

FORECAST

Increasing clouds with a 30% chance of afternoon rain  
High in the 60s

SPORTS

BACK ON TRACK  
A&M baseball team faces Houston Cougars today at 7p.m. in first SWC home game

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OPINION

"I respect people like David Duke (and) MLK, Jr. . . . because they stand by their beliefs - popular or not."  
- columnist Mike Sullivan

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# The Battalion

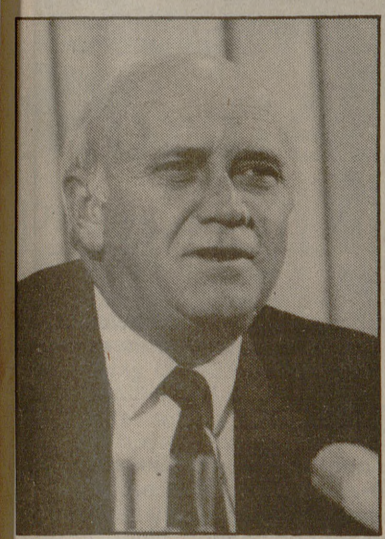
Vol. 91 No. 98

College Station, Texas

"Serving Texas A&M since 1893"

8 Pages

Friday, February 21, 1992



F.W. de Klerk

## de Klerk threatens to resign

S. African Conservative Party vows to reinstate apartheid

CAPE TOWN, South Africa (AP) — President F.W. de Klerk stunned the nation Thursday by announcing a whites-only referendum on ending apartheid, and he promised to resign if defeated. The move came a day after his ruling National Party lost its second special parliamentary election to the Conservative Party, which wants to reinstate apartheid and create a separate homeland for whites. The vote had been seen as a test of white support for political reforms that have been moving the country toward multiracial democracy. Now de Klerk will put the issue of apartheid to a whites-only vote. "If I lose that referendum, I will resign," clearing the way for a whites-only general election, de Klerk told Parliament.

"It's a question of honor," he said at a later news conference. De Klerk did not set a specific date for the referendum, but he indicated it could take place by the end of March. His action was seen as an attempt to outmaneuver pro-apartheid forces while retaining white support. Polls say he is supported by a majority of whites. But the government's power base has been crumbling rapidly because of white unease over the rapid pace of political change and ending apartheid, the policy of racial separation in a country of 5 million whites and 30 million blacks. If de Klerk were forced to step down, his departure would throw political reform into chaos.

## Corps staff to disband five units

By Gina Howard  
The Battalion

Five units in the Texas A&M Corps of Cadets will be disbanded and absorbed into other units as part of a reorganization plan approved for next fall, the Corps commandant said Thursday. "Organization is really the key," said Gen. Thomas Darling. "One of the reasons we want to get this (reorganization plan) set is that we are in the process of choosing leadership for next year and we need to know what is the organization we are going to have." Two regiment units and three wing units will be dissolved, he said. Smaller units will simply be absorbed into larger ones to increase the size. The brigade and the band will not be affected. Plans for Corps reorganization began in January with junior and senior staff leaders joining with

Corps faculty members to come up with possible modifications. The changes, which were finalized last Friday, include dissolving several outfits in order for all Corps units to be of a larger, more standard size. Darling said the size decided on is 60 members per unit. He did not, however, specify which units would be disbanded. "We have some units in the Corps today that are very small," he said. "Some are so small that it is hard to field a fish intramural team. We selected sixty as the minimum size a unit should be." Darling said he has received some feedback from the plans already. "I get letters from former members of the units saying, 'Please don't disband this unit. It's got a great history,'" he said. "I hate to disband any unit, but the numbers are just not there."

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HUY NGUYEN/The Battalion

## Rollerblade blur

Clay Bryant, a senior wildlife and ecology major from Virginia Beach, Virginia, skates at Research Park Thursday afternoon.

## Corps commander promises cadets leadership, discipline

By Gina Howard  
The Battalion

The newly appointed Texas A&M Corps commander said his new job is to give all cadets positive leadership and willpower. "I see my role as being to provide the opportunity for all cadets to have an environment that is conducive to leadership, self-confidence, and self-discipline development," said Matthew Michaels, Corps commander for 1992-93. "I want to maintain a motivational atmosphere. Looking after our own people - especially freshmen - should be a top priority."

