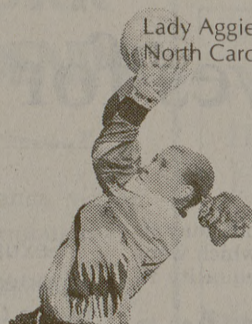


THE BATTALION



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"Serving Texas A&M since 1893"

Charges upgraded against former student

Moore faces murder trial, accused of disposing newborn baby in trash

By Michele Brinkmann
THE BATTALION

A Brazos County grand jury upgraded charges Thursday against a 21-year-old Texas A&M student accused of killing her infant girl in Mosher Hall in March. Stephanie Moore, a sophomore general studies major, was indicted in July on a charge of voluntary manslaughter, but was charged Thursday with murder. Brazos County District Attorney Bill Turner said that after the grand jury indicted Moore in July, his office decided to upgrade

the charges after an internal investigation. "Two people in my office did an in-depth investigation into the law," he said, "and found that the evidence was sufficient for the charge of murder."

On Thursday, the district attorney's office re-presented its evidence to the same grand jury that decided in July to indict Moore on the charge of voluntary manslaughter. Turner said no new evidence was presented to the grand jury.

Turner said it is not unusual to reindict a person. "It happens from time to time," he said. "It is not frequent nor infrequent."

Moore will stand trial on charges of killing and disposing of her newborn baby in a garbage bag in Mosher Hall.

A Mosher Hall resident called Emergency Medical Personnel, who found Moore in her room with blood on the floor.

Moore told EMS that she was "just ill" and did not mention the birth. An autopsy determined the infant was born alive and died of suffocation.

The University Police Department conducted the investigation and reported its findings to Turner earlier this year.

UPD Director Bob Wiatt said Turner thought the original charge of voluntary manslaughter was inadequate.

"Turner thought the original evidence presented to the grand jury warranted a greater charge," Wiatt said. "He presented the same evidence to the grand jury, and it returned a higher degree of charge."

Under the new Texas Penal Code, which took effect Sept. 1, the penalty for first-degree murder is five to 99 years or life in prison and a possible addition of a fine not to exceed \$10,000.

A trial date has not been set.

Pennsylvania plane crash kills 131

USAir jet nose-dives into field killing all aboard

ALIQUIPPA, Pa. (AP) — A USAir jetliner nose-dived into a ravine while trying to land near Pittsburgh on Thursday, killing all 131 people on board. It was the deadliest crash in the United States in seven years.

Flight 427 originated in Chicago and was to stop in Pittsburgh before continuing to West Palm Beach, Fla.

"I looked up and there it was," said Tom Michel, who was at a gas station near the crash site. "It was just coming straight down. I was screaming for everybody to run. It looked like it was under full power and he just went straight in."

Air traffic controllers said

they lost contact with the plane when it was about seven miles from the airport, said Pat Boyle, a spokesman for the Allegheny County Department of Aviation. There were no indications of any problems on the flight and a report of an explosion before the crash could not be confirmed.

Michel said there was a "big boom and the sky lit up. There was black smoke everywhere and that was it."

Witnesses reported a gruesome carnage in a clearing on a heavily-wooded ravine.

Emergency crews put out the fire and the search was called off about two hours after the crash. The area was sealed off for the night, but off-road vehicles were spotted heading to the crash site.

MSC's Open House gives organizations, students chance to 'expose themselves'

By Amanda Fowle
THE BATTALION

Students searching for organizations to join this semester can visit the MSC's Open House Sunday from 2 to 6 p.m.

About 300 organizations will have booths set up throughout the MSC with the theme "Expose Yourself."

Students have the opportunity to "expose" themselves to organizations, and organizations can "expose" themselves to students at the event.

Liz Rayburn, director of public relations for the MSC Council, said many types of organizations will be represented at Open House.

"There is a total range of organizations represented at Open House," she said. "It would take students years to find out about this many organizations on their own."

Open House is held at the beginning of each semester to give students an easy way to see the different organizations that are a part of A&M.

"Open House was started so that students wouldn't have to feel intimidated by walking into a meeting for a group without knowing anything about it or anyone there," Rayburn said.

She said that 20,000 students are expected to walk through the MSC during Open House.

Freshman Cameron Slocum said he will attend Open House to visit the booths and choose which organizations he will join.

"I don't know what kinds of organizations the University has to offer," he said, "so this will give me the chance to see most of them and decide which ones I want to participate in."

Open House also benefits the organizations by giving them exposure they would not otherwise get, Rayburn said.

"The organizations could not have a better outlet to expose themselves," she said. "There is no other way to reach that many people in that short amount of time."

Eric Gruetzner, president of Aggie Democrats, said the organization has sponsored booths at Open House for many years because of the exposure it gives them.

"We've had good feedback every year," he said. "It gives us a chance to tell people face-to-face what our club is all about. We can tell them what we are working on for this year."

This year, during Open House, the Off-Campus Aggies and the Residence Hall Association will host a Welcome Back Bash outside in the Rudder Fountain area.

Texas crime rate on the decline, DPS reports says

AUSTIN (AP) — Crime in Texas declined in all categories during the first half of 1994, the Department of Public Safety reported today.

"We are encouraged to report that for the last 2 1/2 years, Texas has experienced a continuous decline in the volume of crime," said Col. James R. Wilson, DPS director.

