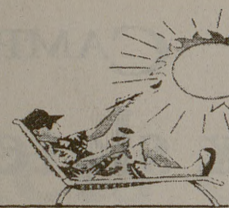


Baby got back

Pencil-thin? Columnist Julia Stavenhagen (and at least one model) ain't down with that
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Weather

Mostly sunny, on Wednesday with lows near 70 and highs near 90
— National Weather Service

Rockets one game away

Houston will face Utah today at The Summit to decide the Western Conference champion.
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THE BATTALION

TUESDAY
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"Serving Texas A&M since 1893"

Friends, faculty cope with students' murder

By James Bernsen
THE BATTALION

Students, faculty and staff are still coping with the murder of two Texas A&M University seniors in DeSoto, Texas last week.

Reginald Broadus and Crystal Miller were found dead in a field in the Red Bird Mall area of Dallas last Monday, apparently robbed of valuables and Broadus' car.

DeSoto police arrested two individuals last Friday based on evidence found in the car.

Kevin Carreathers, director of multicultural services, said Broadus and Miller were outstanding as leaders and as people.

"They were people with bright futures ahead of them," he said.

"With Reginald, we were both in the

same fraternity," he said. "He was an active student leader, a member of the Prime Time Posse acting group — and you could just go on and on."

Chris Alvarado, chair of the Committee for the Awareness of Mexican-American Culture, said he interacted with Broadus through his work on the Black Awareness Committee.

"He was quiet but had a very strong personality," he said. "He was very sure why he did certain things and didn't back down or compromise on anything."

Sheri Schmidt, coordinator of Diversity Education, said she worked with Miller through the ExCel program, for which Schmidt was adviser.

"Crystal was extremely energetic," she said. "She was always excited and wanted to share things with others." Alvarado said his first reaction to news

"Crystal was extremely energetic. She was always excited and wanted to share things with others."

— Sheri Schmidt, coordinator of Diversity Education

"It was just a senseless act. Broadus overcame all the obstacles for people of color only to become just another statistic."

— Chris Alvarado, chair of CAMAC

of the murders was disbelief.

"It was just a senseless act," he said. "Broadus overcame all the obstacles for people of color only to become just another statistic."

"He personified the words 'student leader,'" Alvarado said. "He did it all because he wanted to."

Ron Going, a junior philosophy major, said he also worked extensively

with Broadus through the Diversity and Equality Commission.

"I came to work on Tuesday and found out," he said. "I was just dazed."

"We don't really know many details," he said. "All we know is the consequences. There's a lot of pain there, but as far as emotion, you're just numb."

Going said it will take a long time before he can deal with the loss.

He said he was particularly saddened by the story because it is not just one isolated incident.

"It happens a lot," he said, "and you only realize it when it happens to someone you know."

Schmidt said the tragedy only proves no one is immune to violence.

Going said something should be done so that Broadus and Miller are not forgotten.

"We have to focus on positive things to remember them by," he said.

Schmidt said she has spent the last few days coming to grips with the tragedy and trying to think of something that can be done to remember the two.

"A lot of students have called from here and at home not knowing how to deal with it," she said. "They were two top-notch individuals, and we're really going to miss them."



Darrin Hill/THE BATTALION

Defense! Defense!

Sean Cronin, a senior English major from San Antonio, tries to block his friend Matt Balfour during a friendly game of basketball outside Walton Hall on Monday. The two said they were trying to get in a little exercise and a studybreak during the first day of classes.

Tax may snuff some smokers

A&M researcher says proposed cigarette tax could decrease nationwide consumption by 30 percent

COLLEGE STATION (AP) — If Congress adopts a proposed \$1.25 increase in tax on a pack of cigarettes, it could cut cigarette consumption by as much as 30 percent across the United States, a researcher says.

"I don't think there's anything to mitigate the impact of such a large price increase," said Dr. Thomas Blaine, a consumer economist with the Texas A&M University department of recreation, park and tourism sciences.

Blaine, a specialist in leisure-related consumer spending and an expert in domestic cigarette consumption, bases his estimate on studies showing that for every 1 percent increase in price, there is a half-percent decrease in consumption.

A 10 percent increase in price, for instance, would result in a 5 percent decrease in consumption, Blaine said.

Any tax increase on cigarettes would probably be passed on to the consumer because manufacturers had already cut prices by some 40 cents a pack in the fall of 1993, Blaine said. His current estimates are based on a per-pack cost of \$1.80.

A 75-cent tax hike would mean a price increase of approximately 42 percent, likely resulting in a consumption decrease of 21 percent, he said.

