Parson's Mounted Cavalry Luna's case against UT fights cutbacks with fundraising

By Ann Marie Hauser THE BATTALION

Budget cutbacks by Texas A&M motivated the Parson's Mounted Cavalry (PMC) to begin fund-raising efforts this

past spring.
University funding was reduced by about 75 percent last year for the cavalry and other

University-wide organizations.

Jim McFadin, PMC commander and a senior agricultural economics major, said the cavalry needs \$30,000 per year to cover

expenses for the unit.

"Without this money the cavalry would not function," McFadin said. "We are raising this money now so three or four years from now we will still be in existence."

Members have begun a letterwriting campaign targeting for-

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mer cavalry and Corps of Cadets members for donations.

Aggie Moms' Clubs and former students from cavalry members' hometowns are also receiving letters. This method was modeled after the fund-raising efforts utilized by the redpots for Bonfire.

Donors have the option to give their money to two separate funds, operational or endowment. Operational funds go towards everyday expenses such as feed and hay for the horses. The endowment funds will remain untouched until a goal of \$500,000 is reached.

Mickey Gerdes, a junior history and political science major, said his efforts for fund-raising are worthwhile for the cavalry.

"I love it," Gerdes said. "Being in the cavalry gives you something to work for, and it moti-

vates me to study."

McFadin said the Parson's Mounted Cavalry began in 1974 to help publicize A&M and the Corps.

"It was formed to keep the old traditions alive and give favorable publicity to A&M and the Corps, McFadin said.

The cavalry is one of the last mounted ROTC units left in the United States. The members of the cavalry participate in various parades and drill and ceremony functions and A&M football they fire the cannon.
McFadin said he hopes the

cavalry can continue because of all the unit has done for him and others.

"Caring for the animals teaches us responsibility and respect," McFadin said. "A special bond exists between us (the cavalry).'

System begins this week

AUSTIN — A trial is ed, Luna said, he was ter Luna's bosses ordered slated to begin this week threatened with being beat in-house audit of Luna's a for a former accountant who sued claiming he lost his job after alleging the University of Texas System was being ripped off by millions of dollars.

Jose "Joe" Luna contends he was "tortured" out of his job with the UT System in August 1994 after reporting that gas companies operating on university land were underpaying royalties to the Permanent University Fund. That endowment helps support the UT and Texas A&M

University systems.

Luna, who is seeking \$2 million in damages, claims the underpayments amounted to between \$25 million and \$50 million.

Instead of being reward-

en with a two-by-four, told to change his audit findings and, ultimately, stripped of his duties — all of which led him to leave his job and seek psychiatric care. His bosses included an official who once had an interest in a well with a gas company that Luna audited. UT lawyers say there is no substance to Luna's alle-

gations, including the charges that his bosses retaliated against him in vio-lation of the Texas Whistleblower Act. That law, which is designed to protect public servants who report wrong-doing, is the basis for Luna's suit. UT auditors did not un-

cover any improprieties af-

ter Luna's bosses ordered an in-house audit of Luna's allegations, UT officials said.

UT plans to produce doctors who will say Luna's mental trauma was of his own making — that the actions he perceived as retaliation were "ordinary and benign personnel measures" aimed at improving his ner. aimed at improving his pe formance. UT says Lun walked off his job one da

and never came back.

Luna will produce his ow doctor to disagree with UTs.
He also will argue that he effectively was fired and had little choice but to leave. It will be up to a Williamson County june which is County jury, which is expected to be seated Tuesday or Wednesday, to decide whether Luna has a claim

Investigators work to determine cause of Delta mishap

PENSACOLA, Fla. (AP) — Shattered pieces of jet engine were gathered off an airport runway Sunday, remnants of shrapnel that shredded part of an airliner's fuselage and devastated a vacationing family.

Investigators had yet to determine why the left engine on a Delta Air Lines jet blew apart during takeoff, whether there was some internal problem or whether it sucked in a foreign object such as a bird, said George Black, a member of the National Transportation Safety Board.

