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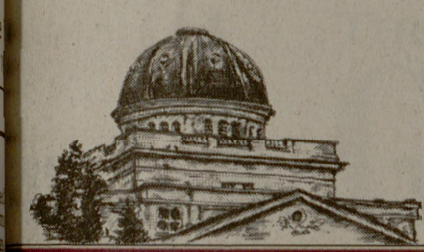
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# THE BATTALION

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## Former employee released on bond

BY BRANDON HAUSENFLUCK  
THE BATTALION

A former employee of Texas A&M University surrendered to the University Police Department Wednesday after allegedly embezzling over \$30,000 from the Center for Construction Education in the Department of Civil Engineering.

The offense is a third-degree felony punishable by two to ten years in prison and a \$10,000 fine.

Cynthia J. McNeill, 36, of College Station, admitted taking several checks instead of depositing them in a bank account for the Center. Allegedly, she put the checks into accounts she had opened under the Center's name with she as the authorized signatory.

During a routine audit, Son-Meyer, a Texas A&M University System auditor, found a discrepancy in the Center's financial records. On August 15, notified University police because she had discovered a possible embezzlement.

Meyer was unavailable for comment.

An investigation of McNeill's bank records indicates she deposited two checks into her checking account in December 1994, and one in April 1995. Three checks were also deposited into a savings account — one in June 1995 and two in September 1995.

The sum of the checks is about \$30,500.

Detective/Sgt. Jim Lindholm of UPD made the arrest and took a signed oral statement from McNeill, in which she admitted to depositing the checks into her accounts.

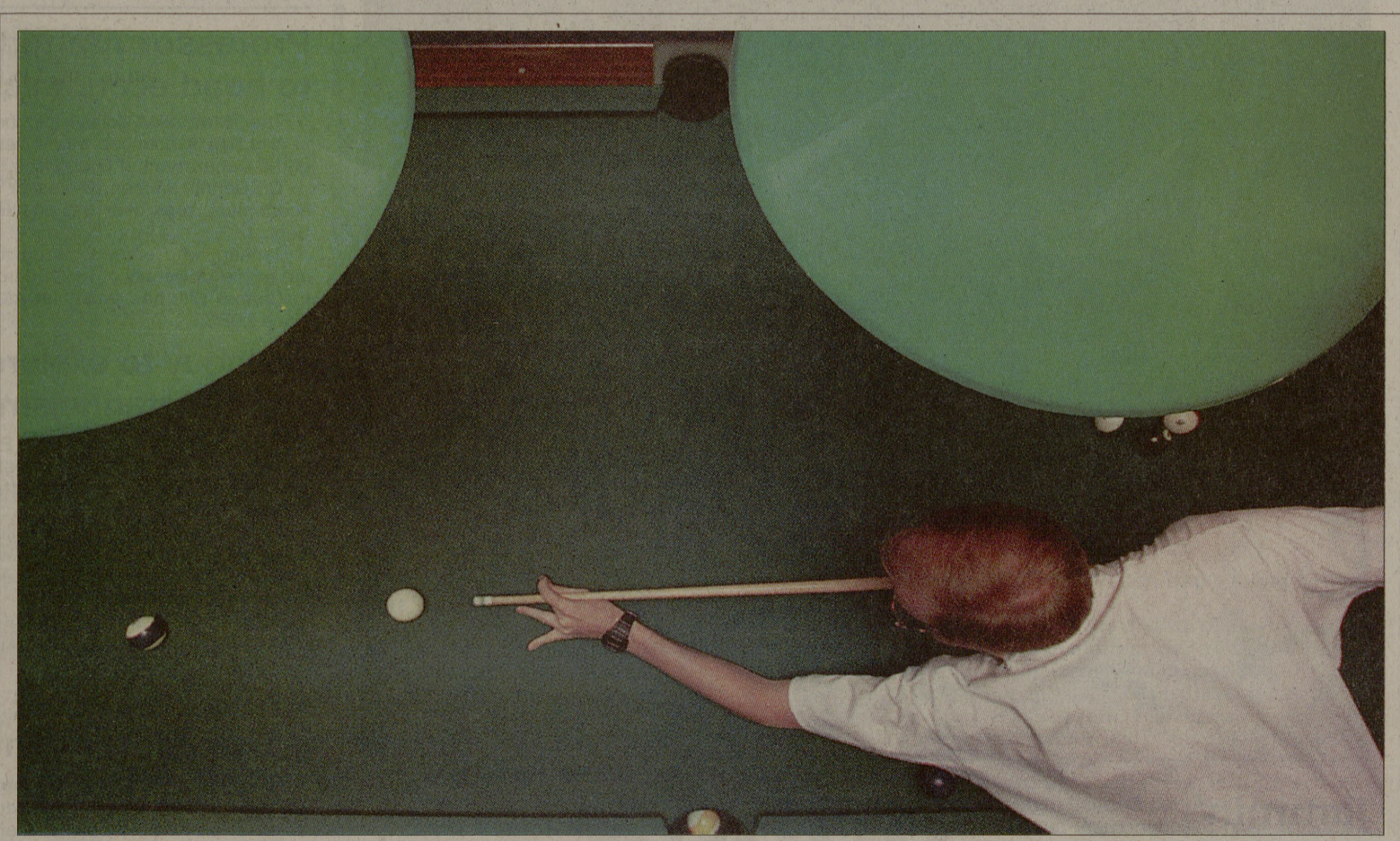
Lindholm said the case is still being investigated.

