

THE BATTALION

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Margraves granted change of venue

By Melissa Nunnery
THE BATTALION

Ross Margraves, former chairman of the Texas A&M University System Board of Regents, was granted a change of venue for his trial Thursday at a pretrial hearing at the Brazos County Courthouse.

Margraves was indicted April 30 on charges of official misconduct for using an A&M airplane to go to Baton Rouge for his son's graduation in Aug., 1993.

Margraves resigned from the Board of Regents in April, 1994.

David Berg, attorney for Margraves, said they wanted the change of venue because extensive media coverage could give potential jurors a preconceived notion about Margraves' guilt or innocence.

Berg said news about Margraves has pervaded the community, and changing the county where the trial takes place should not be a difficult decision.

"Why take the chance?" Berg said. "Let's get a community that's not as affected by the University."

"It's better to leave the community in which [the investigation] has occurred," Berg said.

Approximately 15 of Margraves' friends and business acquaintances testified Margraves could not get a fair trial in Brazos County because it would be

hard to find an impartial jury. John David Crow, director of athletic development, said he agrees.

"You can't get many people in Brazos County who haven't heard, read or have an opinion about Margraves," Crow said.

Bill Youngkin, a witness for the defense and practicing attorney in Brazos County, said Margraves cannot receive a fair trial in Brazos County because of the role A&M plays in the community.

"The University has a central role in lives," Youngkin said. "What happens there impacts many."

Red Cashion, A&M graduate, NFL referee and a long-time resident of College Station, also testified that Margraves could not get a fair trial in Brazos County.

Witnesses for the prosecution testified

they had not seen extensive media coverage of Margraves' indictment or the investigation leading up to the indictment.

The prosecution produced three witnesses who said they thought Margraves could get a fair trial and an impartial jury in Brazos County.

Brazos County District Attorney Bill Turner said the witnesses who testified on Margraves behalf have all lived their lives in loyalty to A&M. Turner said the media coverage seems extensive to Margraves' defense team because "when something gets publicity at A&M, they talk about it."

Judge J.D. Langley, also a graduate of A&M, granted the change of venue because he said he wants ensure no matter what the verdict, both sides in the case feel they got a fair trial.

Langley said the timing of the investigation and other charges related to the Board of Regents and A&M could cause Margraves to be convicted of something he did not do.

"I'm not saying this community has a lynch-mob mentality," Langley said. "For there to be justice, we have to have justice on both sides."

Berg was pleased with the court's decision. "We wanted to make sure we moved it (the trial) out of Brazos County and we have," Berg said.

Turner said he believed potential jurors in Brazos County would take their oath as jurors seriously and could make a fair decision.

Langley must now decide where the trial will take place and whether he will hear the case.



MARGRAVES



Shane Elkins, THE BATTALION

OPEN UP AND SAY 'AH'

Jojo gets his teeth cleaned by Linda Naranjo, a fourth year senior veterinary student, Tuesday at the Small Animal Clinic.

New Mexico's Cass new Ag tennis coach

By Ross Hecox
THE BATTALION

Three weeks after the retirement of legendary coach David Kent, Tim Cass was announced as the new head coach of the Texas A&M Men's Tennis team Tuesday.

Cass, who coached at the University of New Mexico for eight years, was named Western Athletic Conference Coach of the Year five consecutive years and led the Lobos to five consecutive WAC titles.

Cass replaces Kent, who retired May 31 after 18 seasons at A&M. Kent was one of only nine Division I-A tennis head coaches to have more than 500 wins (516-223 career, 316-161 at A&M), and he led the Aggies to their third consecutive trip to the NCAA postseason in 1996.

"He coached with class and integrity, and I hope to learn some of the things he's done and take it a little bit further," Cass said. "He left me with a great foundation to build upon. There's going to be some big steps for me to fill."

Cass said A&M's support of its athletic programs and the construction of new tennis facilities helped him decide to come to College Station.

"It's a tremendous university," he said. "I like the commitment the University makes to all its (sports) programs and its commitment to a new facility for

the tennis program."

As a player for the Lobos, Cass was an All-WAC selection three times and an All-American doubles player in 1986. He was also the WAC Champion in 1986.