The number of crimes reported in the state's crime index was down 7 percent from January to June, compared with the same six-month period of 1993, the DPS said. The 1994 figure was 530,561 compared with 570,367 the previous year.

The crime rate — crimes per 100,000 population — dropped 8.9 percent.

Wilson said that for the first time since 1976, when the DPS began collecting Uniform Crime Reporting statistics, all seven of the major crime categories showed declines.

However, he said, a major worry to law enforcement officials is a rising number of juvenile arrests.

"It is clear from the rising arrest figures that juvenile activity is increasingly a problem for law enforcement," he said.

Overall, the state's rate for violent crime was down 5.6 percent.

The rate for murder fell 10 percent, reported rapes dropped 7.5 percent, robbery showed a 6.9 percent decrease and aggravated assault was down 4.7 percent.

The property crime rate dropped 9.3 percent, with burglary down 11.9 percent, larceny-theft down 7.7 percent and motor vehicle theft down 13.5 percent.

As for the volume of crime, the total number of violent crimes showed a 3.6 percent reduction from 67,306 to 64,864, and property crimes showed a 7.4 percent drop, from 503,061 to 465,697.

Pope calls off public Mass in Bosnia, cites fear of safety for crowds as reason for absence

SARAJEVO, Bosnia-Herzegovina (AP) — Tearful and angry faithful gathered at Sarajevo's cathedral Thursday for a Mass left hollow by the absence of the pope, as John Paul II, grounded in Italy by security fears, called on Serbs, Croats and

The pope addressed the people of Sarajevo on radio and television and delivered the same sermon he had planned to give if he had been present in the Bosnian capital.

"The spiral of 'wrongs' and 'punishments' will never stop if forgiveness does not come at a certain point," he said. "To forgive does not mean to forget. If memory is the law of history, forgiveness is the power of God."

Matilda Sagolj said she cried when she heard the pope's words in Serbo-Croatian, broadcast from the courtyard of his summer residence in Castel Gandolfo, near Rome.

"I am sorry, I am so sorry," she said, breaking into tears again. "His arrival meant almost everything to me, and now I feel terrible."

A papal envoy, Monsignor Francesco Monterisi, said in Sarajevo that the pope still hoped to visit "in one of the next few days, in the near future." But with security still a nightmare, it was unclear what would make the pontiff change his mind.

Sarajevo has been under Serb siege since April 1992, when Bosnia's Serb minority rebelled against a decision by the republic's Muslims and Croats

to secede from Serb-dominated Yugoslavia. In the weeks preceding the pope's planned visit, shelling and gunfire around the capital intensified.

As if to underscore the danger, United Nations planes approaching the Sarajevo airport were fired upon Thursday, and two British NATO warplanes were targeted by surface-to-air missiles, apparently fired by Serbs. None of the planes were hit.

Sarajevans of all faiths, who had looked forward to the pope's visit as affirmation that they had not been forgotten by the world after 29 months of war, were angry over its cancellation. Most of their wrath was directed at the Serbs, who had said they could not guarantee the pope's safety, and the United Nations, whose security concerns contributed to the cancellation.

Archbishop Vinko Puljic, co-celebrant of the Mass, alluded to the pope's absence and the pain it had caused.

"The Holy Father was already in our minds, in our feelings, in our prayers," he told worshippers. "We are begging the powerful ones ... who prevented the Holy Father's visit ... don't allow the evil to spread further. Stop the evil so we could live like human beings."

Saying he was praying to God as the first Slavic pope, the Polish pontiff called for forgiveness on all sides in the conflict in former Yugoslavia, and offered a spiritual embrace to the city's Serbs and a wish of peace to Orthodox hierarchy.



Pope John Paul II



Stacy Cameron/The BATTALION

A little to the left

Lucia Bale, a Texas A&M computer science graduate student and pottery instructor at University Plus, begins work on a new project for her pottery class

Federal charges dropped against suspects in cross-country crime spree

ALBUQUERQUE (AP) — While an ex-convict and his teen-age companion suspected in a cross-country crime spree face prosecution in at least two states, federal authorities have for now dropped charges against them.

Federal charges of unlawful flight to avoid prosecution were dropped Wednesday against Lewis E. Gilbert, 22, and Eric A. Elliott, 16, both of Newcomerstown, Ohio, Assistant U.S. Attorney Robert Gorence said.

Both were charged Wednesday with first-degree murder in Oklahoma, where a police affidavit says the pair admitted shooting someone to death.

They were jailed Tuesday in New Mexico after troopers tracked them to a dusty highway culvert and arrested them.

They are charged with burglary and kidnapping in Ohio in the disappearance of a 79-year-old woman.

They are also suspected in the slaying

of an elderly couple in Missouri, though they have not been charged there.

"Now we have three states, from what I've heard, who can all fight over them," Gorence said.

And the federal investigation continues, with carjacking charges a possibility, Gorence said.

Federal authorities often use unlawful flight charges as a way to let the FBI help police track down dangerous fugitives, FBI agent Doug Beldon said.

"When that mission is accomplished, such as here, the unlawful flight charge is often dismissed. This enables the state to proceed against the suspects judicially," Beldon said.

Authorities believe Gilbert and Elliott met Aug. 15, the day Gilbert was released from prison in Ohio after serving time for boat theft. Elliott was awaiting trial on charges of breaking into a bowling alley.

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