

845-3 Tuesday, November 13, 1990

Student activities stress geographical awareness

By MIKE LUMAN
 Of The Battalion Staff

In recognition of National Geography Awareness Week, some Texas A&M students are sponsoring programs and activities aimed at "making people aware" of the world around them.

For example, where are the cities of Rangoon, Budapest and Riga located? All were mentioned in recent news stories.

Bryan McFadden, a senior geography major, says people from the United States are among the world's most geographically illiterate.

"It's being ignored, not considered important," McFadden says. "But you need to know about other places and customs to be successful and understand what's going on."

He says with communication technology increasing, a knowledge of geography is becoming essential.

"You can't fully understand current events without knowing some-

thing about the world," he says.

McFadden and others are working at a table in the MSC this week, quizzing students on their geographic knowledge.

What caused the loudest noise ever heard on Earth? Where is the source of the Nile? What is the closest country to the United States other than Canada and Mexico?

The answer to the last question is the Soviet Union. For answers to the others, McFadden suggests visiting the MSC table.

Taking the entire quiz will rank an individual's knowledge as below or above average.

Geography Awareness Week was initiated this year by a joint resolution of the U.S. Congress, possibly in response to low national geography test results.

The federal government did not begin testing high school students for geography skills until last year.

A study released by the Department of Education in February concludes that the average 12th grader

has "little understanding of geography."

McFadden says an international study of about 14 countries ranked the United States last in geographic knowledge.

He also mentioned a study at the University of Miami in which some students were unable to locate Florida on a map.

Geography students are sponsoring other events this week, including a panel discussion with a professor from Moscow State University. The topic is United States, Middle East and Soviet relations.

Ronald L. Hatchett, associate director of A&M's Mosher Institute for Defense Studies, and Vatche Tchakerian, Middle East native and A&M assistant professor of geography, also will speak.

The program is 7:30 p.m. Wednesday in 112 David Eller Building.

By the way, Rangoon is in Burma, Budapest is in Hungary and Riga is in Latvia.

Officials allege misuse of reinvestment funds

GALVESTON (AP) — School officials concerned about how the city spent some \$2.5 million the district relinquished through a tax reinvestment zone want city officials to explain the discrepancies, a published report said.

Auditors for Galveston's school district say they can't find records at City Hall to show how municipal officials spent the money it has been collecting from the district since 1984, according to a confidential memorandum obtained by the Houston Chronicle during the weekend.

In its memorandum to the Galveston City Council, the school board alleges the city:

- Improperly used perhaps hundreds of thousands of dollars from tax reinvestment zone funds to pay all or parts of the salaries of City Manager Doug Matthews and at least 15 other city employees.
- Violated state law by giving

grants of reinvestment-zone tax dollars to the Galveston Historical Foundation, the Galveston trolley project, the Galveston Economic Development Corp. and the Downtown Revitalization Committee.

- Collects and distributes property taxes illegally.

The tax reinvestment zones are quasi-governmental entities that funnel property taxes into public improvements as a way to enhance private development within the zones.

In a memo, the trustees said they believed the funds' removal was dictated by "the city's need for funds more than by the application of any formula or accounting procedure ..."

Mayor Barbara Crews told the newspaper Sunday she had not studied the entire school board memorandum, since council members received it during meetings Thursday.

Editor position available

The Texas A&M Student Publications Board is accepting applications for The Battalion editor for Spring 1991.

Students can obtain applications in the Department of Journalism office, 230 Reed McDonald.

Deadline for applications is 1 p.m. Wednesday and can be submitted to Francia Eldridge in the journalism office.

As of Monday, no applications had been submitted. Student Publications Adviser Robert Wegener says that historically students turn in applications the day of deadline.

Timm Doolen, managing editor of The Battalion, says the editor's job entails being the external representative of the daily newspaper at all University functions.

"Within the staff, the editor sets policy for The Battalion and is the ultimate student authority on all Battalion matters," Doolen says.

