

The Battalion

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New regents comment on position, future of Texas A&M

By STEPHANIE PATTILLO

The Battalion

The new members of the Texas A&M Board of Regents are from different cities and have different backgrounds but have one belief in common - the needs of students should come first.

M. Guadalupe Lopez Rangel of Corpus Christi, T. Michael O'Connor of Victoria and John H. Lindsey of Houston were appointed by Gov. Ann Richards two weeks ago to serve on the Board until Feb. 1999.

Rangel, an English instructor who has taken a leave of absence from the Corpus Christi State School, is the first Hispanic woman to serve on the A&M Board of Regents.

Rangel, 43, said she is looking forward to working with the student body to make the A&M System stronger.

"I will work hard as a regent to find solutions to students' problems," she said. "I understand students very much and have counseled and listened to them."

Financial problems students encounter will be another of Rangel's focuses.

Getting through college is more difficult today than it was 20 years ago because of the poor state of the economy, she said.

"More students today have severe economic problems than in the past," she said. "These problems are put in the classroom when you have older students and students who have to hold down two jobs."

O'Connor, 38, a rancher and the youngest board member to date, said working toward student enhancement is a priority.

"I haven't been gone (from A&M) all that long," he said. "The class of '77 may seem cen-

turies away, but it's only been 15 years since I was a student there. There's been a lot of changes, and I'd like to see more emphasis toward student development."

As an institution grows, often research and development become the important emphasis, O'Connor said.

"I think the University as a system and especially in College Station has to change with the times, but not lose focus of the tradition and what A&M's all about," he said.

With the increasing budget cuts at the state capitol, education must be seen as an investment, not an expense, O'Connor said.

"So many times when there's budgetary problems, they (legislators) look at the expense-related and not the enhancement of edu-

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About being a regent...

"I have a knowledge of the University and I know the players involved. Knowing the other regents well will be an asset to me. I think they will feel I am someone who can be trusted."

-John H. Lindsey

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Nursing homes aided by truancy program

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

HOUSTON - A new program that offers truant public school students the option of working at local nursing homes has proved successful for both the youths and elderly residents, officials say.

The program was the brainchild of Harris County nursing home coordinator Barbara Cowart. In January she approached Peace Justice Molly Maness of Pasadena, who hears truancy cases.

"What was missing in this program was some young faces," Cowart said. "These kids have so much energy. I thought, what if you could put that energy into positive action."

Maness agreed, and schoolchildren caught violating school attendance laws now are offered the option of after-school-hours community service instead of fines charged to their parents.

"It's the most bizarre thing," Maness said about the notion of closing such a wide generation gap in the name of alternative sentencing.

"But she added that it works for everyone involved."

"They love it," she said. Thirteen-year-old Josephine knows why. The one-time truant, whose real name was withheld because she is a minor, said it's more than a matter of good deeds and new friendships.

Truants and nursing home residents have more in common than some people think, she said after completing 14 hours worth of nursing home duty.

"I'm a good listener, and that's what these people need is a listener and a person who will talk to them," Josephine said.

She said her peers also need someone to talk to.

"They need to say, like, 'Can we sit down and discuss all this?'" she said.

Some nursing homes in Pasadena, Deer Park and La Porte are participating in the program, which started Jan. 19. Since then, 18 truants have signed up.

They do chores ranging from reading to residents and helping

Waltrip wins Shootout



DARRIN HILL/The Battalion

Darrel Waltrip waves to cheering race fans after winning the ARCA-NASCAR Winston West Shootout at the Texas World Speedway Sunday. Waltrip, driving his Western Auto Car Supply sponsored Chevrolet Lumina, finished a full lap ahead of second place finisher Ken Schrader.

Communist power struggle Yeltsin tries to resist overthrow

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MOSCOW - Russia's standing legislature took the first step Sunday toward impeaching President Boris Yeltsin and possibly putting his top aides on trial for usurping power.

Coming a day after Yeltsin declared emergency rule in an attempt to sidestep legislative blocks to his economic reforms, the Supreme Soviet's action appeared to cement a stalemate.

Yeltsin's chief legal adviser, Sergei Shakhrai, said earlier that the president would not step down if impeached.