In 1988, only two years after graduating, he was named head coach of New Mexico's men's tennis team, and three years later he took the Lobos to their first conference title in 23 years.

This season the Lobos were 17-8, going 5-2 in the WAC and finishing 15th in the national Rolex Collegiate Rankings.

Cass said it was a difficult decision to leave New Mexico, where he compiled a career record of 144-93.

"I am very indebted to the University of New Mexico," he said. "I've been very fortunate. It is a very, very difficult parting, but it's a career move that I believe is the right one to make."

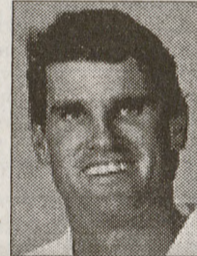
Cass has high expectations for the Aggie team next year.

"I look forward to the challenge ahead," Cass said. "We would like to take a small step closer to the top each year. There's no doubt we'll be going in with the mind set of winning a conference championship."

"Kent left me with a great team. It's my responsibility to develop them."

Cass also plans to boost the fan support as he did at New Mexico.

"We had a lot of success there with the fan support," he said. "I hope to put people in the stands and get them excited about A&M tennis."



CASS

VISUALIZING THE FUTURE

Viz Lab program focuses on computer art design

By Ann Marie Hauser
THE BATTALION

New York and California may soon be facing an influx of Aggies in the entertainment industry.

These prime locations for film and television are attracting graduates of the visualization program in Texas A&M's College of Architecture.

William Jenks, the founding director of the Visualization Laboratory (Viz Lab), said the program is highly competitive and famous even outside the A&M community.

"We are recognized by visual industries as one of the few places in the world that offer a graduate program combining computer science and art design," Jenks said.

Jenks added the biggest challenge is staying on the cutting edge of technological developments with tight state budgets.



"Tiny" is an animated character created by Kevin Thomason in the Viz Lab.

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Terrorist bomb strikes U.S. facility in Saudi Arabia

DHAHRAN, Saudi Arabia (AP) — Striking at the heart of the United States' military presence in the Persian Gulf, a truck bomb destroyed an American housing complex, turning the eight-story building into a crumbling honeycomb.

Eighteen Americans who bunked there were killed and more than 270 were wounded, 73 of them seriously.

The Tuesday night attack, the deadliest ever against Americans in the Persian Gulf, seared off the front of the concrete building, spilling mattresses and chunks of concrete onto the ground below.

Master Sgt. William Sine was walking down a hallway toward the eleva-

tor when he was knocked to the ground by the force of the blast.

"The lights went off ... and I realized the whole side of the building was falling," said Sine, of Warren, Ohio. He said he quickly started to help care for the victims.

"There were some people dead. I could feel a lot of blood on my hands and I knew it couldn't be sweat because it was too thick," he said from his bed at King Fahd Hospital where he was recovering from cuts on the thigh, face and arms.

Hundreds of people rushed out into the streets.

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where the WILD things are

By Heather R. Rosenfeld
THE BATTALION

Pico de Gallo, a green-cheeked Amazon parrot who is on temporary stay at the small animal clinic in the School of Veterinary Medicine, is in good hands.

The hands belong to Mark Drew, doctor of Veterinary Medicine, and his students.

Dr. Drew, an exotic animals specialist, said he is never quite sure what he might see when he comes to work.

"Most veterinarians deal with dogs and cats, ... but after that, almost everything else is considered exotic," Drew said. "We can see anything from tarantulas to elephants."

Two weeks ago, the clinic housed a two-year-old, privately owned lion named Sebastian.

"He had a bone cyst condition," Drew said. "Basically, Sebastian has arthritis in his knee, but he is back at home in Arkansas now."

Dr. William Moyer, head of the department of large animal medicine and surgery, said people travel from all over the country to have their animals treated at A&M.

"They (clients) will cross state lines to come here," Moyer said. "Most vet schools are a lot smaller, and they don't even have people who do the kind of work Dr. Drew does."

Moyer said that Drew possesses a wide expertise.

"All I've ever done as a living is look at horses. Not even cattle," Moyer said. "Dr. Drew is just as qualified whether it's looking



Pat James, THE BATTALION

Dr. Drew, an exotic animals specialist, handles a large iguana, one of the many exotic animals in the small animal clinic.

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