Other jobs include overseeing the managing editor and section editors. The editor also conducts daily meetings with editors and weekly meetings with the entire staff.

Qualifications for editor include:

- 2.0 overall and major GPR at the time of taking office as well as during the office term

- At least one year experience in a responsible editorial position on The Battalion or comparable student newspaper

- At least one year editorial experience on a commercial newspaper

- At least 12 hours of journalism classes, including reporting and editing I and II. The 12 hours must include completion of — or enrollment in — mass communication law or its equivalent.

Applicants will be interviewed at 1 p.m. Friday in 215 Reed McDonald during the Student Publications Board meeting.

The new editor will be chosen Friday and will serve from Dec. 3, 1990, through April 26, 1991.

Baylor president vows to fight convention

HOUSTON (AP) — Baylor University President Herbert H. Reynolds said he's tired of being monitored and second-guessed by fundamentalist extremists and he's going to fight to keep the university independent.

"As I understand the Bible, one day I am going to face the Lord," Reynolds said. "I'm not going to meet 13 other people standing around to take authority. Therefore, I don't need them down here."

When the Baptist General Convention of Texas kicks off Tuesday, Reynolds said the governing body of Baylor will be the focal topic.

"For the first time in 12 years, as far as I'm concerned, on Sept. 21, action was taken to thwart the juggernaut that we have seen in the Southern Baptist Convention," Reynolds said. "As a result of that, we've had a good deal of abuse heaped upon us and had a fair amount of criticism."

"I guess it all depends on whose ox is being gored as to the reaction that people have," he said.

On Sept. 21, Baylor's Board of Trustees voted 30-7 with one abstention to revise the school's charter, establishing a new governing body for the school, a board of regents.

The new board, which eventually will have 24 members, will be elected primarily by the board

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members themselves with a quarter of the members coming from the board of trustees, which would continue to be elected by the Baptist General Convention.

The move sparked yet another round between moderates and conservatives within the church.

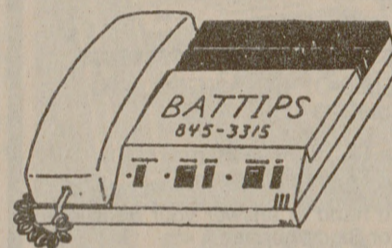
But in a press conference Monday, Reynolds said the decision actually came as a result of continued friction from overzealous conservatives who were threatening to take control of Baylor, the nation's largest and oldest Baptist university.

"We did not seek in any way whatsoever to remove ourselves from the lives of Texas Baptists," Reynolds said. "These are our people. They are our family. I myself have been a lifelong Texas Baptist. We love Texas Baptists."

"We have been disenchanted and unhappy with those in this extremist movement, and we definitely have sought to distance ourselves from them," Reynolds said. "We simply came to the point that we thought the danger was too great that we might lose our opportunity to exercise the kind of religious freedom that we want as an institution."

Reynolds said the move showed "we believe strongly in the priesthood of the believer, sole confidence: all of these principles that have been so important to Baptists down through the years."

BATTIPS



Anyone with story suggestions can call BATTIPS. The Battalion's phone line designed to improve communication between the newspaper and its readers.

The BATTIPS number is 845-3315.

Ideas can include news stories, feature ideas, and personality profiles of interesting people.

T.A.M.U. STUDY ABROAD 1991

INFORMATIONAL MEETINGS FOR PROGRAMS TO

Italy	— TO STUDY —	Music & Art
England	— TO STUDY —	Geography
Netherlands/ Europe	— TO STUDY —	Business Management
England	— TO STUDY —	Grad. level Indus. Arts/ Tech. Education
Dominica	— TO STUDY —	Tropical Island Biology
France/Germany Spain/Russia	— TO STUDY —	Intermediate Language
England	— TO STUDY —	Theatre
Far East	— TO STUDY —	BANA
Italy Semester	— TO STUDY —	Humanities

Wednesday, November 14, 2:00-3:00 p.m.
 510 Rudder Tower

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