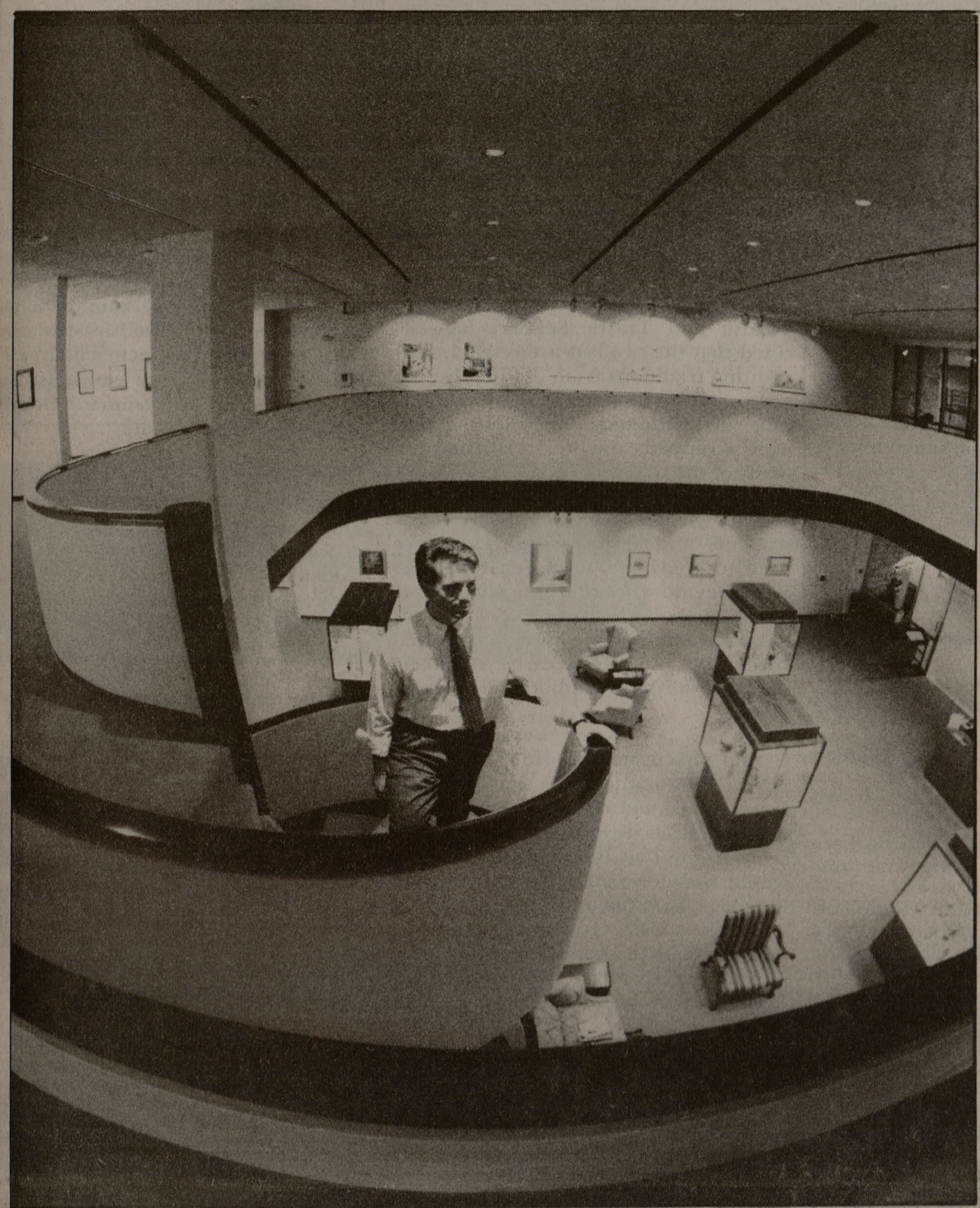


WEATHER

TOMORROW'S FORECAST:
Partly sunny

HIGH: 90 LOW: 68



Blank stair

Eric Trekell, an educational administration graduate student, walks up the spiral staircase

to view the art displays at the new Forsythe Gallery in the MSC.

Photo by Mike C. Mulvey

French airliner crash in Niger takes 171 lives

Moslem terrorists claim responsibility

PARIS (AP) — A Moslem extremist group claimed responsibility Wednesday for the downing of a French DC-10 jetliner in southern Niger that killed all 171 people on board.

