

The Battalion

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Opinions expressed in The Battalion are those of the editorial board or the author, and do not necessarily represent the opinions of the Texas A&M student body, administrators, faculty or the A&M Board of Regents.

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BATTIPS

The Battalion encourages its readers to contribute story ideas and suggestions by calling 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. Readers also are encouraged to offer any other suggestions that could improve the newspaper.

UT regent wants fees to double

AUSTIN (AP) — A University of Texas System regent has backed a plan to double tuition at state universities, The Daily Texan reported.

W.A. "Tex" Moncrief said Monday that the state should come closer to charging students at UT and Texas A&M what it costs to teach them.

University officials have denounced proposals by State Comptroller John Sharp and legislative leaders to double tuition and cut the state's higher education budget.

The House Appropriations Committee, seeking to write a state budget around a projected \$4.8 billion shortfall in revenue, voted Sunday to slash \$500 million from college and university allocations.

But in a letter to Sharp, Moncrief wrote: "Texas A&M and Texas universities are good universities, pretty good nationally — but they are not world class universities."

"They could be made so with the aid of two things. The tuition at College Station and Austin does need to be doubled — probably even more than that," he said.

The other needed change is raising academic entrance requirements for prospective students, Moncrief said.

The Higher Education Coordinating Board estimates that it costs the state \$128 per semester hour to educate a student. Non-resident undergraduates pay the full amount, while residents pay \$20 per semester hour.

Comptroller saves trees, practices waste management

VICTORIA (AP) — Texas Comptroller John Sharp is a man who practices what he preaches when it comes to stationery.

Sharp has been urging state agencies to cut their expenses drastically as the Texas Legislature wrestles with a \$4.8 billion budget deficit.

So when Sharp took office, what did he do with an estimated 2 million pieces of his predecessor's stationery, envelopes and brochures valued at about \$50,000?

The stationery now has three black lines printed through former Comptroller Bob Bullock's name with Sharp's name stamped directly above.

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Deputy commandant of Corps retires

By Tammy Bryson
The Battalion

During his four years as deputy commandant of Texas A&M's Corps of Cadets and head of the Department of Aerospace studies, Col. George B. Stokes has seen significant changes in the Corps and the University — and he says it's all for the better.

Col. Stokes, who is being awarded with the Air Force Legion of Merit at his retirement ceremony today, says he has seen the University change and grow over the years.

"There of course have been physical changes — with all of the expansion and building, but there have also been significant changes in the Corps," he says.

Stokes says the Corps is more professional than it was when he came here.

"They look better and they perform better," he says. "Grades have also come up considerably in the past four years."

Stokes says he believes Gen.

Thomas G. Darling, commandant of the Corps of Cadets, has been instrumental in bringing these improvements, which will continue in the future.

"There are still things to be done, but we are going in the right direction," he says.

Stokes, retiring after 28 years of military service, says he will stay involved in the Corps and the local community through the Corps Development Council and local community organizations.

"I'm staying right here," he says. "I have strong ties in the local area through such groups as the Rotary Club, so I'm



SCOTT D. WEAVER/The Battalion

Col. George Stokes will receive the Air Force Legion of Merit award.

not going anywhere." Stokes says he loves his job and the only bad part of it was having to tell students they had to leave the Corps because of grades or disciplinary problems.

"It is hard to discipline someone when it will mean they will lose out on a chance to do something they really

want," he says. "The Corps is such a benefit — it is hard to take it away from someone who wants it."

Stokes, who began his Air Force career as a pilot, has almost 4,000 flying hours, many of

those as a helicopter commandant pilot.

He spent eight years overseas including time spent in Europe and Vietnam.

He also has received numerous military decorations including the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Meritorious Service Medal, two Oak Leaf Clusters, Air Medal with 12 Oak Clusters and the Air Force Commendation Medal with two Oak Leaf Clusters.

Stokes says he has enjoyed his time as deputy commandant and says it is the best job he has ever had.

"It was a great pleasure to be here," he says. "Everybody wants this and I got to do it for four years during a time when there were significant improvements in the Corps, so it was especially satisfying."

Stokes' successor as deputy commandant, Col. James Crumbliss, previously served Tindall Air Force Base in Florida.

State senator blasts budget; Speaker Lewis defends plan

AUSTIN (AP) — A state senator blasted a House budget proposal as "irresponsible" Wednesday. But Speaker Gib Lewis defended the spending plan, which has been called the cheapest expected this session.

