

# THE BATTALION

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## Faculty Senate

# Meeting focuses on minority recruitment

By KATHLEEN STRICKLAND  
THE BATTALION

The absence of a quorum ended the Texas A&M Faculty Senate meeting Monday afternoon, leaving many debates unresolved. The Senate must have a minimum number of members present to take action at meetings.

The Faculty Senate heard a report and recommendations from its minority conditions subcommittee regarding the recruitment and retention of minorities at A&M. Diane Kaplan, chair of the subcommittee and a visiting assistant professor of ed-

ucational curriculum and instruction, presented the report to the Faculty Senate.

"We are still in the process of examining the campus climate and issues," Kaplan said. "Today we are bringing forth for Senate approval of the recommendations we feel are most important for recruiting and retaining minority faculty on campus."

She said a representative student body is necessary to maintain minority faculty members.

"We are doing the best job we can in recruiting a diverse student body now that living under the Hopwood decision seems to be a reality, at least for the immediate fore-

seeable future," she said.

The committee used a report on undergraduate admissions and tenure reports from A&M to create its recommendations. Results of the studies led the committee to recommend a new three-year plan for the University to facilitate the recruitment and retention of minority and women faculty and students. Recruitment and retention of minorities would cost an estimated \$3 million, while the cost of recruitment and retention of women is estimated at \$1 million.

D. Stanley Carpenter, a professor of educational administration, favored a change

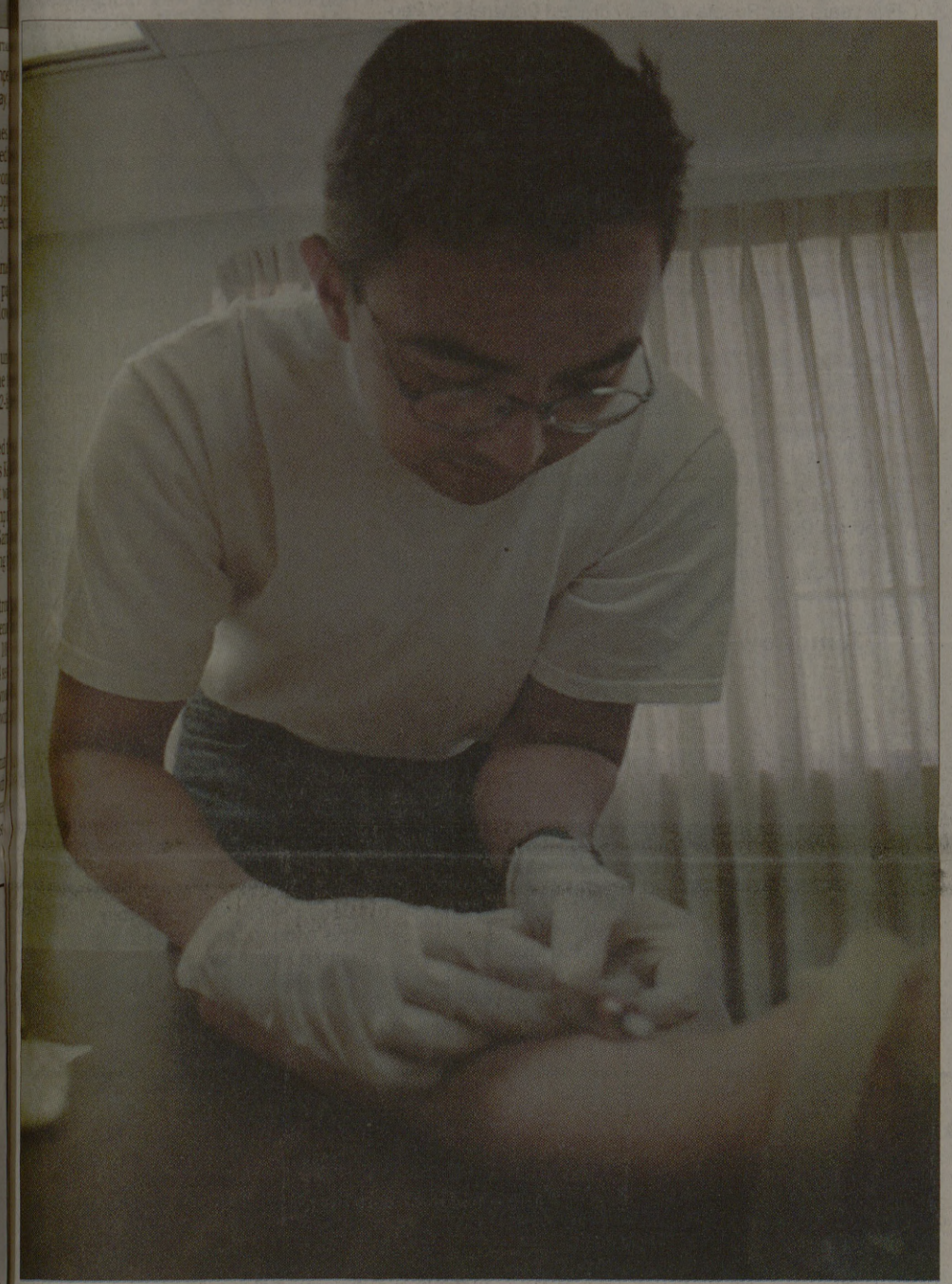
in the committee's recommendations.

