

AGGIE life

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Art Fest

Art Fest '96 encourages variety of entries

By John LeBas
THE BATTALION

The MSC Visual Arts Committee is spotlighting student artists in Art Fest '96, its annual visual arts competition.

Kathy Aceves, chair of the visual arts committee and a junior marketing and management major, said the competition allows any Texas A&M student to pursue interests in visual arts. "Art Fest is a student art competition — the only one on campus," she said. "It's open to all Texas A&M students. It gives people who are still continuing their work (from high school) a chance to display their work and get some money." Artists can enter almost any kind of work in Art Fest

in any of several categories. "We have six different categories: drawing, painting, mixed media, sculpture, and color and black and white photography," Aceves said. "It's \$5 an entry, up to four entries per category. Students should bring their entries to the Visual Arts office, located upstairs from Rumours in 227 MSC between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Entries can be made now through April 1.

Aceves said Art Fest helps awareness of visual artists at A&M, where they may otherwise go unappreciated. "A lot of people around campus think that maybe art isn't important or doesn't relate to their lives," she said. "This really gives people a chance to see that everybody does art and that it can relate to everybody. People from all types of majors enter, from engineer-

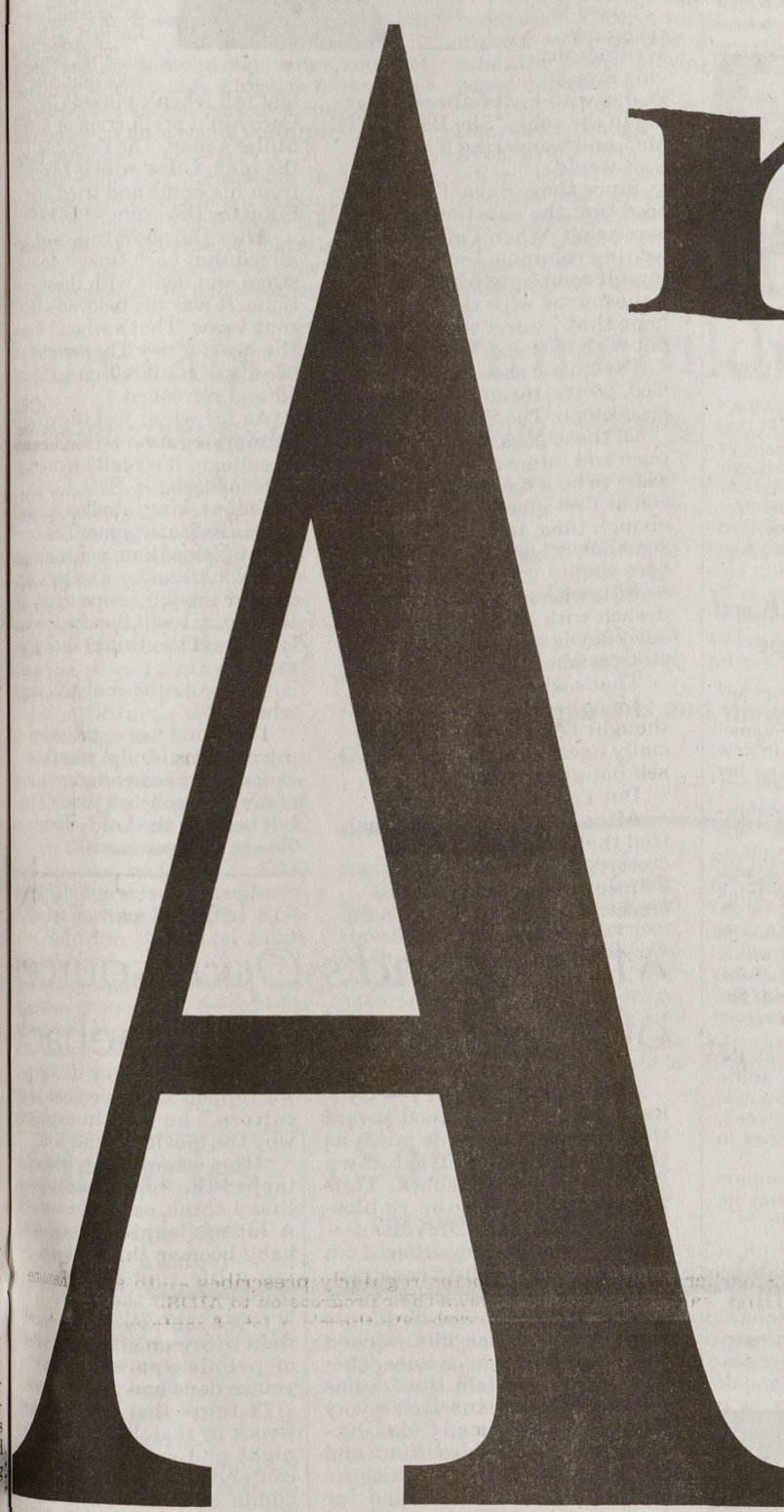
dence with Parent's Weekend. "I think the timing is good with Parent's Weekend because it's a good chance for students' parents to view their work if they haven't already," she said. "We'd like to get as many students involved as possible." Brent Maxwell, an artist and an art instructor at A&M Consolidated High School, was a judge for the contest last year. He said it was important that entries invoked a "good gut reaction" and demonstrate application of art elements and principles of design.

