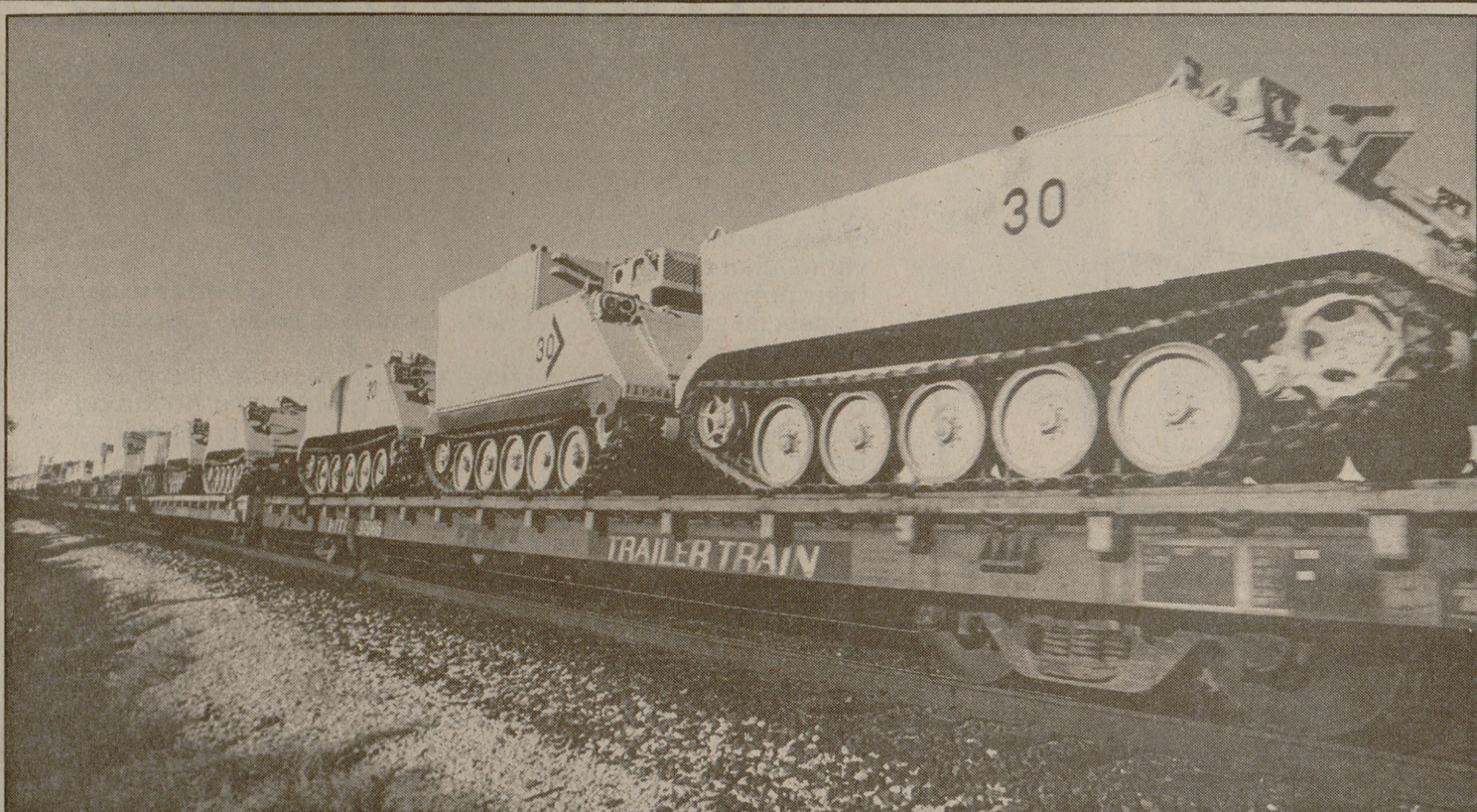


**We asked
and you said ...**
A&M students tell what
they want for Christmas
See Page 3

Over there



Sand-colored armored military vehicles pass through College Station Tuesday afternoon heading south. In Iraq Tuesday, Saddam Hussein backed away from his confrontation with the Kremlin, promising to release the 3,300 Soviets he was holding.

