

Texas A&M The Battalion

WEATHER

TOMORROW'S FORECAST:
Mostly sunny and cool
HIGH: 65 LOW: 40



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A&M boldly goes forward in research of science fiction lit

By SUZANNE CALDERON
Of The Battalion Staff

Texas A&M is one step away from being the major school for science fiction and fantasy work and research, a former teacher of Russian science fiction said.

Brett Cooke, an A&M assistant professor of Russian who formerly taught classes on Russian science fiction at A&M and the University of California-Riverside, is encouraged about the possibility of A&M becoming a leader in science fiction and fantasy research.

A&M's Sterling C. Evans Library is home to the second largest collection of science fiction and fantasy works in the world, Cooke said.

This, combined with one of the largest student bodies in the country and Cepheid Variable, one of the largest student science fiction clubs,

gives A&M the potential to be the leading university for science fiction and fantasy work, he said.

To focus attention on this valuable resource, a reception tonight will kick off a conference on science fiction and fantasy literature.

The Fantastic Imagination In New Critical Theories — An Interdisciplinary Literature Conference, will start today and end March 4. The conference will feature panels on science fiction and fantasy and how they relate to various disciplines and theories.

"The idea of the conference is to get the word out, so that leading English professors or leading professors of literature in this field know what our (A&M's) assets are and help put us on the beaten track," Cooke said.

It is also important that the campus and community are aware of what potential program development in science fiction offers for a space-grant university like A&M, Cooke said.

"Science fiction and fantasy are useful ways to study the uses of literature and fiction," he said. "We have to realize that here is literature that interconnects with every facet of knowledge — if not every facet of life."

During the conference prominent writers and scholars will present papers examining such areas as Marxism, feminism and psy-

chology and their relationship to scientific fantasy.

Another panel will feature leading collectors and biographers of fantasy materials speaking on the challenges and future opportunities in the scientific fantasy field.

The major topics to be outlined are the use of fantasy, imagination and whether it's limited or unlimited, and an examination of whether fantasy is a good way to test literary theories.

At the end of the conference, four prominent writers of scientific fantasy will give their responses to the material that was presented in the panels, Cooke said.

"Many of these scholars attending are truly outstanding," he said.

Among those attending will be Gregory Benford and Chad Oliver.

"Gregory Benford is one of the most popular and highly respected writers of science fiction in the world," Cooke said. "He has won almost every major award in the field."

Chad Oliver is a major classic writer from the 50s and 60s. Oliver recently won the National Cowboy Hall of

Fame Western Heritage Award for his book "Broken Eagle." The award recognizes the outstanding western novel written in 1989.

Students, faculty and community members are invited to attend all portions of the conference. Admission to all the panels is free.

Students who want to attend the conference banquet and party are being offered a special student conference fee of \$22. Normal registration fee to attend the banquet and party is \$35, and can be paid upon registration. Registration is not necessary to attend the panels.

Registration will be from 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. February 28 to March 2 on the second floor rotunda in Rudder Tower.

The conference is sponsored by the College of Liberal Arts, the Department of Modern and Classical Languages, the Women's Studies Program and MSC-Cepheid Variable.

An exhibit of A&M's science fiction and fantasy collection is currently on view on the second floor of Sterling C. Evans Library.

The following is the schedule of events for the Fantastic Imagination In New Critical Theories Conference.

February 28:
● 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. — Reception, 145 MSC.

March 1:
● 9:00 a.m. — Conference Opening, 501 Rudder.

● 9:15 a.m. to 12:15 — Panel on Fantasy and Speech Organization, 501 Rudder.

● 1:45 to 5:30 p.m. — Pan-

See Schedule/Page 12

Gorbachev demands reforms Soviet leader proposes more powerful presidency

MOSCOW (AP) — A determined and at times angry Mikhail S. Gorbachev on Tuesday rammed through the Soviet legislature his proposal for a more powerful presidency that progressive lawmakers warned could become a dictatorship.

Gorbachev, his voice rising as his temper frayed, accused his critics of engaging in "cheap demagoguery." The Soviet leader recognized lawmakers and revoked their right to speak apparently at whim during the often-stormy debate.