— KATHY ACEVES
chair of the Visual Arts Committee

At a reception planned for April 3, a panel of three judges will view the entries and select a best overall work and first, second, third places and honorable mention entries in each category. These works will then be displayed in the Visual Arts Gallery, next to the Browning Library on the second floor of the MSC. In addition, the best overall winner will receive a prize of \$60, and the first, second and third place winners in each category will win \$30, \$20 and \$10, respectively. These prizes will

include art supplies. Aceves said Art Fest lets students who may have been very involved with art in high school continue to actively pursue their interests. "We welcome all kinds of entries, and it doesn't have to be stuff that they've done while they've been at Texas A&M," Aceves said. "It can be works that they've done in high school — anything they would like to submit." Lalaine Little, adviser for the Visual Arts Committee, also encourages all student artists to enter Art Fest, especially considering its coinci-

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A&M Speleological Society tunnels its way into nature

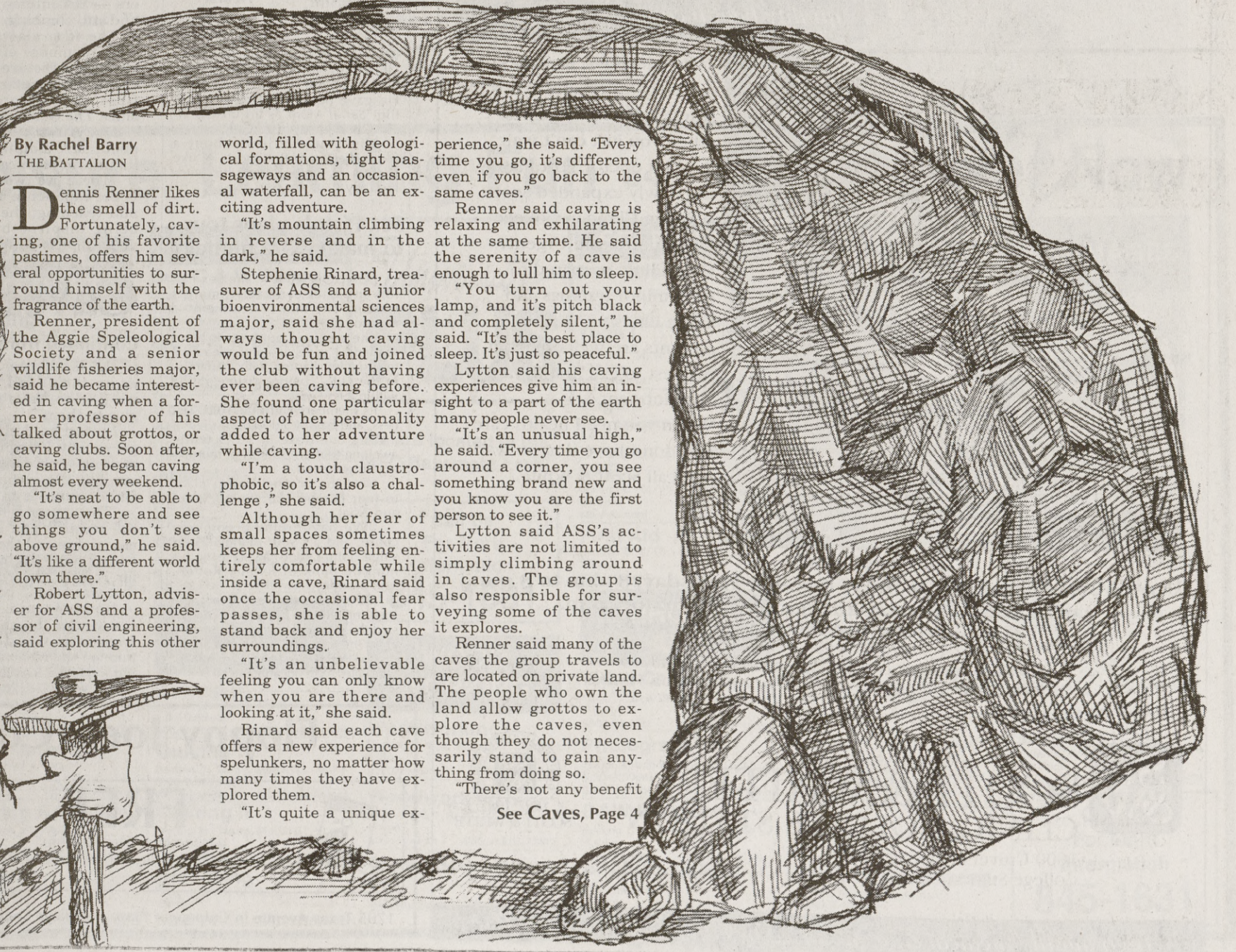
By Rachel Barry
THE BATTALION

Dennis Renner likes the smell of dirt. Fortunately, caving, one of his favorite pastimes, offers him several opportunities to surround himself with the fragrance of the earth. Renner, president of the Aggie Speleological Society and a senior wildlife fisheries major, said he became interested in caving when a former professor of his talked about grottos, or caving clubs. Soon after, he said, he began caving almost every weekend. "It's neat to be able to go somewhere and see things you don't see above ground," he said. "It's like a different world down there." Robert Lytton, adviser for ASS and a professor of civil engineering, said exploring this other