A \$1.25 tax increase would cause prices to surge approximately 69 percent, with consumption likely falling almost 35 percent.

After President Bill Clinton proposed an additional 75-cent per-pack tax on cigarettes, Congress increased the proposal to an additional \$1.25 a pack. Either way, the tax would have a significant impact on consumption, Blaine said.

Cigarettes are currently taxed at 24 cents a pack.

The tax increase was proposed by the House Subcommittee on Health as a means of paying for changes in national health care proposed in House Bill 3600. The bill should be considered by the House Ways and Means Committee in June, a committee spokeswoman said.

Blaine had earlier done studies predicting a consumption decrease to 106 packs per year, or 2,120 cigarettes, per capita among all adults by the year 2000. That's down from current figures of 2,550 cigarettes a year, or 144 packs, for each U.S. adult.

Approximately 25 percent of the adult U.S. population smokes, officials say. That makes the aver-

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Nation of Islam member attacked

Khallid Muhammad shot by former NOI member James Bess

SEATTLE (AP) — The man arrested in the shooting of former Nation of Islam spokesman Khallid Abdul Muhammad has appeared frequently on public-access television as a preacher of his own variant of Islam.

James Edward Bess, 43, once headed a local branch of the Nation of Islam but was kicked out of the faction three years ago. He also is known as Abdul Haqq Mohammed and goes by Brother James X on his Seattle TV shows.

Bess is accused of shooting Muhammad and three others Sunday after Muhammad spoke at the University of California, Riverside. Bess was beaten by a crowd before police dragged him away.

He was booked for investigation of attempted murder.

Bess has no arrest record in his hometown, police Sgt. Ed Streidinger said.

"It's public knowledge that he was at odds with the people running the Nation of Islam," he said.

In a column entitled "Prophecy Fulfilled At Last," in the Oct. 2, 1991 edition of The Facts, a weekly black community newspaper, Bess wrote that Nation of Islam founder Elijah Muham-

mad was the subject of a death plot "which was hatched by the American government. However, this plot did not end with only the American government, but involved the Vatican City (the Catholic Hierarchy), her branches, worldwide Communism, worldwide Jewry, excluding an honorable few who await the 'Messiah.' Also, the tentacles of the 'death plot' reached into the Nation Of Islam."

In the same issue of the newspaper, Bess was attacked in a letter signed only Jamaatul Ikhlas, translated as "community for purity in worship," for a previous column in which he was accused of making an unnecessary public defamation of Imam W. Deen Moham. ed.

Former student recovering from lightning accident

A&M graduate in critical condition after struck by lightning

By Sara Israwi
THE BATTALION

A Texas A&M University graduate is in critical condition at Scott and White Hospital in Temple. He was struck by lightning last Saturday in Tabor, a few miles outside of Bryan.

Witnesses said Varghese Thomas was at a friend's outdoor wedding when the thunderstorm began.

The lightning struck near the neck and shoulder area, leading doctors to believe it was Thomas' chain necklace that attracted the lightning, and not an umbrella, as was reported earlier by other media on Monday.

Scott and White spokeswoman Shirley Meadows said Monday night that Thomas was in critical but stable condition and was improving.

Thomas suffers from second degree burns on his chest, neck and left arm.

Cindi Erickson, Thomas' girlfriend, said, "Contrary to early media reports, he was

"The doctors cannot say one way or another, but signs look good that there will not be any brain damage."

— Pastor Ray Muenich of Fellowship Community Church

never in a coma. The burns internally and externally both seem to be minimal."

However, Thomas is still in the intensive care unit at Scott and White.

As of Monday afternoon, Thomas was able to acknowledge people when they spoke to him and was able to squeeze their hands.

Erickson said doctors are hopeful that Thomas may be home by the end of the week.

"They have taken him off the respirator, and now he just has an oxygen mask," she said.

Pastor Ray Muenich of Fellowship Community Church was beginning the wedding ceremony when Thomas was struck.

Muenich reported that although lightning usually damages internal organs, doctors at Scott and White Hospital have confirmed that the lightning didn't harm Thomas' internal organs.

"The EKG showed no signs of permanent heart damage," he said. "The doctors cannot say one way or another, but signs look good that there will not be any brain damage."

Thomas, 27, received his master's degree in industrial engineering from A&M.

His brother will be arriving within the next 48 hours from India, where Varghese is from.

Thomas was planning to leave for Missouri on Thursday, where he was offered a job.



John Williams/THE BATTALION

Puppy play

Alexis Hill, a senior education major from Longview, and her golden retriever, Scout, return from playing frisbee and catch at Research Park on Monday afternoon.

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