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surgeon general's warning
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The Battalion

Vol. 91 No. 135 College Station, Texas "Serving Texas A&M since 1893" 10 Pages Tuesday, April 21, 1992

Gas prices skyrocket in Moscow

MOSCOW (AP) — In the latest blow to price-battered Russians, Moscow authorities unexpectedly increased gasoline prices fivefold on Monday. Now it costs the average Russian a week's salary to fill the gas tank.
Motorists grumbled they would have to take on extra jobs to pay for gas — or just stop driving.
"I can't do without my car," moaned mechanic Vladimir Markarov. "We are going somehow to find ways to cope." He said he might use his car as a private taxi, or moonlight with extra car-repair jobs.
Prices for everything from clothing to cabbage have skyrocketed in Russia since January, when President Boris N. Yeltsin lifted decades of government price controls on most goods and services. Gasoline prices had already tripled before Monday.
Despite the latest price increase, there were long

lines at Moscow gas stations. Some frustrated drivers complained that state-owned gas stations shut down over the weekend rather so they didn't have to sell gas at the old prices.
Moscow has suffered gas shortages in recent weeks, with fuel being diverted to southern regions for spring planting. Russia, which has one of the world's largest known oil reserves, has seen production drop in recent years because of outdated equipment.
Before Monday, it cost about 48 rubles to fill the standard 10-gallon tank with the most commonly used gasoline. Now it costs 240 rubles — only \$2, but about a week's salary for the average Russian worker.
"It's an unpleasant and rather depressing feeling," said Vladimir Stukalov, a computer worker, waiting dejectedly in a two-hour line outside a Minskaya Street gas station in western Moscow.

Envoy pleads for cease-fire

Mediator attempts to arrange safe exit for Afghan leader

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP) — With Muslim guerrillas claiming they now control all major cities but Kabul, a U.N. special envoy pleaded Monday for a cease-fire by government forces and rival rebel groups.
Benon Sevan, who was trying to mediate a settlement of the nearly 14-year-old civil war before the fall of President Najibullah last week, said he was trying to negotiate safe passage out of the country for the ousted leader.
Sevan said agreement was close for an interim government to replace the Soviet-installed government, but a radical fundamentalist group rejected that idea. The

group, Hezb-e-Islami, threatened Monday to attack Kabul if the city was not surrendered to its fighters in one week.
A more moderate group, Jamiat-e-Islami, which is considered the best organized of Afghanistan's many rebel organizations, said its troops formed a protective ring outside the capital. Troops of the crumbling Communist government held the city itself.
Many people fear the civil war will degenerate into fighting among the various factions and turn this city of 1.5 million people into a battleground. An estimated 2 million Afghans already have died in the war and 5 million more

have fled their homes.
Sevan urged the rebels to put aside their "personal and political ambitions" and work out a peaceful transition to a new government.
"We are almost there. Don't risk destroying the chance for peace," said Sevan, who appeared in public for the first time since Najibullah gave up power and tried to flee the country Thursday with the U.N. envoy's help.
Nervousness has steadily increased in Kabul as the guerrillas have tightened their noose around the capital and seized several provincial towns in the four days since Najibullah's ouster.

Department of English runs short on funding

Committee considers summer course cuts

By Michael Sullivan
The Battalion
English classes for the summer semester at Texas A&M may soon be on the endangered species list because of funding cuts, the department head said Monday.
Dr. Larry Mitchell, head of the Department of English, said funding for all departments in the College of Liberal Arts has suffered badly under the budget crunch and his department may not be able to offer all the classes originally scheduled for this summer.
"We have discussed the possibility of a sort of Armageddon scenario, in which if the only way we could come up with the funds would be to cut from what we've got right now (this summer)," he said.
The Executive Committee of the Department of English is meeting today at 2 p.m. to discuss, among other things, the possible class cuts.
The classes hardest hit would be the large survey courses, but other offerings would also feel the crunch, Mitchell said.
Courses such as English 104: Freshman Composition, which is part of the core curriculum and required for all students; and English 301: Technical Writing, which is required in the Colleges of Engineering, Agriculture and Business are both threatened by the cuts, he said.
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DARRIN HILL/The Battalion

I scream, you scream. . .
Jessica B. Farrell, a junior journalism major from Dallas, celebrates the warm weather by eating a mint

chocolate chip ice cream cone outside Monday. Farrell says she eats an ice cream cone almost every day.