Outside the parliament building, known as the "White House," thousands of placard-waving protesters took to the



Yeltsin

streets to jeer or cheer Yeltsin. A heavy police contingent, with more than 100 jeeps and bus loads of militiamen in reserve, kept the two groups apart.

No violence was reported.

Defense Minister Pavel Grachev called for a compromise in the fight over dividing up governmental powers and promised the army would stay out of the dispute. But he warned that "tempers are running high" in some units, especially in the Moscow Military District.

"Any attempt to split the army forces could lead to bloodshed," Grachev said at the emergency session of the legislature, which is dominated by Communists elected before the Soviet Union collapsed.

Yeltsin's chief rival, parliament speaker Ruslan Khasbulatov, and other political opponents accused the president of usurping power and leading the nation toward civil war.

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More cult releases FBI sees freeing of 7 members as sign of improving negotiations with Koresh

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WACO - At least seven more Branch Davidian cult members left the group's armed compound Sunday, a quickening tempo of releases that the FBI said is a positive sign.

"The quicker it picks up, the better the situation is, and we're getting more and more out," said FBI agent Richard Swensen as word spread that two more women left the compound about 11 a.m. Sunday.

Rita Riddle, 35, and Gladys Ottman, 67, were whisked away in a red car to McLennan County Jail. One of the women acknowledged a row of news reporters with a slight smile as the car sped by. They refused to comment to

reporters upon arrival at the jail. About 2:30 p.m., James Lawten, 70; Sheila Martin, 46; and Ofelia Santoyo, 62, left the compound, said FBI special agent Sharon Smith. As with previous releases, they were escorted by federal agents and a state trooper's car and also were taken to the jail.

Earlier, about 12:30 a.m., Victorine Hollingsworth, 59, and Annetta Richards, 64, left the compound, Swensen said. Ms. Hollingsworth was taken to Hillcrest Baptist Medical Center for an examination because of an existing heart condition, Swensen said.

"I think they (cult members)

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Houston officer shot twice while at desk job

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

HOUSTON - A police officer shot twice in the head while working a desk job for a sick colleague remained in critical condition Sunday, authorities said.

Dan Vaughan, 36, a 10-year veteran with the Houston Police Department, was shot in the forehead and jaw with a .380-caliber pistol Saturday by a man who opened fire at the South Central Police Substation.

The man walked into the substation, calmly asked to see a supervisor and then shot Vaughan with a gun he had pulled from a backpack. He fled the station, but

was arrested a few minutes later. Charges against the 22-year-old suspect were pending, police said.

"I don't think (Vaughan) ever had a chance to reach for his gun. He was holding some paperwork," said Sgt. J.E. Zitzmann.

Vaughan underwent surgery Saturday at Ben Taub Hospital, where he remained in critical condition Sunday. The shooting occurred shortly before noon.

Houston Police Department spokesman John Leggio said the gunman had asked to see a lieutenant, and one of the two female officers in the front office called a

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Perot returns to television

Businessman seeks national support of UWSA's agenda

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON - Ross Perot returned to prime-time TV Sunday, urging Americans to vote for deficit reduction and government reform - and to join the expanding rolls of his national political organization.

Billionaire Perot distributed more than 30 million ballots in advance of the 30-minute "national referendum" he paid to air on NBC. Leaders of his United We Stand America group organized events nationwide to help fill the mails with a positive response.

Given those efforts, the survey's unscientific nature and the tone of Perot's questions, no one

should be surprised if the public gives Perot's agenda a resounding "Yes!"

Even as they criticized the format, the political parties and analysts were watching closely, still fascinated by the man who sent the 1992 race into so many confounding turns.

"The Perot people are still holding as a group," said President Clinton's pollster, Stanley Greenberg, although he said a majority support Clinton's economic program.

Worried that Perot might attack Clinton's initiative, the Democratic National Committee sent a memo to leading Democrats last week urging them to respond quickly to any criticisms.

But, as has been his trademark since the election, Perot aimed most of his barbs at Congress.

"Watch Congress: they talk about savings but what they want to do is spend," Perot said in a transcript of the program released by his office. "They treat money like it falls out of the sky. But it comes from hard-working people."

With his trademark charts and folksy twang, Perot promoted the staples of his agenda: campaign finance and lobbying reform; a balanced budget amendment; and cuts in staffs, salaries and perks in Congress and at the White House.

Perot's format was denounced

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