

The Battalion

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The Battalion is published daily except Saturday, Sunday, holidays, exam periods and when school is not in session during fall and spring semesters. Publication is Monday through Friday during the fall and spring semesters. The newsroom phone number is 845-3316.

The Battalion is a non-profit, self supporting newspaper operated as a community service to Texas A&M University and Bryan-College Station.

The Battalion news department is managed by students at Texas A&M University in the Division of Student Publications, a unit of the Department of Journalism.

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.

Comments, questions or complaints about any of the editorial content of the newspaper should be directed to either associate editor at 845-3313.

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Advertising

Advertising information can be obtained from the advertising department at 845-2696 Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., or by visiting the office in room 015 Reed McDonald building.

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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.

State & Local

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Tuesday, September 3, 1991

'I knew what the government was telling the people was wrong'

A&M student witnesses time of trouble in U.S.S.R.

By Liz Tisch
The Battalion

When Texas A&M senior Chris Segrest went to Russia this summer, he saw much more than the usual tourist attractions — he witnessed Soviet tanks seizing control of the streets.

Segrest, a history major and a member of the Corps of Cadets, spent five weeks in Leningrad volunteering his time by helping Bryan missionaries Blake and Cathy Purcell. The project was part of a campus ministry called "Navigators."

Hours before his scheduled departure to Houston, he was told to remain in the city when the coup attempted to overthrow the Soviet government.

"The last night I was there, I received a phone call (from Russian friends) that Gorbachev was sick and that

the nation was in a state of emergency," he said. "And that didn't make too much sense to be in a state of emergency just because Gorbachev was sick."

Immediately, Segrest turned on the television to find information. Instead, he found that every station was airing the same movie. Knowing this was abnormal, both Segrest and Blake Purcell said the television programming was a "sort of brainwashing, to keep the people ignorant of what was really happening."

Segrest then received another phone call from friends from the United States that warned him to stay off the streets because Gorbachev was under arrest.

In addition, he was told that the coup was going to arrest any "speculators." This included any citizens not in agreement with the coup's actions.

"This meant anybody like business reformed people, missionaries like the Blakes and myself," he said. "It made me nervous. We were warned that tanks were going

to patrol the streets."

After being advised to leave, Segrest arrived at the airport unharmed in Leningrad.

He said he noticed, however, some people were acting undaunted by the crisis.

"I knew what the government was telling the people was wrong," he said. "They said Gorbachev had resigned. It was strange that the foreigners knew the news before the Russian citizens did."

Although Segrest felt safe when he was on his way to Houston, he was concerned about the rest of the missionaries who were not scheduled to leave.

"They told me if things did not calm down soon, they were going to escape to Finland," he said.

Segrest said his experience has made him appreciate the United States much more.

"It made me realize how much a lie the system of Communism is," he said. "And it doesn't have to be that way."

A&M newspaper room relocates, receives high-tech design system

By Troy Hall
The Battalion

New offices and a new computer system highlight several recent improvements to The Battalion. The face-lift began during the summer and was completed at the end of August.

The Battalion offices moved from the second floor of Reed McDonald to the basement. Battalion advertising was moved from the English Annex building and is also located in the basement of Reed McDonald.

The improvements were made to utilize space efficiently.

A lack of space in the journalism department coupled with the need to organize student publications and journalism facilities were the main reasons for the

changes, said Charles Self, journalism department head.

"The journalism department is very crowded and lacks adequate space to run efficiently," Self said. "We tried to consolidate The Battalion and journalism offices to make things run more efficient."

The former Battalion office was remodeled to house four new faculty offices, a classroom and reading room. The total cost of the project was approximately \$20,000. Self said the project was funded by student publications. No taxpayers' money was used.

Although the new Battalion offices are smaller, the newsroom is more centralized and secure, said Todd Stone, associate editor of The Battalion.

"The changes have been tough, but in the long run we will be more competitive with other

college newspapers and some small city papers," he said.

A new Macintosh computer network replaces the outdated system.

"The new network operates less expensively and allows us to do many more technical things," Self said.

The computer network cost approximately \$60,000, which is "incredibly cheap," Self said. In addition, the network can continually be updated whenever new software is introduced.

In the past, communications between Battalion advertising and the newsroom have been difficult, but now they can work more closely together as a team, Self said.

"The move will help the student run newspaper work more efficiently as a whole."

Texas man kidnapped by Turkish Kurds while searching for Noah's ark

DALLAS (AP) — A Texas man was among three Americans kidnapped by Kurdish guerrillas last week while filming a television special about the quest for Noah's ark, a newspaper reported Monday.

Marvin T. Wilson of Garland, two other Americans, a Briton and an Australian traveling to what they believed was the site of the biblical Noah's ark were taken away by armed Kurds, officials said.

Friday night's kidnapping was the second time in a month that Turkish Kurds abducted Westerners. The rebels had not previously targeted foreigners in their 7-year-old campaign for independence. So far the struggle has claimed 3,000 lives.

Ten German tourists were kidnapped in eastern Turkey in early August and were released after a week.

Turkish soldiers and police have been using heli-

copters to comb rugged mountains in search of Wilson and the others. Meanwhile, Wilson's wife and children are waiting for word of his safety.

"I'm very calm," Renetta Wilson told the Dallas Times Herald. "I have a strong faith in a higher power that he's going to be fine."

Mrs. Wilson said she last saw her husband a week ago when he left on his expedition. Wilson was invited by the expedition's leader, Ronald Eldon Wyatt, a biblical archaeologist.

Wilson, a senior partner in a time management company, was acting as a business consultant on the trip.

Mrs. Wilson said neither she nor her husband had any reservations about this expedition. Now, she said she's sitting by the phone, surrounded by three of their five adult children.

Dangerous chemicals in fishing areas Scientists check seafood poisoning

HOUSTON (AP) — Scientists are taking another look at fishing areas in the Houston Ship Channel and upper Galveston Bay where health warnings were issued for possible dioxin contamination in seafood last year.

The Texas Department of Health last September warned people to limit themselves to one meal of fish or crab a month because of dioxin in fishing areas of the ship channel, upper bay and the Brazos and Neches rivers. Women of childbearing age and children were told not to eat any of the seafood.

Officials believe the dioxin comes from nearby paper mills, where the bleaching process produces the deadly chemical.

But recent studies of dioxin, which has been known as a cancer-causing killer for nearly a decade, have scientists questioning a link between the chemical and cancer.

Federal studies, including one by the Environmental Protection Agency over the next year, could make state officials reconsider its warning on Texas seafood.

"If the cancer potential factor changes or there is new information on dioxin, that is something to look at," said Kirk Wiles of the shellfish sanitation division of the state health department.

"The warnings were issued with the best science available at the time."

The Texas Water Commission has been the target of a lawsuit demanding that the standards for the chemical be changed.

"We're going to review any new data that comes in," John Hall, water commission chairman, told The Houston Post.

Bungee jumper falls short

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — A San Antonio man broke his leg bungee jumping over the Guadalupe River, the Guadalupe County Sheriff's Department said Monday.

Mark Ackerman, 31, suffered a dislocated knee, severe lacerations and a fracture to his right leg Saturday. He remained hospitalized Monday night at St. Luke's Hospital in San Antonio.

St. Luke's supervising nurse Ruth Dryer-Richard said Ackerman requested information about his condition not be released.

Emergency medical workers said Ackerman was trying to perform what's called a "rocket launch" bungee jump. Instead of jumping off a bridge over water, jumpers have their cords attached to the top of a crane and leap from the basket, also attached at the top.

Tafts said Ackerman snapped up about 200 feet.

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