"They did about half of what we needed in the way of prisons, and they slashed education, which holds the greatest hope for economic development and growth and avoidance of the need for so many prisons. It makes no sense to me," said Sen. Carl Parker, Education Committee chairman.

"The first word that pops in my mind when I see something like that is 'irresponsible.' And it is a budget that shows no leadership," said Parker, D-Port Arthur.

Lewis said he supports the plan, which may be considered Sunday by the House. It was approved Tuesday night by the House Appropriations Committee.

"I think it's a well-thought-out budget," said

Lewis, D-Fort Worth. He said that these are "mean and lean times."

Lawmakers are meeting in special session to write a state budget for the next two years. They face an estimated \$4.8 billion shortfall between expected revenue and the cost of continuing current levels of state services.

The House committee proposal would fall \$1.3 billion short of expected revenue, despite taking a 5 percent bite from most state agencies. It would cut \$500 million from higher education, \$200 million from welfare services and about \$100 million from the state prison system.

Lewis said he has confidence in the Appropriations Committee: "They're certainly not going to throw the baby out with the bath water."

Sen. John Montford, a Lubbock Democrat who heads the Finance Committee, said his panel hopes to complete work on the Senate's spending plan by Saturday.

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Annual Night Out Tuesday

By Jeff M. Brown
The Battalion

The National Association of Town Watch and local police departments are encouraging neighborhoods throughout the Brazos Valley to join thousands of communities nationwide for the Eighth Annual National Night Out.

The celebration will take place from 5:30 to 8 p.m. Tuesday at the Brazos Center with the theme, "Give Neighborhood Crime and Drugs a Going Away Party."

The event is designed to heighten awareness of crime and drug prevention, to strengthen police/community relations and

to send a message to criminals that neighborhoods nationwide are organized and fighting back for a safer America.

Lt. Bert Kretzschmar, University Crime Prevention Specialist with UPD, said A&M will provide bus service to and from the event.

"This is a national and even worldwide event," Kretzschmar said. "We want everyone to get involved but specifically students and faculty."

A shuttle bus will pick up in front of the Commons at 5:30 p.m., the Northside Parking Garage at 5:45 p.m. and the Married Student Housing Office at 6 p.m. The bus will return from the Brazos Center at 7:30 p.m.

Kretzschmar said the cele-

bration will be informative as well as fun. There will be crime prevention lectures, game booths, free soft drinks and pizza.

After the celebration, residents are asked to return to their neighborhoods, turn on their outside lights and spend part of the evening outside with neighbors and police.

UPD Cpl. Betty LeMay said socializing with other members of the community creates a safer neighborhood.

"We want residents to be aware that by just turning on outer lights prevents crime," LeMay said. "Also, getting to know your neighbors creates a crime watch that is hard to beat."

Governor signs bill to increase aid to Medicaid hospitals

AUSTIN (AP) — Hospitals that serve a large number of people could get about \$1 billion more in federal money over the next two years under a bill signed into law Tuesday by Gov. Ann Richards.

The bill would not be effective if the federal government rejected the plan or if federal funds were not available.

It was approved 141-0 by the House Tuesday, after passage by the Senate.

Under the measure, dozens of hospitals that have above-average loads of Medicaid patients would pay the state a percentage of their inpatient Medicaid income.

The estimated \$585 million fee revenue would be matched by the federal government, yielding about \$1 billion.

Owner drags dog to death behind truck

DOGWOOD CITY (AP) — A woman charged in the death of her dog, which was dragged through a subdivision by a truck Tuesday she thought had put the animal in the back of the pickup.

But sheriff's officers who Monday charged Betty Turner, 50, with cruelty to an animal disagreed, saying she had given them three different stories about her large black dog.

"I did drag it, but I didn't know that I was dragging it," Turner said. "I thought I put it in the truck."

Turner, who says she took the dog on rides in a truck, contends she secured the animal to the truck because she had attempted to jump from the pickup in the past.

Witnesses of Lakeway subdivision told Smith County investigators they tried to save the woman Monday evening that the dog, either a Doberman pinscher or a Labrador retriever, was tied to her truck along a mile-long circular route on the west side of Lake Palestine.

"The people said when she drove by the first time, the dog was trying to keep up with the truck but its neck was being stretched," said sheriff's Greg Wilson. "The second time around, the dog was trying to get up on its feet."

"The third time, the dog was dead," he said.

Turner posted a \$500 bail on the misdemeanor charge and was released from county jail, Wilson said.

"The first reason she gave me that she was leading the dog was the reason that she tied the dog so it wouldn't get out of the truck, and the second was that she was exercising the dog," Wilson said.

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