



# THE BATTALION

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## Board of Regents elects new chair

**A committee approved an on-campus child-care center at yesterday's meeting.**

By MELISSA NUNNERY  
THE BATTALION

Don Powell hopes to provide leadership as the newly elected chairman of the Texas A&M University System Board of Regents.

PART FOUR IN A SERIES OF FOUR

The election of a new chairman was the first order of business at yesterday's Board meeting.

Regent T. Michael O'Connor was chosen to serve as vice chairman of the Board. "I'm humbled," Powell said. "The current regents are exceptional people who have unparalleled ability and service attitudes. I am honored and thrilled to work with these people."

Powell, whose term as regent ends in 2001, said each member of the Board is equally important and that he plans to learn from their high standards and priorities.

"[The chairman's job is to] make sure each and every member receives respect from each of us and [to make sure] their voice and thoughts are expressed freely without any constraint [and] with all the integrity we can muster," he said.

In other business, the facilities planning and building committee approved the next phase in the building of the proposed on-campus child-care center at Texas A&M. The University would provide about \$1 million in start-up funds for the center, which would then be self-sufficient.

The proposal, which was sent to committee for consideration at the regents' January meeting, met with opposition from Regent Guadalupe Rangel. She said the center's proposed tuition, probable long waiting list and \$10 waiting list fee would be cause for frustration in the long run.

"[It is] too much of an investment to benefit too few people," Rangel said. She suggested the center be privatized so the University's money could

be used for scholarships.

A&M President Ray Bowen said private funds currently are not available for the center.

"[We are] weighing a lot of different competing priorities," Bowen said. "[This] use of this money is the highest need at this time."

Regent Erle Nye said the center would alleviate frustration, despite the fact that there would be too few spaces available to fulfill the demand for the center's services.

"Some effort to meet some of the demand would produce less frustration," Nye said.

Bowen commented on the high demand for the center.

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Robert McKay, THE BATTALION

Don Powell, newly elected chairman of the Texas A&M University System Board of Regents, is congratulated by Regent T. Michael O'Connor, who was chosen to serve as vice chairman of the Board.

## Lecture to focus on improving communication between races

By BENJAMIN CHENG  
THE BATTALION

Communication between races will be discussed when Dr. Orlando Taylor visits Texas A&M today from 12 to 1 p.m. in room 229 of the Memorial Student Center.

Taylor's lecture is titled "Race, Communication and Diversity: Challenges and Opportunity for the Academy." Taylor studies intercultural communication at Howard University and is president-elect of the National Speech Communication Association.

Dr. Martin Medhurst, associate head of the Department of Speech Communications, said Taylor will discuss how miscommunication can arise among people from different races and how better communication can foster better relationships.

Medhurst said people need to understand and appreciate better the views of people of different races.

"It's a question of how we become one nation from multiple voices," Medhurst said.

Anissa Silva, a senior sociology major, said people typically see those of different races in a stereotypical manner.

"Once you communicate, the stereotypes dissolve," Silva said. "It's not what you are, it's what you do."

Kevin Carruthers, the director of multicultural services at A&M, said interracial communication at A&M needs improvement. He said African-American students at A&M have informed him they have been told in a hostile manner to remove their hats in the MSC.

"It (what he hears from students) tells me that we still have work to do in this area," Carruthers said.

People should seek to educate themselves about issues and improve their communication skills, he said.

"People need to talk about fact, not fiction," Carruthers said.

Sarah Wilson, a senior speech commu-

nications major, said she does not see a major problem with interracial communication at A&M.

"We all address each other as A&M students," Wilson said. "We're Aggies first." Silva said the Hopwood decision has strained interracial relations and hurt minority recruitment at A&M.

"We need to encourage minorities to go to college to improve interracial communications," she said.

Medhurst said Taylor's lecture provides an opportunity to address some of these racial issues on campus.

"It's the kind of topic we need to be talking about at A&M," he said.

Taylor is the Dean of Howard University's Graduate School of Arts and Sciences and a professor in communications. His lecture is sponsored by the A&M Department of Speech Communications and the Office of the Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies.

## Spiritual leader to receive award

### A&M professor will attend ceremony at Westminster Abbey

By GRAHAM HARVEY  
THE BATTALION

In 1972, global investor Sir John Marks Templeton founded the Templeton Prize for Progress in Religion, an award given annually to a living person who has innovatively contributed to mankind's awareness of God or spirituality.

This year the award will be presented to Pandurang Shastri Athavale of India.

Dr. Betty M. Unterberger, the Patricia and Bookman Peters professor of history at A&M, nominated Athavale for the prize and plans to be present when he receives it. Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, will present Athavale with the prize on May 6 at Westminster Abbey in London.