High court considers restrictions

Weighs limits on complaints concerning right-to-silence

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Supreme Court said Monday it will consider restricting defendants' opportunities to complain that their right to remain silent was violated.
At issue is whether severe new limits should be placed on federal courts' power to reverse state criminal convictions.
The justices agreed to hear Michigan authorities' arguments that federal courts should not be allowed to second-guess state judges who uphold police interrogation tactics.
In its 1966 ruling in *Miranda vs. Arizona*, the high court said suspects in police custody may not be questioned unless they are told of their rights to remain silent, have a lawyer present and have a free lawyer appointed if they cannot afford one.
Confessions or other evidence obtained in violation of the *Miranda* ruling, which is based on the Constitution's Fifth Amendment protection against self-incrimination, cannot be used at trial.
The question in the Michigan case is whether defendants can turn to federal judges for help after "a full and fair" state court review determines their *Miranda* rights were not violated.
The Supreme Court in 1976 barred federal courts from reviewing Fourth Amendment claims by state prisoners who say their convictions were tainted by unreasonable police searches, after state courts have rejected those claims.
The high court several times in recent years has declined invitations from state prosecutors to extend its 1976 decision to alleged Fifth Amendment violations. In the Michigan case it now will consider taking that step. A decision is expected sometime next year.
State prisoners file about 10,000 such federal court appeals a year. The high court has been told by legal experts that federal judges overturn convictions in about 400 of those cases.
The court also acted on four race-relations cases Monday, two school desegregation disputes and two affirmative action controversies.

Japan signals end of plans for plutonium production

TOKYO (AP) — Japan signaled Monday that it may shelve its controversial plan to produce plutonium for power plants, a program that critics have warned could result in a dangerous stockpile of the highly radioactive fuel.
Takao Ishiwatari, president of the quasi-governmental Power Reactor and Nuclear Fuel Development Corp., indicated the change was prompted in part by the dismantling of some U.S. and Soviet nuclear warheads.
The disarmament program will increase the world supply of plutonium, which can be used for weapons as well as reactor fuel, unlike the uranium used in most commercial nuclear plants.
"We have to think of what the U.S. is going to do with this weapons material," Ishiwatari told reporters. "Japan should make some contributions in this field."
Ishiwatari, however, reaffirmed his agency's commitment to the plutonium-powered nuclear pro-

gram. The Japanese commercial nuclear industry is the only one that envisions relying mainly on plutonium fuel.
Japan's plan to produce and import tons of plutonium has been criticized by the International Atomic Energy Agency, anti-nuclear activists and other governments.
They contend Japan has overestimated its needs and will end up with a big surplus, increasing the chance of accidents or thefts by terrorists.
"If this is the official attitude, then the Japanese government half admits they are going to have surplus plutonium that they cannot consume," said Jinzaburo Takagi, a physicist and anti-nuclear activist.
Because of plutonium's dual uses, controlling its spread has become a key concern of the United Nations since the breakup of the Soviet Union and allegations of secret nuclear weapons programs in Iraq and North Korea.

Committee prepares for Muster



Battalion photo

A candle is lit and held in memory of A&M students who have passed away during the last calendar year.

By Julie Polston
The Battalion
The nearly 8,000 students, faculty, friends and family attending the annual Muster ceremony this evening will only see the final product. Most people are not aware of the time and effort necessary to ensure the success of the event.
Every year on April 21, students and former students gather to honor Aggies who have died over the past year. This evening at 7 p.m. in G. Rollie White Coliseum, roll will be called and friends or family will answer "here" for the deceased.
The Muster Committee is made up of seven sub-chairpersons over five different subcommittees, and includes general members as well, chairwoman Jeni Briscoe said.
These areas include public awareness, finance, host and reception, programs, and speaker selection. The committee begins preparing for the one-day event in early fall.
Seth Dockery, subchairman of speaker selection, said the committee began the process of choosing a keynote speaker in October. In January, the committee decided on Frank W. Cox III, class of '65.

"Mr. Cox epitomizes what the Muster Committee wanted for this year's ceremony: a man who is motivational, inspirational and has a sincere devotion to the spirit of Aggieland," Dockery said.
Cox, founder of the management consulting firm Source Of Success, was head yell leader and a member of the Ross Volunteers during his 'Ol' Army' days. Cox has since written a book about his Aggie experience called "I Bleed Maroon."
Other subcommittees, such as host and reception, wait until mid-spring to begin the majority of their work. The host and reception subcommittee is responsible for contacting the families of students to be honored at the ceremony.
The committee begins this process just before spring break, and mails information packets with a general letter to the families to explain the day's events, said Maureen Gannon, a co-subchairwoman.
"It is important to explain the history of Muster to the families, because a lot of the families are not Aggies, and they don't know what Muster is all about," Gannon said.
This year about 50 families are expected to at-

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