He hailed the Supreme Soviet's final and overwhelming approval of his proposal as a "great political event." But lawmaker Leonid Sukhoy, a Ukrainian taxi driver, warned, "The way the voting went today is the same way presidential power will be."

After only two days of discussion, spread over

two weeks, the Supreme Soviet voted 347-24 with 43 abstentions to approve creation in principle of a national presidency with a five-year term, to replace the government post now held by Gorbachev, whose formal title is Supreme Soviet chairman.

The bill was remanded to committees to consider the dozens of amendments offered by deputies during debate.

Subject to final approval by the legislature's parent body, the Congress of People's Deputies, the president will be granted powers to veto laws, unilaterally declare states of emergency, and name the prime minister, according to a copy of the bill shown to Western reporters.

Gorbachev, who chaired the legislature's proceedings, emphasized he has not yet been elected

president and said he has even considered refusing the office, but few expect the 58-year-old Communist Party chief not to be chosen.

The presidency would give Gorbachev a new and stable power base at a time when his 20 million-member party's popularity and prestige are waning and it pursues the declared aim of following East Europe's Communist parties in renouncing its legally guaranteed right to govern and compete in a multiparty system.

Progressive lawmakers strongly objected to concentrating so much power in one leader's hands and what they called Gorbachev's undue haste in pressing the issue on the Supreme Soviet. But other legislators said mounting economic, social and ethnic woes prove the need for a strong leader.

Knee deep

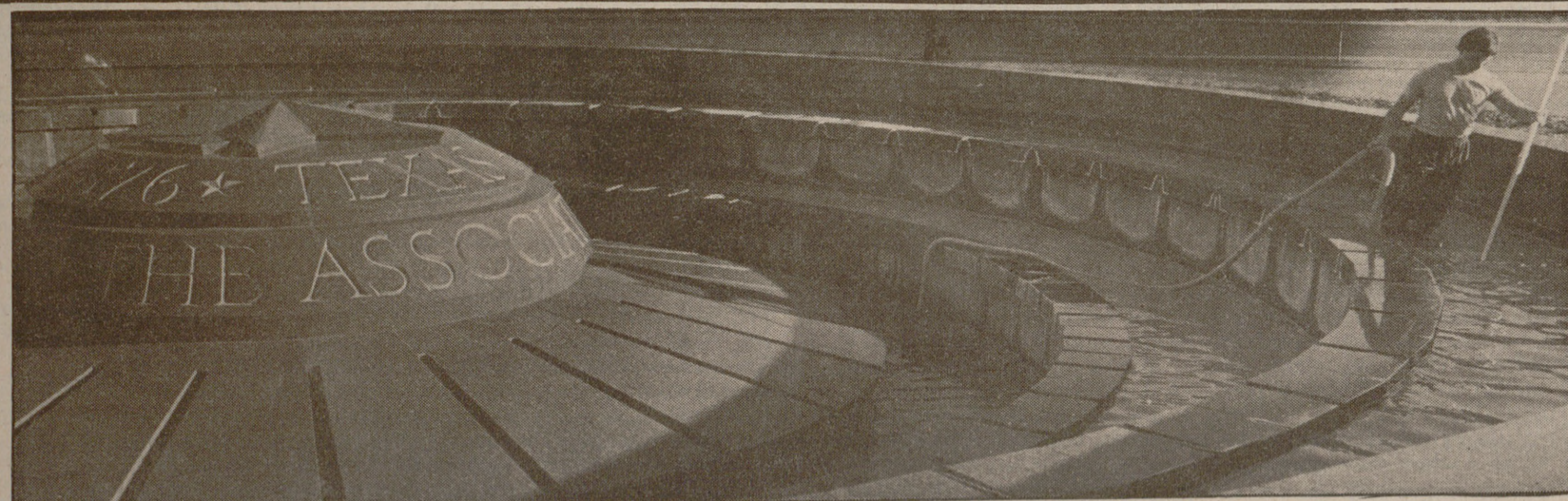


Photo by Scott D. Weaver

Dwight Wardlan, a mechanical engineering major who graduated in December 1989, cleans the fountain in front of the

Clayton Williams Alumni Center. Wardlan works for the Association of Former Students to clean the fountain.