"Apart from our sitting here and doing the committee's work for them ... and rewriting the nature of the report or rewriting the recommendations for them, what we need to do is send a very strong statement," Carpenter said. "We are sitting on a disaster with respect to diversity in the faculty and in the student body. In fact, the language of the report is wrong, it's not strong enough."

Before any decisions could be made regarding the subcommittee's report and recommendations, a quorum was lost as senators left the meeting. All discussion

on the report was postponed until the May meeting.

- In other business, the Faculty Senate:
  - Approved recommendations from the University Curriculum Committee.
  - Approved candidates for graduate and undergraduate degrees and candidates for Doctor of Veterinary Medicine, subject to completion of all requirements.
  - Approved recommendations from the Rules and Regulations Committee.
  - Reviewed the unofficial results of the Faculty Senate elections.
  - Reviewed the recommendations of the Academic Affairs Committee.



Ryan Rogers, THE BATTALION

**Test Anxiety** | Maurice Padilla, an employee at AIDS Services of Brazos Valley, administers an HIV test in the MSC Monday as part of HIV/AIDS Awareness Week.

## Spy plane, ground teams join search for warplane

EAGLE, Colo. (AP) — The pilot of the A-10 Thunderbolt that disappeared almost two weeks ago with four bombs aboard could have disabled an emergency beacon and then secretly bailed out over the Rocky Mountains, an Air Force official said Monday.

The search for the warplane was joined Monday by a high-flying SR-71 "Blackbird," a spy plane that carries highly sensitive radar. The Air Force also has sent ground teams into the snow-covered, remote terrain.

The possibility that Capt. Craig Button, the pilot of the \$9 million jet, is still alive is one of the issues lending urgency to the search. Another is that the plane carried the 500-pound bombs, although Air Force officials have said they do not believe the bombs were activated. Triggering the plane's ejection seat ordinarily would set off an emergency locator signal, but "the pilot could manually disable the

ejector seat beacon," said Air Force Capt. Mike Richmond.

Pilots are given the ability to switch off the beacon because it sends out a radio signal that could be intercepted by enemy forces in wartime.

Button, 32, and his A-10 disappeared April 2 during a training exercise out of Davis-Monthan Air Force Base in Tucson, Ariz., where he was on temporary duty from his station at Laughlin Air Force Base at Del Rio, Texas.

Radar data and witness accounts indicate Button consciously flew the plane to Colorado — about 800 miles off course, but Air Force officials said they do not know why.

Ground and air searches focused Monday on five possible impact sites, reduced from eight that were targeted Sunday in a remote area of the Rockies.

The five sites in the area of the 12,500-foot New York Mountain contain "irregular shapes that are not normal in nature," Lt. Gen. Frank Campbell said.

Dick Dixon, who owns an outfitter's shop in Avon, said he saw a large fire south-southwest of Interstate 70 on the day Button disappeared.

"All you could see was the glow," Dixon said. "It looked like a miniature sunset or sunrise. It was very intense."

The SR-71 "Blackbird," capable of flying three times the speed of sound and high enough that pilots can see the curvature of the Earth, was expected to make two passes over the region on Monday. Older U-2 spy planes were used during the weekend but they experienced radar problems, Campbell said.

The SR-71 brought a decidedly high-tech aspect to a search that also included some old-fashioned legwork — a local mountaineer was leading military personnel on foot through the rugged terrain.

## Panel discusses prospect of peace

By JOEY JEANETTE  
SCHLUETER  
THE BATTALION

Suicide bombings, bus bombings and sporadic violence plague Israel and Palestine as the two countries struggle to reach a peace settlement.

For Israelis and Palestinians, a nightmare exists. The possibility of peace and the role of the United States in this feud over territory were discussed last night at the MSC L.T. Jordan Institute and the MSC Political Forum hosted a panel discussion titled "Israel-Palestine: Peace in Our Time?"

The discussion was designed to inform the student body of different perspectives of the peace process between

the two groups.

Dr. Nehemiah Geva, an Israeli and a political science professor at Texas A&M, was a member of the panel. He discussed Israel's point of view, saying peace in the near future is possible.

"We have full peace with Egypt," Geva said. "We have full peace with Jordan. If we can accomplish peace with these two countries,

then we are walking the path of peace with Israel."

Mohammed Al-Hassan, editor of The Muslim World Monitor newspaper and a

Palestinian, also was on the panel. He urged the audience to think long and hard about the peace process and what it entails.

"True peace in the Holy Land is possible if Israel changes," he said. "Still, Israeli law permits torture only against Palestinian prisoners."

Al-Hassan said four issues must be addressed.

Israel must withdraw from areas occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem, solve the refugee problem, change territory policy and establish securi-

ty by dismantling nuclear weapons.

The conflict between the two groups dates back to the 40s, when the Republic of Israel was founded. The republic occupies almost 8,000 square miles of Palestine, on the eastern seaboard of the Mediterranean. Jerusalem is the capital, where the conflict began in a fight over territory.

