

Monday, March 4, 1991

The Battalion

ISA selects outstanding international student Swiss senior receives award at talent show

By Bridget Harrow
The Battalion

She is vice president of public relations for the International Student Association, member of three scholarly fraternities,

teaching assistant in French, member of the Europe Club and this year's Most Outstanding International Student.

Melanie Goodner, a Texas A&M senior scientific nutrition major, received the award Friday night during intermission of the ISA Talent Show.

"I was honored to get this award," Goodner says. "I filled out the application, but I never had any idea that I would actually get it."

Goodner was born in Switzerland, but has dual citizenship in the United States because her mother is American and her father is Swiss. Goodner's mother was raised in the Bryan-College Station area and her grandparents still live in Bryan.

Goodner says her grandparents are Aggie advocates and encouraged her to attend A&M. Goodner's brother and some of her uncles also graduated from A&M.

"I guess I kind of grew up in the Aggie spirit, even if I was not from this country," Goodner says.

Another reason Goodner says she chose to come to A&M is because the University has one of the best agricultural programs in the world. Goodner says she hopes to attend graduate school to get her master's degree in nutrition and become a registered dietician.

To compete for the Outstanding International Student Award, candidates must have a GPR above a 3.75 and be involved in extracurricular activities,



HUY THANH NGUYEN/The Battalion

Melanie Goodner, who was named Most Outstanding International Student, seeks to promote international awareness and further integration of international students at Texas A&M.

particularly those directed toward international awareness.

Goodner's GPR is 3.88 and she belongs to Phi Beta Delta, the international scholars fraternity, Alpha Zeta, the agricultural honor fraternity, and Phi Eta Sigma, the freshman honor society. She also has actively participated in ISA for two years.

As vice president of public relations for ISA, Goodner helps

publish the international student organization's newsletter The Planet. She also is responsible for advertising all ISA events.

Goodner says publicizing this year's International Week was a challenge.

"I tried as best as I could but there is a lot to do," Goodner says. "It is hard to try and get in contact with everybody — television, radio, newspapers and schools. I had a

pretty busy schedule."

Goodner also is in a student peer educator program offered by A.P. Beutel Health Center. As part of the program, she will present health education speeches on nutrition to residence hall and student organizations beginning this fall.

"Because nutrition is my major, I figured it would be good experience," she says. "I really do want to help my peers learn about

nutrition."

Goodner says she had to make some adjustments when she arrived at A&M.

In Switzerland, she attended an all-girl high school that mainly concentrated on academic pursuits.

"We did not have any extracurricular activities," Goodner says. "So when I came here, I was surprised by all these things I could do."

She says the size of A&M's student body also was intimidating. Fribourg, her hometown in Switzerland, has about the same population as the University.

"When I came to A&M, I felt so lost," Goodner says. "I was fortunate to have my brother at A&M."

Besides English, Goodner also speaks German and French. She says she believes learning another language is important.

"I have always spoken English with my parents and brother," she says. "But I grew up in a French-speaking school. So I guess I am one of those lucky people who is perfectly bilingual. I have no accent in either language."

Goodner says because she does not have an accent, people usually cannot tell she is an international student. She says she does not have to deal with the problems many international students have to face.

"I can go around and everybody considers me American," she says. "There is nothing to give me away. I have a lot of European friends that look American, but as soon as they talk, you know they are not because they have such a strong accent."

Goodner says being viewed as an American can be an advantage because she is able to get insight into what people think about international students.

"I can go around and get treated

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Soldier dies day before cease-fire

TEXAS CITY (AP) — The Persian Gulf cease-fire came one day too late for Staff Sgt. Christopher Stephens, an Army scout.

A Bradley Fighting Vehicle carrying Stephens was hit Tuesday by Iraqi fire in Kuwait and exploded. The 27-year-old father of four died 24 hours before President Bush announced the end of the fighting.

His wife, Jennie Stephens, said she heard first about the cease-fire.

"We knew everything was OK," she told the Houston Chronicle in an interview from her home in Texas City, a Gulf coast town 50 miles south of Houston.

A knock on her door late Friday proved her wrong.

Military officials, her pastor and her father-in-law brought the news.

"I didn't expect it at all," said Mrs. Stephens, 27. "We had plans — we had plans to do other things."

Chief among those was raising four sons — ages 9, 8, 6 and 2 — and moving to California, where her husband, a member of the 3rd Armored Division, was to be stationed after the war.

This weekend, Mrs. Stephens braced herself to tell her sons of their father's death.

"I just can't believe it," she said. "I thought it was over, and I knew he was coming back."

They would have celebrated their 10th wedding anniversary March 14. Both grew up in Houston and were high-school sweethearts.

The last 4½ years were spent in Germany, until they moved to Texas City in December. Stephens was sent to the Middle East on Dec. 28.

Three of his brothers — Edmund, 31, Willard, 30, and Timothy, 25 — are in the Army and remain in the Middle East. Chris Stephens was the last of the four to be shipped to the Persian Gulf area.

Last month, he told his wife he was heading for the front lines.

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