U.S., French and UTA airline authorities said they believe the plane, bound Tuesday from Chad to Paris, was blown out of the sky by a bomb. A U.S. team of investigators was to leave later Wednesday for Niger.

Two callers who claimed to represent Islamic Jihad but did not give their own names made their claims of responsibility in separate telephone calls to the airline and to a Western news agency.

Islamic Jihad is among several radical fundamentalist groups in Lebanon believed to be part of Hezbollah, or Party of God, the umbrella group thought to hold 16 Westerners hostage in Lebanon, including eight Americans.

Among the passengers on the French jetliner were seven Americans, including Bonnie Pugh, wife of the U.S. ambassador to Chad, Robert L. Pugh.

UTA Flight 772 was on a flight from Brazzaville, Congo, to Paris when it crashed Tuesday shortly after making a stop in N'Djamena,

Crash claims lives of 5 Texans

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Four Texas-based oil workers and a Peace Corps volunteer returning to the United States were aboard the French airliner that crashed in Niger, family members and officials said Wednesday.

The five were among 171 passengers killed on a UTA flight from the Congo and Chad to Paris that crashed after an explosion over the

central African country Tuesday.

In separate telephone calls to the airline and to a Western news agency, a caller claiming to represent the Moslem extremist group Islamic Jihad asserted responsibility for downing the plane.

Of the seven Americans on board the flight, four were from Texas. In addition, a Canadian national who

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Chad. Debris was scattered over a 16-mile expanse of desert about 400 miles northwest of N'Djamena.

The French army, whose troops stationed in neighboring Chad were the first to reach the scene, said the 15 crew and 156 passengers died, including eight children.

Authorities said indications are that a bomb was the cause of the crash.

"It exploded at high altitude leaving every reason to believe it was a bomb," UTA spokesman Michel Friesse said. He said it was possible, but less likely, the explosion was due to technical failure.

A Foreign Ministry spokesman,

speaking on condition of anonymity, echoed that sentiment: "The pieces are widely scattered, so it didn't crash on impact."

"The obvious wide-spread nature of the debris suggested it blew up in the sky and not on the ground," presidential press secretary Marlin Fitzwater said, adding that President Bush had been briefed on the mishap.

Representatives of the National Transportation Safety Board, the Federal Aviation Administration and builders of the plane and en

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Jet splashes into East River, splits into pieces, killing 2

NEW YORK (AP) — A USAir 737 carrying 62 people skidded off a runway on takeoff from LaGuardia Airport late Wednesday, landing in the East River near the city jail at Rikers Island, authorities said.

The pilot tried to abort the take-off for an unknown reason, said

Federal Aviation Administration in New York.

"They've got people in water in life rafts, some people in tail section."

— Petty Officer Gary Rives, U.S. Coast Guard.

Kathleen Bergen, spokesman for the

The plane was carrying 55 passengers and seven crew members and was being evacuated, said a Fire Department spokesman, John Mulligan.

Mulligan said survivors were being transported to the Pan Am Shuttle terminal at LaGuardia. Coast Guard small boats and planes were on the scene, as well as police vehicles.

County agencies fight alcohol, drugs during awareness month

By Pam Mooman

Of The Battalion Staff

Brazos County drug prevention agencies and treatment centers are teaming up to educate the community about substance abuse during National Drug and Alcohol Treatment Awareness Month.

The Brazos Valley Mental Health and Mental Retardation Authority kicked off the month with an open house on Sept. 14 at its rehabilitation facility on Marylake Drive. MHMR also plans additional activities with local treatment centers to raise awareness about the dangers of drugs.

Tom Gray, substance abuse unit director for the Brazos Valley MHMR, said that two workshops will be held Thursday at the College Station Community Center.

"Anybody and their dog can come," Gray said.

The first workshop, from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m., will discuss "Professional Enabling." This term refers to the ways people can help maintain someone's addiction, Gray said.

"You fail to confront the fact that a person is abusing a chemical, or you keep a person from feeling the consequences of use," Gray said.

A second workshop, from 12 p.m. to 1 p.m., deals with the "Recognition of Substance Abuse Problems in Families."

Gray and Dr. Mike Wilbourn, with the Student Counseling Service, will conduct the first workshop. The second workshop will be conducted by Dr. Dennis Reardon, coordinator for the Center for Drug Prevention and Education, and Sharon Sandifer, clinical coordinator of outpatient programs at Parkside Lodges.

Reardon said the center, located on the second floor of the A.P. Beutel Health Center, does not deal with actual treatment of substance abuse.