"As of right now, the investigation is still underway," Lindholm said. "We have confirmed the \$30,000, but we're looking to make sure no additional moneys have been taken."

McNeill was released on \$5,000 bond set by Justice of the Peace Carolyn Hensarling.

Dr. Walter Moore, director of the Center for Construction Education and a professor of civil

See EMPLOYEE, Page 8



**Corner pocket** Stewart Loftis, a fifth year English major, plays pool at the MSC Wednesday afternoon during his lunch break. He plays pool at least three times a week.  
Rony Angkriwan, THE BATTALION

## To graduate, or not to graduate 'Other education' delays graduation

BY WESLEY POSTON  
THE BATTALION

Only about one-fourth of the Texas Aggie Class of 1994 actually graduated that year. By 1995, that number had risen to 58 percent.

Don Carter, Texas A&M registrar and non-academic activities are the reason students are here longer than the traditional four years.

"A large percentage of students work," he said. "And many of them are involved in 'the other education,'

which is important."

Students take lighter course loads, Carter said, because of their extra activities. The average student takes between 13 and 14 hours each semester. But many degree plans require students to take heavier course loads to graduate in four years.

Carter said a greater focus on grade-point ratio also keeps students from taking heavy course loads.

"There's more concentration on the classes they're taking," Carter said.

Sallie Sheppard, the associate provost for undergraduate programs and academic services, said work and activities often hinder 'on time' graduation.

"A lot of students are involved," she said. "They're enjoying experiencing leadership development in their organizations."

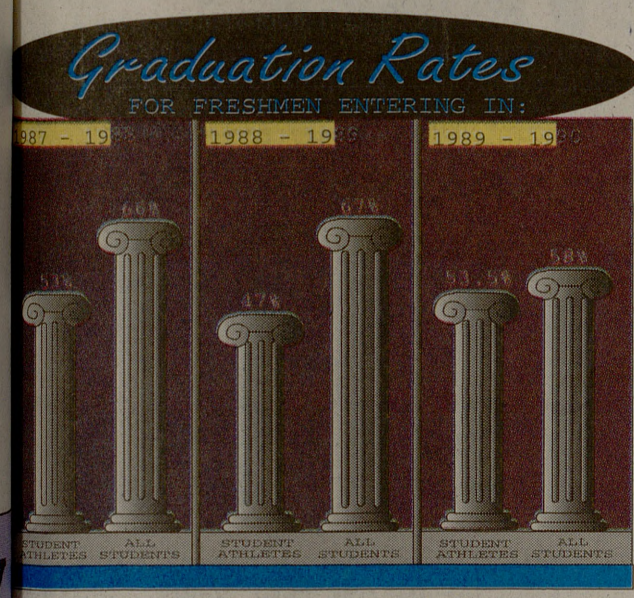
Carter said the pre-med and athletic programs are also responsible for some delays in graduation.

Many pre-med students spend three years in professional school,

one year in medical school, and then to finish their degree, he said. Some athletes sign professional contracts without finishing their degrees, but later return to earn their bachelor's.

Vanessa English, a senior secretary for the undergraduate programs office in the college of business administration, said some of the degree programs make an extra year necessary.

See UNDERGRADUATE, Page 8



## A&M athletes graduate at higher rate than average

BY MARISSA ALANIS  
THE BATTALION

Texas A&M's athlete graduation rate surpassed the National Collegiate Athletic Association's graduation average by 4.5 percentage points.

Wally Groff, A&M athletic director, said he is glad to be above the NCAA average but he would still like to see the graduation rate climb.

A&M's athlete graduation rate is above the NCAA's average of 53.5 percent, but the overall graduation rate for

A&M students is 68 percent.

"Our goal is to equal or beat the graduation rate of the A&M student body," Groff said.

In contrast to the men's athlete graduation rate of 52 percent, the women athletes had a higher rate of 68 percent.

Lynn Hickey, A&M senior associate athletic director, said several factors contribute to the higher graduation rate among female student athletes.

In particular, Hickey said, women grow up with pressure to academically excel.

The fourth annual NCAA report compiled information on athletes who enrolled as freshmen at institutions in Fall 1989.

The NCAA obtains its graduation percentage by calculating the number of freshmen who entered college and earned a degree within six years.

A school's athlete graduation rate is lowered by college athletes who opt for professional careers before receiving a degree.

See ATHLETES, Page 8

## Regents amend renovation plans

BY MELISSA NUNNERY  
THE BATTALION

Admission standards for the 1997-1998 school year will be adopted in a session that starts today by the Texas A&M University System Board of Regents.