world, filled with geological formations, tight passageways and an occasional waterfall, can be an exciting adventure. "It's mountain climbing in reverse and in the dark," he said. Stephenie Rinard, treasurer of ASS and a junior bioenvironmental sciences major, said she had always thought caving would be fun and joined the club without having ever been caving before. She found one particular aspect of her personality added to her adventure while caving. "I'm a touch claustrophobic, so it's also a challenge," she said. Although her fear of small spaces sometimes keeps her from feeling entirely comfortable while inside a cave, Rinard said once the occasional fear passes, she is able to stand back and enjoy her surroundings. "It's an unbelievable feeling you can only know when you are there and looking at it," she said. Rinard said each cave offers a new experience for spelunkers, no matter how many times they have explored them. "It's quite a unique ex-

perience," she said. "Every time you go, it's different, even if you go back to the same caves." Renner said caving is relaxing and exhilarating at the same time. He said the serenity of a cave is enough to lull him to sleep. "You turn out your lamp, and it's pitch black and completely silent," he said. "It's the best place to sleep. It's just so peaceful." Lytton said his caving experiences give him an insight to a part of the earth many people never see. "It's an unusual high," he said. "Every time you go around a corner, you see something brand new and you know you are the first person to see it." Lytton said ASS's activities are not limited to simply climbing around in caves. The group is also responsible for surveying some of the caves it explores. Renner said many of the caves the group travels to are located on private land. The people who own the land allow grottos to explore the caves, even though they do not necessarily stand to gain anything from doing so. "There's not any benefit

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