



Being Board

Michael Ward, 18, a senior from Bryan High School performs a hand plant in front of Rudder Tower while friend Chris Willis, 16, looks on. Michael and Chris were skating on Tuesday.

Photo by Scott D. Weaver

Noriega's troops recapture headquarters, crush coup

PANAMA CITY, Panama (AP) — Troops loyal to Gen. Manuel Antonio Noriega recaptured the headquarters of the Panamanian Defense Forces on Tuesday and declared that they had crushed an attempted coup.

Rebellious troopers seized the headquarters compound in the morning but apparently failed to capture Noriega, and loyal forces counterattacked. After a six-hour gunbattle, the government claimed victory. "We want to underline that the situation in the country has been duly controlled to guarantee the peace and tranquility that the state should assure for its citizens," a statement released by Justice and Interior Minister Olmedo Miranda said.

The United States has been trying to oust Noriega, the Defense Forces chief who controls the government, for nearly two years. However, officials in Washington said they were not responsible for the attempted coup and U.S. troops were not involved.

The Justice Department statement declared an 8 p.m.-to-5 a.m. curfew and said the news media could report only official statements on the revolt. Panama's provisional president, Francisco Rodri-

guez, speaking to the U.N. General Assembly in New York, said an attempted coup against his government had been crushed.

Rodriguez, in his midafternoon address, did not accuse the United States of complicity in the revolt but said Washington had undermined his nation with "financial terrorism, economic blackmail and political interference."

Rebel soldiers had seized the Defense Forces headquarters in downtown Panama City Tuesday morning.

The rebels' claimed in a broadcast around noon that they had overthrown Noriega and retired top officers, but that communique was not repeated. Loyalist forces later announced they were "ready to give their lives" in resistance.

An officer loyal to Noriega later said the general was at an undisclosed location controlling the operations against the insurgents.

White House spokesman Marlin Fitzwater said Tuesday afternoon in Washington that officials had heard "rumblings" of the uprising. He said later it appeared that Noriega's forces "are back in control."

Fishing boat explosion kills three; search for survivors continued

PORT ARTHUR (AP) — Three people were killed and at least four were injured when a 160-foot fishing boat hit a gas pipeline and exploded Tuesday night in the Gulf of Mexico.

U.S. Coast Guard spokesman Don Merwin said 14 people were aboard the "Northumberland" when the vessel exploded about a half-mile offshore, about four miles from Sabine Pass. The boat belonged to a firm from Cameron, La., officials said.

Merwin said three men were known dead and four had been taken to area hospitals.

Two Coast Guard boats and helicopters and as many private air and water crafts continued searching for the other seven occupants late Tuesday.

"Apparently, they hit a natural gas pipeline and it exploded," Merwin said. "It's still burning and we're trying to get (the pipeline) shut off."

Merwin said he did not know who owns the pipeline. He said several people reported the explosion about 6:05 p.m.

A private helicopter pilot, who ferries drilling crew to offshore rigs, said he and his mechanic saw the ex-

plosion and flew to the blazing boat.

"It was just a boom and big ball of fire went up into the air about 300 feet," said Allen Willett, a pilot for Evergreen Helicopters in Sabine Pass.

"We didn't know what it was, we just went out there, and as soon as I saw what it was, I radioed back in and they notified the Coast Guard," Willett said.

Open hearing concerns core curriculum changes

An open hearing on proposed revision of the science category of the Texas A&M University core curriculum will be held by the Core Curriculum Oversight Subcommittee (CCOS) today at 3 p.m. in 302 Rudder.

The hearing is to receive comments from students, faculty and department heads outside of the sciences whose majors must satisfy this core requirement.

The proposed revision is intended to ensure that every student takes at least four units from one of the fundamental physical or biological science courses taught without science prerequisites.

The revision also is to permit students to choose from a wider range of science courses for the other four units that are required.

The CCOS is advisory to the Academic Affairs Committee and the Faculty Senate, which in turn, make recommendations to the University

president. Only after the approval of the President do any of this body's recommendations become policy.

The CCOS encourages student input on the proposed revision.

Correction

A story in the Friday issue of *The Battalion* incorrectly identified a person killed in a head-on collision Sept. 23 near Prairie View.

Roland Ira Tompkins, 19, was killed in the accident. He was the cousin of A&M student Marion Dwayne Tompkins, 19, who also died in the accident.

The Battalion incorrectly identified Tompkins as the brother of the A&M student. *The Battalion* regrets the error.

Pool: Scientists exposed fusion experiments

By Melissa Naumann

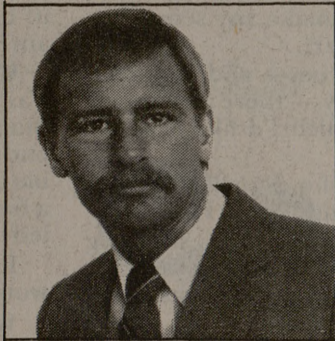
Of The Battalion Staff

It wasn't science as usual last spring when two scientists from the University of Utah announced the results of their cold fusion experiments.