Speech ends Black History Month celebrations

By SEAN FRERKING
Of The Battalion Staff

The dreams of little-known African-Americans of yesterday slowly have come to be the opportunities of African-Americans today, the speakers of "We are the Dream: Opportunities Today" said.

The presentation was sponsored by the MSC Black Awareness Committee and celebrated the culmination of Black History Month.

Dr. Albert Broussard, an associate professor in the Texas A&M history department, and David Smith, the manager of Minority Dealer Operations and Training Department for the Ford Motor Company, focused on the African-American role in American society.

Broussard said Black History Month owes its birth to a relatively unknown scholar, Carter G. Woodson. The event began as Negro His-

tory Week in 1926.

Broussard said Woodson's extreme determination made Negro History Week a success for African-Americans in the United States and around the world.

"He (Woodson) believed, like many other young black scholars, that he had a mission to fulfill," Broussard said.

The mission for the scholars, Broussard said, was to educate African-Americans and to serve as role models for future leaders. They also had to fight discrimination in almost every form, he said.

Through years of perseverance, Broussard said, African-Americans have come a long way in American society.

"We as slaves helped build the nation," Broussard said. "We cleared land ... We harvested crops and we picked so much cotton, tobacco and rice that we helped make America one of the strongest nations on the face of the globe."

Through the actions of African-Americans of

the late 19th and early 20th centuries, African-Americans began to win some rights, Broussard said. Along with their hard-earned rights, they also struggled for their political and economic freedom, he said.

Broussard said the struggle for equal rights required great determination. Such determination helped uplift African-Americans to their present state, he said.

David Smith said he thought the civil rights movement of the 1960s was a key to the success of many African-Americans today.

However, instead of dealing with the past, Smith said, he wanted to offer advice that would help the college students in the future.

"I want to stress 'Where do we go from here?'" Smith said.

Smith said good oral and written communication skills are necessary to be successful in the business world of the 1990s. But these talents are not the only qualifications a person needs.

See Month/Page 12

AIDS film helps raise awareness

By JULIETTE RIZZO
Of The Battalion Staff

In 1986, a student at a university in the East Coast engaged in a relationship she presumed would last a lifetime.

To "keep her boyfriend forever," Sally ignored her inhibitions and...

Four years later, the relationship over, but Sally still has something that will last a lifetime — AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome).

Sally is not a fictional character. She is a real student at a university in the East Coast, on the West Coast, at Texas, at Texas A&M.

As a heterosexual woman, she never put herself in the high-risk category for contracting the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) that may lead to AIDS, nor was she aware that her boyfriend was bisexual.

Now all she has to say is, "I could have said no, like the drug dealer, or yes to condoms."

To raise awareness about AIDS on the college campus, student leaders from universities around the world watched the sentimental and informative video "AIDS — A Decision for Life" Tuesday in Rudder Tower as part of the 10th Annual Conference on Student Government Associations. The video is by the American College Health Association.

Dr. Erika Gonzalez-Lima, health education coordinator at A&M, said college students frequently wonder when they, as a group, were placed in the high-risk category for AIDS, a disease that weakens the body's immune system.

"It's been said that AIDS does not

Visiting university delegates debate different AIDS policies

By JULIETTE RIZZO
Of The Battalion Staff

Sexuality. The Pill. Condom availability. AIDS.

These may not be topics of conversation at your table but topics such as these were the argumentative appetites of student government delegates representing universities worldwide at a round table discussion on AIDS Tuesday at A&M.

When asked if AIDS education was stressed at other schools or if their schools support the distribution of condoms on campus, the majority of delegates replied that their schools try to maintain a healthy attitude about such issues. Most of the schools represented said their university has an environment conducive to

discriminate," she said. "We are all at a high risk. It doesn't matter if a person is male, female, black, white, straight or homosexual."

Although the male homosexual population was the first in the United States to be infected by the disease, the number of heterosexual cases is growing.