Metal pieces flying from the engine, mounted on the side of the fuselage near the tail, ripped a gash about a foot wide and more than 4 feet long across the side of the plane, killing Anita Saxton, 39, her son

Nolan, 12, and injuring two of her other children. Mrs. Saxton, of Scottville, Mich., had been vacationing with three of her five children in the Pen-

The two injured children were discharged from Sacred Heart Hospital on Sunday and joined with their father, Randy Saxton, who flew

to Pensacola late Saturday. Although dazed and burned, 15-year-old Derrick Saxton carried his sister, 9-year-old Spencer, from the plane after the pilot made an emergency stop on the runway, said their grandfather, William Saxton. Spencer had leg and facial injuries.

"Then he wanted to go back inside to get his mother and brother," said William Saxton, who said he spoke with Derrick by telephone soon after the posident for the brother than the said and for the said and said a ter the accident from his home at Pentwater,

Mich. "He seems all right now, as much as he 219 engines that powered the MD-88 jetliner.

Five of the other 142 passengers aboard the jetliner also were injured, but only one remained hospitalized Sunday, listed in critical condition after surgery for a broken leg. None of the five crew members was hurt.

Delta officials said Sunday there was no connection between the accident and deep cost-cutting that has pruned about 12,000 jobs from the Atlanta-based carrier since 1994.

Delta has had four engine-disabling incidents since April, according to NTSB records, The Tampa Tribune reported Sunday.

No one was hurt in any of those cases. Two of them involved MD-88 airliners, the same model involved in Saturday's accident.

In one of those engine accidents on June 22, a turbine blade punched a hole in the engine case and made a small hole in the engine's exterior

metal covering. While the cause of the latest engine failure is not yet known, Black explained what made it so lethal.

"Any engine has a lot of fairly massive parts rotating very rapidly," he said. "It's just like slinging keys around on a chain. If something happens to that object it has to dissipate that energy. So it

would be a violent event."

The seven-member NTSB team was assisted by experts from Delta, the Federal Aviation Administration, plane manufacturer McDonnell Douglas and Pratt & Whitney, which made the two JT8D-

They were checking all of the plane's systems, maintenance records and its flight data and cockpit voice recorders, the so-called "black boxes." They also were interviewing the pilot and co-pilot. Black said experts would try to reconstruct the

failed engine to find out what went wrong. The runway where the accident happened could not be reopened until all the debris was removed, but airport operations continued uninterrupted on

an alternate runway. Also Saturday, another Pratt & Whitney engine failed, on TWA's Flight 114 from Seattle to St. Louis, prompting the pilot to land the MD-80 at Omaha, Neb. However, no debris escaped from that engine, a slightly less powerful model called the JT8D-217, Pratt & Whitney spokesman Mark

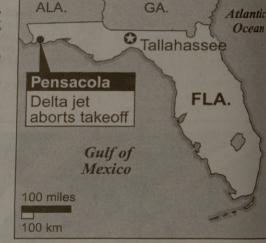
The JT8D is one of the most common and reliable types of engines used on commercial aircraft, said Pratt & Whitney spokesman Mark Sullivan from the company's East Hartford, Conn., headquarters.

The engine powers 4,000 passenger and cargo jets. About a quarter of the engines are from the 200 series that was in the Delta plane.

This type of engine accident is "very unusual —

atastrophic and unusual," said NTSB spokesman Michael Benson.

A similar failure involving a JT8D-9A engine, an earlier version of the type that failed here, penetrated the cabin of a ValuJet DC-9 preparing to



take off from Atlanta on June 8, 1995. A flight at tendant and six passengers were injured; a result ing fire destroyed the plane.

NTSB investigators found evidence that corre sion on a piece of that engine called a compress disc had been plated over during a 1991 overha in Turkey. The agency then conducted special in spections of other engines that ValuJet had pur chased from a Turkish airline.