PHELAN M. EBENHACK/The Battalion

Collision raises questions
**Human error tops
investigators' list**

ROMULUS, Mich. (AP) — The captain of a DC-9 that collided in fog with another jetliner on an airport runway — a collision that killed eight people — returned to the cockpit only last week from a five-year medical leave, officials said Tuesday.

Investigators were trying to determine whether the Northwest Airlines captain, William Lovelace, or his first officer, James F. Chiffers, was at the controls Monday when their plane ran into a Boeing 727 racing for takeoff at Detroit Metropolitan Airport.

Chiffers, who spent 20 years in the Air Force, was hired by Northwest in March, his first job in commercial aviation.

National Transportation Safety Board investigators said they were looking at such factors as human error, weather and equipment as possible causes of the accident.

A fireball fed by fuel burned away the top of the Pittsburgh-bound DC-9 after the right wingtip of the Northwest 727 tore open the DC-9's fuselage and dislodged an engine.

Noxious fumes killed seven men and a woman among the 43 people aboard the DC-9, said Wayne County Chief Medical Examiner Bader Cassin. Seven people remained hospitalized, two of them in critical condition.

I.C. Payne, a passenger on the DC-9, said he couldn't see much out his window and just remembers a piece of shrapnel striking him on the head.

"It nearly knocked me out of my seat," Payne said. "The first thing I did was reach up to see if all my head was still on. Then I heard someone in the front of the plane yell out that the engine just blew."

The woman killed was Heidi Joost, 43, of Dearborn, a flight attendant who worked for Northwest since 1968. The names of the others were unavailable from the medical examiner because their bodies were so badly charred. Cassin said dental records were being sought to make positive identification, which Northwest spokesman Kevin Whalen said could come today.

Another Northwest spokesman, Bob Gibbons, said the flight was Lovelace's first without another pilot observing since he returned to flying Nov. 25.

A&M studies organic agriculture

By LYNETTE CLARK
Of The Battalion Staff

Due in part to a global increase in environmental concern, a group of Texas A&M students is joining the study of sustainable agriculture for the world's future.

Sustainable agriculture is not a new idea and these students are not the first to deal with the complex practices, says Dr. Fred Smeins of the Department of Range Science.

Smeins says the term "sustainable agriculture" includes a whole spectrum of ideas and practices.

At one extreme is organic farming, considered the most sustainable because no chemicals are added to the land, Smeins says. Sustainable agriculture, however, also includes methods which merely reduce chemical and energy inputs, using them in a more efficient way.

The new sustainable agriculture program at A&M is an experimental program funded by the Clayton Foundation. But the program is representative of what is going on across the nation — an increased interest in sustainable agriculture and the environment, Smeins says.

Recently students were given the opportunity to influence policies of sustainable agriculture in the United States. Members of the sustainable agriculture class and Conservation and Sustainable Community Development Coalition met last weekend at A&M to discuss issues, Smeins says.

The Coalition represents state agricultural agencies and various private foundations in Texas, Louisiana, Oklahoma and Arkansas.

The purpose of the meeting was to better define some sustainable agriculture practices and applications and find better ways to communicate ideas of sustainable agriculture to farmers.

"The conference went extremely well," Smeins says. "This could be a real tool for Texas A&M to advertise to many different groups that we are doing something in this arena."

Chris Rhodes, a junior chemistry major in the program, says the students gave presentations on various topics related to sustainable agriculture, followed by discussions with the coalition.

"Hopefully, our perspectives and discussions will aid the coalition in developing new policies and an integrated approach to sustainable agriculture," Rhodes says.

He says many ideas, thoughts and analyses were presented at the meeting, which could carry into actions for the necessary changes.

Dwight Barry, a junior philosophy major in the class, says the change from conventional agricultural practices to sustainable ones is inevitable.

"With the growing environmental and social problems all over the world, sustainable agriculture is no doubt going to be the future," Barry says. "The only other alternative is our extinction."