Donald Lehr, public relations represen-

tative for the New York-based Templeton Foundation, said the award is substantial.

"The Templeton Prize, valued at 750,000 pounds sterling, about \$1.21 million, is the world's largest annual monetary award," Lehr said.

A panel of nine judges, including former President George Bush, selected Athavale as this year's Templeton Prize winner, Lehr said.

Unterberger, an expert in Asian studies, was one of the first Western scholars to recognize a global importance in Athavale's spiritual philosophy of life, called Swadhyaya, a Sanskrit word meaning "self-study."

One of the West's foremost authorities on the movement, Unterberger owns one of the largest private collections of research materials relating to Swadhyaya, all

gained from her trips to India and her many interviews with Athavale.

For three years she has nominated Athavale, also called the Dada, meaning "elder brother," for the Templeton Prize, and she now is requesting a grant to write a history of Swadhyaya and its creator.

"Swadhyaya is not a denomination in any sense of the word," Unterberger said. "Athavale wants us to have deep love and respect for all the major religions of the world."

The philosophy teaches love for others and trust in God are the answers to all questions, Unterberger said. Athavale teaches that people must rely on themselves rather than blaming the world for their problems.

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Robert McKay, THE BATTALION

**Beat It** Steve McFadden, a percussionist with the Christian rock band Legacy, plays outside the MSC Wednesday afternoon as part of the Resurrection Week festivities.

## College of Liberal Arts approves cultural studies minor

**Dr. Richard K. Curry has been named coordinator of the new minor.**

By REBECCA TORRELLAS  
THE BATTALION

The College of Liberal Arts has developed a Comparative

and Cultural Studies minor at Texas A&M for students interested in continuing study of diverse cultures.

The college's Curriculum Committee has approved a menu of courses from which students may choose to build a tailored minor.

Dr. Woodrow Jones, Jr., dean of the College of Liberal Arts, said companies are looking for graduates with a mature per-

spective on globalization and cultural diversity.

"The Comparative Cultural Studies minor is designed for those students who are interested in broadening their national or international perspectives," Jones said.

Dr. Richard K. Curry, associate professor of Spanish, has been named the first coordinator of the new minor.

Curry came to Texas A&M in 1987 with a Ph.D. in Spanish from

Arizona State University.

Jones said Curry was the ideal candidate for the position because of his extensive experience advising and coordinating language learning in the Department of Modern and Classical Languages.

"His background in Hispanic culture and literature gives him a strong cross-cultural communications knowledge," Jones said. "This knowledge will be pivotal in

the development of this minor."

Curry said the course requirements for the Comparative Cultural Studies minor depend on student interest.

"I think this minor will be invaluable to those students who are looking for a way to consolidate their interests in other cultures into a field of study," Curry said.

The Comparative Cultural Studies minor requires a three-

hour foundation course, a three-hour capstone course, and four three-hour courses from any one topical or geographical area.

Students' choices include African-American, African, Asian, Central and South American, Latino, and Eastern and Western European Culture.

The Comparative Cultural Studies minor will be available in the fall of 1997.

## Deputies discover mass suicide in California



RANCHO SANTA FE, Calif. (AP) — The bodies of at least 39 young men, lying side by side in matching dark pants and tennis shoes, were found scattered throughout a million-dollar mansion Wednesday in an apparent mass suicide.

The men, all white and between the ages of 18 and 24, were lying prone with their hands at their sides. There were no signs of survivors, said San Diego County Sheriff's Cmdr. Alan Fulmer.

Two deputies searched the palatial home about 3:15 p.m. after an anonymous caller told them to "check on the welfare of the residents." A deputy entered the home through a side door and quickly saw 10 bodies.

Then, he and another deputy made a cursory search of the mansion, counting 39 bodies clustered in various rooms, all of them lying on their back and "appearing as if they had fallen asleep," Fulmer said.

The two deputies then left, and no one else had reentered the home as of Wednesday night. Author-

ities were waiting for a search warrant before proceeding further.

Investigators believe it's a mass suicide "due to the number people involved, no signs of struggle, no signs of trauma," sheriff's Lt. Gerald Lipscomb said.

The cause of death has not been determined, he said. There was a pungent odor, and the two deputies were sent to the hospital for blood tests.

KNBC-TV reported that a real estate agent said the home had been on the market for quite some time and that they were having trouble selling it. The agent complained that every time they tried to show the house, a religious cult was having a meeting there.

There was no indication whether the deaths were related to Saturday's fiery mass suicide in Quebec of five members of the Order of the Solar Temple, a doomsday cult that believes suicide transports them to a new life on a planet called Sirius.

### THE BATTALION INSIDETODAY

**PAINTBALLIN':** When these folks want to shoot someone, they grab a 'marker,' take aim and let the paintballs fly.

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