Winds top 80 mph as Tropical Storm Bertha bears down on Caribbean

CHARLOTTE AMALIE, U.S. Virgin Islands (AP)
Tropical Storm Bertha bore down on a swath of ribbean islands Sunday, heading directly for the sustained winds reach 74 mph. — Tropical Storm Bertha bore down on a swath of Caribbean islands Sunday, heading directly for the U.S. Virgin Islands with gusts of up to 80 mph.

Hurricane warnings were issued for all of the Caribbean's northeastern islands. The eye of the storm is expected to cross directly over St. Thomas, the main U.S. Virgin Island, sometime Monday.

Bertha should become a hurricane before midnight and advance on the British and U.S. Virgin Islands early Monday.

"They now have it passing right over the Virgin

"They now have it passing right over the Virgin Islands and just north of Puerto Rico," said Miles Lawrence, a specialist at the U.S. National Hurricane Center in Miami. The U.S. National Weather Service posted hurri-

cane warnings from Puerto Rico east and south to Dominica, warning residents to expect winds of at least 74 mph and high waters in the next 24 hours. Gov. Roy L. Schneider ordered shelters to open Sunday on St. Thomas, where hundreds of residents

are still living under tarpaulins covering roofs damaged and destroyed in last year's storms. Puerto Rican Gov. Pedro Rossello activated his

disaster plan, which fixes prices on hurricane-related items and bans alcohol sales. Bertha raced toward the islands at 22 mph Sun-

day — fast for a tropical storm — packing sustained

At 2 p.m. EDT Sunday, the storm was 210 miles east of Antigua. Hammers rang out on that island Sunday afternoon, as people hastily boarded up windows and tried to secure roofs unrepaired since last

Two hurricane aircraft flew into the eye of the storm early Sunday, enabling the National Weather Service to estimate the storm could first hit land around Antigua and Barbuda about 10 p.m. EDT Sunday.

Bertha, which has tropical-force winds extending 145 miles from its center, is then projected to cross numerous Caribbean islands, from St. Martin, St. Kitts and Nevis, to Montserrat, where residents have also been dealing with threat of a volcano erup-

tion for more than a year.

On St. Thomas, residents shopping for emergency supplies created traffic jams Saturday around the main shopping area. The governor asked bottled water companies to open Sunday because so many stores had run out of supplies.

People loaded shopping carts with batteries, matches, propane, lanterns — all the things they didn't have enough of when Hurricane Marilyn struck last September. Others sat near radios and televisions, anxious for news as Bertha approached.

Nigel John, a 34-year-old police officer, hammered away at a blue tarpaulin covering what used to be the roof of his trailer home in Charlotte

Amalie, the main city on St. Thomas. "He's trying to make it stronger," said his wife, Janet. "I'm just sick of it," she declared as she wrapped in plastic the new television and microwave ven that replaced ones destroyed by Hurricane Marilyn last year.

Forecasters predict Bertha will turn into a Category 1 hurricane — the least dangerous of five categories of hurricanes. But since many people have not recovered from last year's storms, and fewer sound shelters are available, even a low-grade storm could cause great damage.

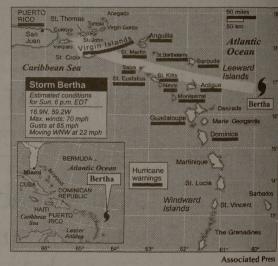
Hurricane warnings were broadcast in Antigua, Barbuda, Nevis, Montserrat, St. Kitts, Anguilla, Saba, St. Eustatius, Dominica, Guadeloupe, St. Barthelemy, St. Martin, the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico

Most of those islands were hard-hit last year, when Hurricanes Marilyn and Luis pummeled through within days of each other, destroying thousands of homes in the worst Atlantic hurricane season in 60 years.

Eighty percent of homes on St. Thomas were destroyed or damaged by Hurricane Marilyn and fewer than half have been repaired.

Forecasters said Bertha was following the same trajectory as Marilyn and Hurricane Hugo, which devastated Puerto Rico in 1989.

The Atlantic hurricane season's first tropical storm doused coastal areas of the Carolinas with rains and gusty winds last month.



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