"What we do through this office is primarily prevention, education and intervention," he said.

Sandifer is pleased to be participating in the workshop, but she said that fighting drugs requires constant activity.

"We do have an ongoing series of lectures on drug abuse," she said.

HCA Greenleaf Hospital is sponsoring a program of its own this month. HCA, in conjunction with Alpha Phi Omega, a Texas A&M service fraternity, will hold an

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Lobbyists to interview faculty regarding wages

Although faculty salaries increased over the past year, many faculty members have not seen a real increase in pay, Dr. Claudine Hunting, area Texas Faculty Association president, said.

Members of the TFA will be on campus Sept. 25-29 conducting informal interviews with faculty to get input on salary and academic issues.

The TFA works with the National Education Association and other organizations to present faculty concerns to the state and national legislatures.

Hunting, an associate professor in modern and classical languages, explained that the TFA has vigorously lobbied the Texas Legislature over the past three years on behalf of the faculty's professional and personal

concerns.

The TFA successfully lobbied for the elimination of a mandatory retirement age, and is currently lobbying to establish a standard wage for beginning teachers and to achieve parity in pay raises, Hunting said.

"This University has many, many faculty that earn less than \$20,000 a year — full time, some with a Ph.D., some without a Ph.D.," Hunting said.

Hunting said the TFA also is concerned with the problems experienced by graduate teaching assistants and is working to put a faculty representative on the A&M Board of Regents.

For further information regarding the interviews or the association, contact Hunting at 845-2130 or 774-7250.

Representative says session deals with state's economic future

By Holly Becka

Of The Battalion Staff

State Rep. Richard Smith, R-College Station, on Wednesday night said November's special 30-day session of the Texas State Legislature will help determine the economic vitality of the state's future.

Smith, Class of '60, spoke at a meeting of the

'Buster' Brown focuses on drug war/See Page 4

Republican Women of Brazos Valley. The special session will cover workman's compensation — House Bill 1.

"The next session will be a difficult session," he said. "I don't think we're out of the woods on the economic front yet. If we don't get workman's comp. settlement... and this will be the only thing I'll say about it, it is a jobs issue, it's not an insurance issue, it's not an issue about safety or about medical health care."

He said he knew of a clothing company that was deciding whether to move to North Carolina or Texas, and it was found that the insurance rate for apparel workers in Texas was \$8.11 per \$100 of payroll, while in North Carolina it was 94 cents.

"When businesses look at those figures and

find the difference in workers' compensation insurance premiums are enough to make business lose money in Texas, and make money somewhere else, it's very simple folks, they're going to go somewhere else," Smith said. "Until we get control of the benefit delivery system in Texas, we're going to have serious problems. I consider that to be the biggest threat for the economic welfare and vitality of the state."

During Wednesday's meeting, Smith, who has been a state representative since 1984, also relayed to his constituents the highlights of the 71st State Legislature, which came to a close in the spring.

Smith said that among the topics of the legislature, state prisons were one of the greatest concern to the legislators and himself, and that the legislature approved a motion to add 15,800 prison beds across the state. The amendment to provide the funding for these additional beds will be on the ballot in a November election for numerous constitutional amendments.

"If I had to state a fundamental purpose of government on the state and local level when you get away from the question of national defense, it's really the defense of the honest citizenry against attacks by hoodlums, thugs and criminals of all stripes," he said. "If we don't have safety in our own homes and streets, it really doesn't mat-

ter what our parks look like or what kind of libraries we have if we have to lock ourselves in our houses."

Smith, chairman of the house public safety committee, said Texas has a tremendous drug problem that has created a backlog of prisoners.

"It's a plague upon our state and our land," he said. "I believe in a combination of (education and incarceration), and I don't subscribe to the belief rehabilitation is the purpose of prison. People need to be put into prison because they're bad people and they need to be taken out of society."

"We need to provide the beds (to do that)," he said. "I'm proud to tell you during this past session the legislature did approve a mechanism by which we can add 15,800 new prison beds, contrary to what the (Bryan-College Station) Eagle said in an editorial recently (that) the legislature had done nothing to solve the prison overcrowding situation."

"I called Dennis Thomas, the publisher, and we had a discussion about that and I pointed out what had been done. I didn't read the correction, but I assume it will appear some point in time," he said.

Smith also said legislators discussed the AIDS problem in Texas, rural health care, education and the Texas budget.



Photo by Kathy Haveman

(From left) Dick Birdwell, Rep. Richard Smith and Rep. J.E. "Buster" Brown