Bernard Shapiro, director of the Freeman Center for Strategic Studies in Houston, gave his view of how peace should be obtained between Israelis and Palestinians. He said peace is negotiable if the two parties can cease fighting. Shapiro said he is from Israel and has seen the devastation of the fighting.

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## New editor aims to improve coverage, quality of Aggieland

By MARISSA ALANIS  
THE BATTALION

Amber Benson knew she did not have a chance when she applied for the 1997 Aggieland editor position last year, but the junior political science and journalism major applied anyway.

Benson, who was recently named editor of the 1998 Aggieland, wanted the Student Publications Board to know about the improvements and changes she had in mind for the yearbook after working there for a year.

"I wanted them to hear that I had a vision," Benson said. "That way, when I finally got all the skills and the experience, I could come in here and make it a reality."

Benson said she will not forget that vision as editor of next year's Aggieland.

Being editor of the largest yearbook in the nation will be a huge responsibility, she said.

"I could feel the weight being dropped upon me as soon as they said I was editor," Benson said. "But I'm so excited and so enthusiastic about it."

Her responsibilities will include overseeing a staff of 20-25 workers, having full editorial control and approving the content of about 800 pages.

Although the Aggieland is known for being the biggest yearbook, she said, it does not have the reputation for being one of the best. She said the Aggieland is a good yearbook, but it still has a long way to go.

"I believe we have the resources available to us in this office to produce one of the best books in the nation," Benson said.

Access to advanced technological resources at the Aggieland was something new to Benson as a college freshman. Her high school yearbook staff had access to only one computer.

Benson said her journalism teacher at Wylie High School, Liz White, encouraged her to pursue goals beyond her reach.

"She taught us that if we just learned the basics and stuck with it, there would come a day when we'd be given the opportunities that we had prepared for," Benson said.

White said she recalls Benson being a diligent and organized worker who had the potential to go in any direction she wanted.

"I think she could carry her journalism qualities in any field she chooses," White said.

The new editor's goal is to make the Aggieland a source of pride for Texas A&M students.

"When you pull out your yearbook to open it up," she said. "I want the images and the words to make you say, 'Wow, I'm proud to be a student at Texas A&M. This is what Texas A&M means to me.'"

Benson said accomplishing her goal will carry with it the responsibility of considering the many perspectives that make up A&M.

"I think our biggest problem right now is that we don't represent the breadth and width of students that go to Texas A&M," she said.

"We've been known to take isolated incidents and make them bigger than they appear here."



Ryan Rogers, THE BATTALION

**Amber Benson**, a junior political science and journalism major, was named editor of the 1998 Aggieland.

Benson said she was talking to several members of an A&M African-American fraternity, who noticed African-American fraternities and sororities never have been represented in the yearbook.

"We've ignored people who are a large part of our university," Benson said. "That's a huge part of A&M that's not there."

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## Tobacco companies argue for dismissal of case Lawyers claim Morales' lawsuit relies on racketeering statutes

TEXARKANA (AP) — Tobacco industry lawyers argued Monday that Attorney General Dan Morales' \$14 billion lawsuit should be thrown out because, among other reasons, it improperly relies on federal racketeering statutes.

The racketeering claims are especially worrisome to the industry because any damage award could be tripled under the federal Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act, known as RICO.

Daniel Webb, Philip Morris' national counsel, presented the industry's case at a three-hour hearing before U.S. District Judge David Folsom.

The racketeering claims al-

lege that the industry lied to federal officials, committed fraud, illegally marketed its products to children and conspired to deceive the public about the dangers of cigarettes.

The state alleges Philip Morris, R.J. Reynolds, Lorillard, Brown & Williamson and industry groups should reimburse Texas for tobacco-related health-care costs the state has paid through Medicaid over four decades.

Tobacco lawyers say the lawsuit should be dismissed on several grounds.

Webb told the court that the racketeering laws do not apply because they concern only damage to property, not personal injury like smoking-related illnesses.

In addition, he said, the state itself suffered no direct damage from cigarettes. Webb also argued that a Texas law passed in 1993 gives the tobacco industry immunity from product liability lawsuits.

"This lawsuit is no more than a veiled attempt by the plaintiff to get the federal court to substitute yourself for the judgment of the Texas Legislature," Webb said.

He also said the state cannot claim damages based on a statistical model that includes estimates of how many Texans smoked, how many suffered tobacco-related illnesses, how much Medicaid paid for their care and other factors.

Instead, Webb said, the state should have to prove

that individual smokers suffered actual damages, "smoker by smoker."

Laurence Tribe, a professor at Harvard Law School who has helped attorneys generals in several states sue the tobacco industry, argued for Texas.

He told the court the state has as much right to sue for damages in this case as it does when a polluter damages the environment.

"The state's treasury is no less public property than its waters or its land," he said.

Tribe said the racketeering charges are appropriate even though they stem from personal injuries suffered by the smokers.

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### THE BATTALION INSIDETODAY

**NEW FACES:** The Texas A&M Football Team looks to three new coaches to help guide the Aggies into the 1997 season.

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