

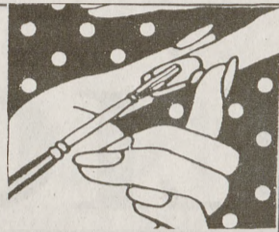
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Applications may be picked up in the Student Programs Office  
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Applications are due Monday, September 4 by 5:00 p.m.  
 Interviews will be September 5



**Orientation Meeting for all Potential Applicants:**  
 September 3rd, 7:00 p.m., 501 Rudder Tower

QUESTIONS? PLEASE CALL THE OPAS OFFICE  
 845-1661



Amy Browning, THE BATTALION

Dr. Robin Autenrieth shows off one of her trading cards on which she is featured. The cards will appear in stores this week.

**'Way Cool Scientist': Prof seeks to stimulate kids' science interest**

□ **Dr. Robin Autenrieth is featured on a trading card for children.**

By Javier Martinez  
 THE BATTALION

It may not be as valuable as a Babe Ruth rookie card, but a trading card with the picture of a Texas A&M professor may give children something just as valuable — an interest in science.

Dr. Robin Autenrieth, an associate professor of engineering, will appear on a trading card as a "Way Cool Scientist" for the Bill Nye the Science Guy television program.

The Sky Box Trading Cards, which bear a picture of Autenrieth along with a brief description of her research, will appear in stores this week.

The cards will have an easy experiment related to Autenrieth's work for kids to try at home.

Photographs for the card were taken in June, and Autenrieth received advanced copies two weeks ago.

"I thought I looked kind of dweeby," Autenrieth said. "But my daughters assured me I looked good."

Autenrieth was put on the card after Mike Downey, a sci-

ence writer for the Texas Engineering Experiment Station, suggested her to a Bill Nye science writer at a meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

Along with her husband, Dr. James Bonner, Autenrieth is currently researching biodegraders such as new strands of bacteria.

These biodegraders will be used to safely deal with toxic materials found in oil spills and outdated chemical weapons.

Other cards in the 94-card set will have stickers and punch-outs that can be made into mobiles. Topics will range from the human brain to the periodic table.

The cards are part of the program's plan to get children interested in science by dispelling stereotypes of scientists as "nerds."

"You are always combating that kind of stereotype," Downey said. "That's why we try and promote people like Robin."

Bill Nye the Science Guy airs on PBS at 4 p.m. on weekday afternoons, as well as on commercial cable networks.

Although this season's episodes have already been filmed, Autenrieth and Bonner are on the short list of featured "Way Cool Scientists" to appear on next season's shows.

**A&M professor leads search for TB vaccine**

□ **A task force is searching for a new vaccine to combat the disease that kills more than 3 million people a year.**

By Maria Jimena Albarracin  
 THE BATTALION

A World Health Organization, WHO, task force led by a Texas A&M professor is searching for new vaccines for tuberculosis.

Tuberculosis, a lung disease, affects 1.9 billion people around the world and 15 million people in the United States.

About 26,000 new cases of TB are reported yearly in the United States. TB is spread through the air, and there have been recent outbreaks in hospitals and prisons in the United States.

Dr. David McMurray, the chairman of the task force and an A&M medical microbiology and immunology professor, said a lack of funding for treatment of the disease has deterred the development of a vaccine.

"In the early 1970s, it appeared as though tuberculosis was on the way out as a health threat in this country," McMurray said, "and when that determination was made, funding for tuberculosis research dropped almost to zero. Until the late 1980s, there was very little money being spent on TB research."

In the late 1980s, a resurgence of TB spurred an increase in funding for research. Part of these funds went into development of a vaccine.

One vaccine, the BCG vaccine, is not used in the United States because it presents risks, especially in people whose immune systems have been weakened by the HIV virus or other conditions.

McMurray, who has chaired the WHO task force for four months, has been working on a vaccine for two years. The task force coordinates vaccine development and testing activities in order to prevent unnecessary duplication of information.

The laboratory is one of six in the United States with facilities to test the bacteria responsible for TB. "Today, we have tested a total of 13 experimental vaccines in this model system," McMurray said. "Several of them give a level of protection which is equal to, if not better than, the BCG vaccine."

Graduate students have been taking an active role in the investigation. The team of researchers is composed of a full-time technician and five doctoral students.

One doctoral student, Guixiang Dai, came to work with McMurray in 1993 from his home country of the People's Republic of China where he had been researching TB. "I am very confident in the research," Dai said.

The team has been working on a guinea pig model of pulmonary tuberculosis, which is widely recognized as the most relevant model of TB in small animals because it mimics the development of TB in humans.

"We have a very human-like disease which is produced in the guinea pig," McMurray said. "If we vaccinate the guinea pigs before we infect them and the vaccine protects them, then we have a high likelihood of expecting the same result in humans."

**THE BATTALION**

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**First Meeting : Sept. 5**  
**8:30 p.m., 601 Rudder**

Then go to Silver Taps.

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- HAUNTED HOUSE
- BONFIRE BUDDIES
- MISTLETOE BASH
- OFF CAMPUS HOUSING FAIR
- REPLANT
- MARDI GRAS
- ALL NIGHT FAIR
- BIG EVENT
- SPRING BANQUET
- DINNER CLUB
- INTRAMURAL SPORTS

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• PARENTS WEEKEND GOLF TOURNAMENT

For more information, please call the OGA office at 845-0688