Their findings rocked the scientific community, but the way they disclosed the information was also new. Stanley Pons and Martin Fleischmann went to the public immediately, bypassing the traditional routes of releasing information.

Dr. Robert Pool, who covered the cold fusion story for *Science* magazine, said that, through Pons and Fleischmann, the public is getting a chance to see science at work.

"Scientists have the attitude that you should present science to the



Robert Pool

public as a finished product," Pool said. "It (Pons and Fleischmann's announcement) is the scientific equivalent of indecent exposure. They went out in public without their sci-

entific clothes on."

Pool, speaking as part of the Texas A&M Science and Technology Journalism Lecture Series, said many people find science mystifying.

"The public somehow sees science as a black box, an unknown quantity," he said. "Perhaps by seeing the false starts, the arguments, the way science really happens, some people will see that it's not just a black box."

Because the Pons and Fleischmann findings didn't undergo as much of the peer-review process as is normal, journalists had to get analyses from other scientists about the likelihood of the cold fusion results, said Pool, who was an assistant professor of math at A&M from 1982 to 1984.

Even with these assessments, however, writing about the findings was difficult because many scientists changed their minds, he said. To combat this problem, Pool devised a Fusion Confidence Index. On the index, he showed where A&M scientists confirmed similar findings and then "hedged", as did Georgia Tech University researchers.

Pool said covering the fusion story taught him that journalists have more power than they understand. One scientist told Pool that he learned about cold fusion solely through *Science* magazine and the *New York Times*. Also, a phrase coined by Pool to refer to past failures by Utah scientists, the "Utah effect," appeared later in *The Economist*.

Police get extra training at A&M Riverside Campus

By Pam Mooman

Of The Battalion Staff

For 41 years, police officers and security guards have come to Texas A&M to learn how to do their jobs better.

The law enforcement and security training division of the Texas Engineering Extension Service was the first state academy to be licensed by the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement Officer Standards and Education. The division teaches courses on various law enforcement topics. Located on the Texas A&M Riverside Campus, the training division is currently offering a high speed driving class.

Dr. Morgan Robnett, division head, said the curriculum offers a variety of special topics as well as required courses.

"We have different specialty courses that last from one day up to a couple of weeks," Robnett said. "They're on an as-needed basis — whatever we need as we go along."

Robnett said that course subjects come from a variety of sources. The training division conducts surveys and assessments, and clients express interest in certain subjects, he said.

"If a department contacts us and says 'We need a course on XYZ,' then we'll try to get it together for them," he said.

However, Robnett said the backbone of the training program is a 400-hour mandated course for police officers. The course is taught twice a year, and police departments know when it will be taught, he said.

"We cooperate with all law enforcement agencies and their needs," Robnett said. "You must successfully complete those 400 hours before you can be a police officer in the state of Texas."

Robnett himself is a retired Dallas policeman. After

20 years on the Dallas police force, Robnett retired in 1982 and served for two years as assistant chief in the Dallas Sheriff's Department. Then in January 1985, Robnett came to work for Texas A&M.

In contrast to a large city police force, TEE's law enforcement and security training division has only 11 permanent employees, including Robnett. But the division has 10 to 20 guest instructors, Robnett said.

One of the instructors is Dr. Douglas P. Starr, a professor in the journalism department. Starr, who teaches a course on media relations for the training division, has known Robnett for many years. They met when they were both stationed in Shreveport, Louisiana in the Coast Guard, Starr said. Robnett still serves in the Coast Guard Reserves as a Lieutenant Commander in Investigations.

Starr said that a law enforcement career today requires education.

"(In the past,) anybody short of an ex-con could be a police officer," Starr said. "(Now) you've got to be an educated person to be a police officer."

Starr said Robnett believes in education for officers.

"All the people he employs he requires to go to school," Starr said. "He believes the better educated the officer is, the better he'll do his job."

Starr said that Robnett's desire for his officers to have higher education helps the officers perform their jobs.

"Law enforcement officers, by their very nature, must deal with people," Starr said. Starr said TEE's training division teaches officers and security guards how to deal with belligerent people.

Robnett said that the division trains federal, state and local officers and individual security guards. The University Police Department sends some of its officers to TEE's training program. However, Robnett said that the University Police Department and TEE's training division are not connected.

Robnett believes that students in the training pro-



Photo by Kathy Haveman

A police officer practices turns on a training course at the Texas A&M Riverside Campus.

Police from all over the state have been coming to the campus for training for 41 years.

gram are getting first-class instruction.

"Out of the eight (instructors), including me, we range from 10 years to 27 years (of experience)," Robnett said. "Everybody's working on graduate school."

Robnett said that the instructors' practical experience and academic pursuits make them better teachers.

"Those are the things I'm most proud of about them," he said.