The Board will hear recommendations regarding admission standards and enrollment management plans today and Friday at a session in the Memorial Student Center.

Terri Parker, director of communications for the System, said the recommendations pertain to policy revisions in the Board's policy manual.

"The change is that enrollment management plans and admission standards would be submitted to the Board for approval instead of just information," Parker said.

Regents are also expected to grant authorization to enter into a settlement agreement with Tenneco Power Generation Co. The Board originally set a settlement deadline of Oct. 1 at its July meeting. But the new agreement would extend the deadline to Nov. 30.

The Board will also vote for the approval of \$2 million from the Permanent University Fund for classroom renovations on the College Station campus.

The University has already budgeted \$650,000 from the general use fee for renovations, and administrators anticipate the fee will generate another \$425,000.

Parker said the Board will also hear reports on campus activities from A&M students and A&M President Ray Bowen.

In other business, the Board is expected to:

- Grant academic tenure to two A&M professors.
- Hear recommendations for naming the College of Business Administration and the Graduate School of Business for L. Lowry Mays, Class of '57, who pledged a \$15 million endowment to A&M.

### THE BATTALION TODAY

**Shit it out**  
A rock band from Austin, tells all about its style and mess.  
Aggielife, Page 3

**Ice Opening**  
20th-ranked A&M Softball Team swept Texas in three games in Big 12 opener.  
Sports, Page 13

**ough work**  
Students too busy studying to focus on pool due to rising tuition costs.  
Opinion, Page 17

## Car chase concludes with capture

BY BRENT MONTGOMERY  
Special to THE BATTALION

A carjacking Wednesday morning left a 20-year-old Bryan resident, a suspect in jail and two damaged College Station Police cars.

Timothy David Cooper, a 20-year-old Bryan resident, has been arrested and charged in the carjacking.

Mandy Lewis, a sophomore animal science major, said she had just gotten into her 1985 Toyota Land Cruiser in the Post Oak Mall parking lot when a man approached her and tried to enter her car.

Lewis said the car door was open and her first reaction was not to let him in.

"At first I didn't see the knife and said 'no,'" she said. "And then he showed it (the knife) to me. So I got over."

Lewis said the intruder forced her into the passenger's seat.

The perpetrator then asked for instructions on how to drive the standard-trans-

mission vehicle, Lewis said.

"He kept asking me how to work it (the vehicle)," she said. "I just said 'OK, that's first, second, third.'"

She said the carjacker asked her for directions to Bryan, so she assumed he was not familiar with the area and decided to mislead him.

Lewis said she told him to go straight down Holleman Road. Her intent was to lead him by Vikings Apartments at 1500 Holleman, she said.

"I know the people in the office, so I just made him come straight here," she said.

After driving for several miles, Lewis jumped out of the moving vehicle.

"I jumped out when he was trying to slow down, coming around the corner," she said.

She escaped with a few minor cuts and scratches to her face, arms and legs.

Lt. Scott McCollum of the College Station Police Department, said the perpetrator then led several of their vehicles on a chase through

College Station and the Texas A&M campus.

The police said they caught up with the driver at the 2400 block of Texas Avenue.

When officers attempted to stop the vehicle, Cooper allegedly fled north on Texas Avenue and then crossed over and drove against traffic.

After cutting through a parking lot at the corner of George Bush Drive and Texas Avenue, the suspect allegedly drove through the A&M campus on Bizzell Street, McCollum said.

After leaving the A&M campus, Cooper allegedly drove straight for a motorcycle officer. The officer, believing his life was in danger, fired shots at the carjacker.

McCollum said officers were able to corner the vehicle in a vacant parking lot, but the suspect escaped in the car.

The suspect was apprehended on Villa Maria Road, police say, after an officer shot out one of the vehicle's tires.

## Morales stresses diversity, opposes Affirmative Action

BY CARLA RENE MARSH  
THE BATTALION

Poor weather conditions did not stop community



Pat James, THE BATTALION  
Dan Morales spoke to a crowd at the Grove.

members and Texas A&M students from gathering at the Grove to hear Attorney General Dan Morales address affirmative action Wednesday night.

As a guest speaker for the Aggie Democrats, Morales was invited to speak on current political issues from a democratic standpoint.

But Morales said he is opposed to affirmative action.

"On a personal basis, I support diversity and inclusion, but I oppose government-enforced discrimination," Morales said.

"An individual ought to be evaluated on individual merit. Schools should look at subjective factors. It's unfair to set higher standards for one group and lower standards for another group."

Rosalind Winn, a junior

English major, said affirmative action is not a quota, it is an effort to make things fair.

"Affirmative action is about opportunities," Winn said. "It's a chance to give the same things to people that others are given."

The Aggie Democrats officers provided the crowd with information on membership, dues and voting before Morales arrived.

Kristina Perez, president of Aggie Democrats and an educational psychology graduate student, said the purpose of Aggie Democrats is to promote the Democratic Party and encourage citizens to vote.

Visitors were offered campaign buttons, T-shirts, fliers, voter registration cards and refreshments.

See MORALES, Page 8