The high-risk individual enters into intercourse unprotected or shares intravenous drug needles.

Statistics show that the number of

learning about sexually transmitted diseases, alternative lifestyles and birth control.

With Texas rating fourth out of the leading AIDS states with 8,421 reported cases (3,524 in Houston alone), Texas A&M health officials have made birth control pills available at the Beutal Health Center for a fraction of the store prescription cost. However, Dr. Kenneth Dirks, director of the Health Center, said condoms are not available there because they do not require a prescription and are readily available off campus.

By far, it appears A&M is doing all it can to educate students. Two human sexuality courses are available to students. Dirks also said several video tapes

See Delegates/Page 12

reported AIDS cases among the college age group is increasing. According to statistics released monthly by the Center for Disease Control in Atlanta, 121,645 AIDS cases were reported as of January 1990. Of this total, 479 cases were reported among the 13- to 19-year-old age bracket and 24,801 were reported in the 20 to 29 age group.

Gonzalez-Lima said students need to be aware that it is possible to have the HIV virus without the disease

AIDS itself.

The onset of the disease is the virus, which can be transmitted to others, but symptoms of the disease may not develop for years, she said.

Because AIDS may not show up in a person for as many as eight years, it is unknown exactly how many students actually become infected in college.

Because alcohol consumption and sexual promiscuity are somewhat related and some college students frequently partake in these activities, students are placed in a high-risk category. She said peer pressure and experimental drug use, as well as continuous drug use, add to the students' risk of HIV infection.

Gonzalez-Lima said college students, especially student leaders, play a key role in dispersing information and dispelling rumors about AIDS. Their input to student governments also helps in the enforcement and origination of university policies to prevent discrimination against students infected with the HIV virus, she said.

The university's role in preventing AIDS is to provide free information to the college population, she said.

"Student leaders are the gate keepers of this information," she said. "What the university does will help inhibit the spread of the disease."

Gonzalez-Lima said students need to realize that those infected by the HIV infection are permitted by law to attend classes regularly. Under the protection of the law, students with symptomatic AIDS are consid-

See AIDS/Page 12

UPD maintains level of vet school security amid rumored threats

By KEVIN M. HAMM
Of The Battalion Staff

The University Police Department is maintaining — not increasing — security in response to a rumor that veterinary school deans are being threatened by militant animal-rights activists, said UPD Director Bob Wiatt.

Wiatt stressed that University and veterinary school security is already adequate, and the rumor that a veterinary school dean will be killed each month for the rest of 1990 is "gossip."

"We are not reacting to this rumor," Wiatt said.

The rumor began after Dr. Hyram Kitchen, dean of the University of Tennessee veterinary school, was shot to death Feb. 8.

Homicide Lt. Larry Johnson, who is from Knox County, Tenn., said an alert was sent nationwide Wednesday via the National Crime Information Center computer to all law enforcement agencies with veterinary schools in their districts. Johnson is leading the investigation into Kitchen's death.

"Everything in it (the alert) was unconfirmed," Johnson said. "It was a 'for-what-it's-worth' teletype based on second-, third- and fourth-hand information. We put it out for only one reason: we didn't want to sit on anything."

Wiatt said a story in Monday's Houston Post about Texas A&M's response to the rumor was misleading and erroneous.

He said the headline and story made it sound like UPD had tightened security at the veterinary school and was protecting certain individuals, which is false.

Wiatt said he has been in contact with Dr. John A. Shaddock, dean of Texas A&M's College of Veterinary Medicine. Wiatt said he told Shaddock about the rumor and instructed him about security precautions he could take on his own.

Shaddock said he is not too concerned about the rumored threats, but will follow Wiatt's recommendations anyway.

"I don't think it's terribly real," Shaddock said. "But I don't plan on taking any chances."

Although UPD is not reacting to this rumor, safeguards were taken and are still in effect at Texas A&M after laboratories were broken into and equipment destroyed at an animal research facility at Texas Tech University last year, he said.

Officials at the local Federal Bureau of Investigation office and the College Station Police Department said they are not planning any special security measures.