The sustainable agriculture program continues next semester. One \$1,500 scholarship is awarded per year to a student in the class. Scholarship applications will be accepted from juniors early in the spring.

Feast without fret
**Doctor offers guidelines
for healthy holiday diet**

By KAREN PRASLICKA
Of The Battalion Staff

If you have ever "pigged out" on your favorite foods during holidays, telling yourself it's OK because you will go on a diet, you are not alone, said a University nutrition specialist.

Dr. Jane Cohen of the A.P. Beutel Health Center offered several guidelines during a seminar Tuesday for enjoying food during the holidays without feeling guilty.

Cohen said many people have an "all-or-nothing" attitude about eating.

This means they either eat as much as they want or they eat nothing they think might be fattening or unhealthy, she said.

Cohen said she encourages people to free themselves of this attitude by saying it is OK to eat high-calorie foods in moderation.

Cohen said people can reduce the number of calories they intake by modifying eating behavior.

She said people should set a limit to how much they eat and then avoid eating beyond that limit.

Cohen also said people should eat foods with fewer calories and avoid fattening and unhealthy foods.

She said people also have other options to cut down on calories during holidays besides cutting back on how much they eat. Exercising and being with friends during holidays are two ways to focus attention on something besides food, she said.

"Instead of taking a nap after a big holiday meal, go for a walk or go Christmas caroling," she said.

Cohen also suggested starting a new tradition this year by substituting some of the high-calorie courses



**"Plan for your snacks,
plan for the holiday,
and use moderation."**
— Dr. Jane Cohen,
health center nutritionist

A&M survey shows healthy holiday sales in Texas

By ELIZABETH TISCH
Of The Battalion Staff

Brazos Valley and Texas consumers are spending more money this season than last year, despite results of a survey that says holiday spending nationwide is down, a Texas A&M faculty member says.

Dr. Larry Gresham, an associate professor of marketing and associate director of the Center for Retailing Studies in the A&M College of Business, says one of the reasons for the increase in holiday shopping is the positive attitude about the state's economy.

"My speculation is, in Texas, we have been in the economic downturn for so long," Gresham says. "And, while other parts of the country are just now experiencing the economic downturn, Texans are still pretty optimistic they are on their way out."

Gresham says A&M's College of

"My speculation is, in Texas, we have been in the economic downturn for so long, and, while other parts of the country are just now experiencing the economic downturn, Texans are still pretty optimistic they are on their way out."

— Dr. Larry Gresham,
Center for Retailing Studies

Business conducted a shopping survey with Arthur-Anderson, an accounting firm based in Dallas.

Gresham says the "weekly holiday snapshot" surveyed retailer accounts from more than 200 stores, and asked retailers to compare total spending figures for last year and this year.

"Our basic finding thus far is most of them (retailers) aren't doing as well as last year," he says. "But retailers in Texas are doing very well."

Gresham says a major reason for

the nation's lull in spending is consumer uncertainty about the U.S. economic situation caused by the Persian Gulf crisis.

"The Gulf crisis is creating consumer uncertainty and that is why people aren't rushing out to buy," he says. "People don't know how it is going to affect them personally, but it just might."

Gresham says people nevertheless will spend money this season, but they are actually spending less money because they will be purchas-

ing less expensive items.

"For example, people will buy a cotton sweater instead of a cashmere one," he says. "It is the upper-end items that will probably suffer."

The survey results also conclude that department stores which carry more expensive merchandise, in addition to automobile dealers, fur stores and jewelry stores, will feel the spending crunch the hardest.

Although Texans are spending more money, the survey shows that Texas consumers also are not buying as much of the expensive merchandise, Gresham says.

He also says many newspapers are reporting that seasonal sales are up about 1 or 2 percent from last year.

"That is not true, because if you factor in inflation for about 5 percent, they are actually running behind in terms of real dollars," he says. "Here in Texas, it looks like we are ahead 6 or 7 percent, even when you take in account the inflation factor."

Fall exams start Friday

Final examinations for the 1990 fall semester begin Friday and last through Wednesday.