Michaels, a senior wildlife and fisheries sciences major from Houston, will be in charge of all of the units in the Corps and run the day-to-day business of the Corps. "I will have my staff to report on their area of expertise and give me advice so that I can make the best decisions"

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## Greeks seek character, not race, members say

By Tanya Sasser  
The Battalion

Fraternities are often viewed as elitist or even racist organizations, but at Texas A&M, men are pledged on the basis of their personal qualities, not skin color, fraternity members said. "We look for a well-rounded person as far as their education and background," said Chris Chambers, president of Sigma Phi Epsilon, which has two black members. "We're not prejudiced against anybody." Mike Leese, coordinator of Greek affairs, said black men pledging traditionally white fraternities are fairly common at A&M. "There is more 'crossing over' with blacks pledging white fraternities than vice versa," Leese said. "These men should be pledged by what kind of person they are and not by what color they are." Randall Gibson, a Puerto Rican member of Omega Psi Phi, a black fraternity, said he never considered pledging a traditionally white fraternity, but color wasn't the issue.

"I never looked at any of the white fraternities," Gibson said. "They didn't really conform to what I believed in." Gibson said he liked the brotherhood he saw in Omega Psi Phi. "I saw a common bond and I know wherever I go, I have a friend," Gibson said. Lonnie Sandars, a black member of Kappa Sigma, a traditionally white fraternity, said he didn't really think color was an issue when he decided to rush. "I used to work at Bennigan's and a couple of guys from work asked me to rush Kappa Sigma," Sandars said. "So I did." Mike Leese said the Interfraternity Council does not have any rules or restrictions on this situation. "The only policy from nationals is that you can accept anybody of any race, creed, or religion," Leese said. Chambers said color is not an issue when men rush Sigma Phi Epsilon. "We just look for a person that comes out and feels comfortable and fits in with everybody," Chambers said. "He wouldn't get treated any different just because he was black."

## In Advance Cut-a-Thon to fund bone marrow transplant

A Cut-A-Thon to benefit cancer patient Becky Hubbard will be held Sunday, February 23, from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. at Benefield and Company, 4417 S. Texas in Bryan. Anyone who donates \$15 or more to the Becky Hubbard Benefit will receive a free shampoo and haircut. Hubbard is on leave of absence from her job at the Texas A&M Research Foundation Ocean Drilling Program. She suffers from liposarcoma, a rare form of cancer. Her insurance company has denied coverage for the autologous bone marrow transplant and chemotherapy treatments recommended by her doctors. Proceeds from the benefit will go toward covering hospital costs.

## Panel advises limited usage OKs implants for cancer patients, research

BETHESDA, Md. (AP) — A panel of experts recommended unanimously Thursday that the government allow silicone gel breast implants only for experiments and for women needing breast reconstruction. That advice, if followed by the Food and Drug Administration, means implants would no longer be performed just for cosmetic reasons. Women wanting to have their breasts enlarged represent 80 percent of the million who now carry the implants in their bodies. The rest have implants because their breasts had been deformed or were removed because of cancer. Nancy Dubler, a lawyer and one of nine voting members of the 24-person panel, said the recommendation of restrictions "responds to science on the one hand and compassion on the other." Initially, five of the nine voted for the proposed restriction. The other four did not vote. The committee then discovered that six votes were needed for passage. The issue was reopened and, after several minutes of discussion, another vote was taken. That tally: 9-0.

An earlier vote rejecting an outright ban was also unanimous. The panel recommended that more studies be done on the implants and on the possible effects of the silicone gel on living tissue. While the recommendations are not binding on the FDA, the agency usually follows the recommendations of such committees. The FDA plans to issue its final decision within 60 days. Dr. Jules Harris, a voting member, said the evidence he has seen this week did not "provide the basis to conclude that silicone gel breast implants are safe and effective." "I do not find this evidence convincing but it is disturbing," Harris said. Through their questions and statements over the course of the hearings, the members indicated more sympathy for women needing breast reconstruction than for those who just wanted bigger breasts. Dr. Mary McGrath, a non-voting member and a professor of plastic surgery at George Washington University, complained that drawing that kind of distinction was "judgmental and pater-

nalistic." Earlier, the group's chairman said members did not have the evidence to conclude that leaks from the implants are linked to health problems such as cancer and autoimmune disease. "We have a possible association, and we need more research," said Dr. Elizabeth Connell, the chairman and a medical school professor. The panel also: — Decided the implants should not be relied upon for a lifetime and said women who have them, especially young women, should be prepared for the possibility that the devices may have to be replaced. The committee did not come up with an acceptable lifetime for the implants but urged women to consult their physicians. — Recommended that implant patients with no symptoms of problems not begin having routine mammograms before they normally would, often around the age of 35. The committee said the dangers from repeated radiation outweighed the known risks of the implants.