The following is the final examination schedule:

- FRIDAY**
- For classes on MW 4:30 — Exam from 7:30 to 9:30 a.m.
 - For classes on MWF 8 a.m. — Exam from 10 to 12 p.m.
 - For classes on TR 12:30 p.m. — Exam from 12:30 to 2:30 p.m.
 - For classes on TR 11 a.m. — Exam from 3 to 5 p.m.

- MONDAY**
- For classes on MWF 9 a.m. — Exam from 8 to 10 a.m.
 - For classes on MWF noon — Exam from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
 - For classes on TR 8 a.m. — Exam from 1 to 3 p.m.

- For classes on MW 3 p.m. — Exam from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m.

- TUESDAY**
- For classes on MWF 10 a.m. — Exam from 8 to 10 a.m.
 - For classes on MWF 2 p.m. — Exam from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
 - For classes on TR 3:30 p.m. — Exam from 1 to 3 p.m.
 - For classes on MWF 1 p.m. — Exam from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m.

- WEDNESDAY**
- For classes on TR 9:30 a.m. — Exam from 8 to 10 a.m.
 - For classes on MWF 11 a.m. — Exam from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
 - For classes on TR 2 p.m. — Exam from 1 to 3 p.m.
 - For classes on TR 5 p.m. or later — Exam from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m.

Police criticized for 'surprise riot'

*Puerto Rican murder acquittal
triggers Miami looters, fires*

MIAMI (AP) — Merchants criticized police response as they angrily cleaned up Tuesday from a night of looting and fires triggered by the acquittal of six police officers in the fatal beating of a Puerto Rican drug dealer.

Fire officials estimated the fire damage alone at \$2.9 million.

Police Chief Perry Anderson said police could have moved in earlier, but defended his department saying there were no deaths or violent clashes with police.

Mayor Xavier Suarez met with leaders in the largely Puerto Rican Wynwood community to look into reasons for the rioting, which police and city officials admitted caught them by surprise.

Merchants complained that police took too long to move in Monday night after hundreds of youths swarmed through usually tranquil streets, looting stores and burning down businesses.

The riot followed the acquittal of six police officers accused of beating to death Leonardo Mercado, a

Puerto Rican-born cocaine dealer.

"The police knew it was going to happen and they just sat back and did nothing, absolutely nothing," said Richard Munoz, who owns Los Hispanos Supermarket.

Munoz said his small grocery store was not damaged because he scared off the looters.

"I spent all night armed and on the roof," Munoz said.

Other merchants were busy sweeping up broken glass and cleaning soot.

Police estimate about 300 people were involved in the rioting at its height. Ten to 15 people were arrested on charges of disorderly conduct and inciting to riot, said George Law, a police spokesman.

Residents said many looters were not from their neighborhood, but came in from other parts of the city

to take advantage of the anger in the northwestern Miami community.

The trouble began shortly after nightfall, nearly six hours after a federal jury found the members of an elite drug squad innocent of conspiracy in the killing of Mercado, who was from the neighborhood.

The jury deadlocked on more serious charges of violating the civil rights of Mercado when he was beaten to death two years ago and Judge Stanley Marcus declared a mistrial.

Mercado's sister-in-law, Rosa Alende, said some Puerto Ricans feel the need for revenge.

"It's not going to change things, but it's a start to let them know it's not only the blacks who get angry," she said. "They said he (Mercado) was a low-life cockroach. But he had

children. A life is a life."

Some business owners said they got telephone calls in the afternoon, warning them there might be trouble and to close down their shops.

"They (the police) knew all about it," said Ricky Perez, whose parents' shoe store was vandalized.

"We called the police and they told us to close down the store and go home," Perez said. "They (the police) were just down the streets, watching them taking TVs and they didn't do nothing about it."

"We were caught a little bit by surprise," Suarez said. "We're going to have to investigate ... and see if it wasn't some sort of predisposed or pre-organized element to this."

"With this particular situation we took two hours to respond, and we should have gone in a lot quicker," Anderson said. "So what I'm saying is, you're damned if you do and damned if you don't."

Fire investigator John Calpini said two stores were destroyed by fire. Other damage appeared limited to a few buildings.