



Childers begins term of student body president

By REBECCA TORRELLAS
THE BATTALION

Curtis Childers, a junior agricultural development major, was sworn in as student body president last night at the Student Senate meeting, although he has already begun some duties.

Childers has selected his executive council and has met with members of the administration and Texas A&M Board of Regents.

"It's amazing how immediately you become a source for

people," Childers said. "You realize all your time belongs to 43,000 students."

Childers said current student body president Carl Baggett has walked him through the responsibilities of the office and has been a great help.

"Carl advised me to block out two to three hours a week for personal maintenance," Childers said.

Baggett said he told Childers to remember he represents the students.

"A student body president

is a representative," he said, "a resource and advocate for the students."

Baggett said he had a great year with the help of several organizations on campus.

"With the work of Chris Williams, president of Memorial Student Center, Stephen Foster with the Corps Of Cadets, Jason Jordan with Interfraternity Council, Eric Curley and the Black Awareness Committee, as well as other organizations on campus, we were able to co-program and communicate on

issues in a more effective way than in the past," Baggett said.

Childers said individual committee chairs should be selected during the summer to begin ground work for the fall.

Jeremiah Williams, vice president of student relations and a junior agricultural economics major, said it is easier to talk to the administration during the summer when students are gone.

"This summer we're going after administration and start pushing Curtis' platform,"

Williams said. "When the [Student] Senate meets in the fall, all the research can already be done."

Kristen Paris, executive vice president and junior biomedical science major, has worked with both Childers and Baggett and said their differing leadership styles are both effective.

"Both are very welcoming to ideas," she said.

Paris said she wants to ensure her position is one of action.

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Derek Demere, THE BATTALION

Student Body President **Curtis Childers** is sworn in at the Student Senate meeting Wednesday night.



Ryan Rogers, THE BATTALION

For the Birds Marisol Salazar, a junior wildlife and fisheries sciences major, feeds Avery and Zea, two of the 39 ostriches cared for at the Wildlife and Exotic Animals Center.

Council votes to close busy street

Only northbound traffic will be allowed through Munson Avenue

By JOEY JEANETTE SCHLUETER
THE BATTALION

Residents' complaints of excessive traffic have prompted the partial closing of one end of College Station's Munson Avenue in two to three weeks.

The College Station City Council voted last Thursday to temporarily close the street allowing only northbound traffic.

Munson Avenue connects Harvey Road and Lincoln Avenue. The closure will stop traffic entering Munson from Lincoln and redesign the intersection to better accommodate traffic around the neighborhood.

Ashburn Avenue, which is parallel to Munson, will be barricaded as well to avoid traffic from making a detour through the residential area.

City transportation planner Ed Hard said the road would be closed to target southbound traffic.

"We have to get the necessary equipment for the partial closing," he said, "and we have to buy addi-

tional special signs." About 7,000 cars travel through the area each day. The closing and redesigning of the avenue will reduce that number by half.

Cliff Lareson, a College Station resident whose house is located on Munson, attended the city council meeting. He said the traffic along Munson is a major problem for the neighborhood.

"The road is bumpy and not well lit," Lareson said. "I have kids, and I am concerned. I think the city should do something to keep all the traffic from making a shortcut through town."

Angela Perry, a resident of the University Oaks duplexes and a business graduate student, said she uses Munson to drive to and from campus each day.

"I go down Munson because it is easier and quicker than going down Texas to Harvey Road," she said. "You may have to stop at a couple of stop signs, but at least it is not a lot of traffic and red lights."

"The road is bumpy and not well lit. I have kids, and I am concerned."

Cliff Lareson
College Station resident

Survivors observe 50th anniversary of Texas City disaster

TEXAS CITY, Texas (AP) — It was sunny just like that Wednesday in 1947. This time, though, it was peaceful.

Fifty years to the minute after a French freighter exploded in the Texas City harbor, gray-haired survivors bowed their heads in a moment of silence, remembering the 576 people who died in the nation's worst industrial disaster.

"If it was just a little bit cooler, it would be an exact replica of the day 50 years ago," said Jeanne McCauley, nodding at the blue sky streaked with white, wispy clouds. "It was just like this, and within an hour, it was just like midnight."

An explosion at 9:12 a.m. aboard the S.S. *Grandcamp*, loaded with 2,300 tons of ammonium nitrate fertilizer, shattered windows up to 25 miles away and blew two small planes out of the sky.

The blast caused other explosions and fires in the huge petrochemical complex of the Galveston Bay city. A 15-foot tidal wave tossed a 150-foot-long barge 200 feet away onto land. It took nearly a week to put out all the fires.

The disaster injured about 5,000 people. Nearly a third of Texas City's residents were either killed or hurt.

"It was really like the war had started all over again," said McCauley, describing the horror of seeing injured people being taken to hospitals. "Some of their arms were dangling. I saw one man whose face was split down the center and hanging open."

Mattie Lou Higgs was one of the many survivors among the 4,000 people attending the memorial service. Her 31-year-old husband and 26 other firefighters died when the

Grandcamp exploded. "When he was leaving the house, there was just a feeling that came over me that I would never see him again," she recalled, wiping her eyes. "He was backing the car out of the driveway, and I ran out and called to him, 'Please, be careful,' but I don't know whether he heard me."

Higgs' granddaughter sat beside her on a wooden bench in the high school football stadium.

A 9-year-old great-granddaughter joined other children to sing "Each of us is a flower" for the crowd.

"It always helps," said Higgs, who has attended other commemorations over the years, "to know that other people care."

The city's fire chief rang a single bell 50 times to toll the years gone by. Sixty-three wreaths of red and white flowers — one for each of the graves of unknown victims — later were taken to Memorial Park cemetery.

Artfest '97 showcases student work

By GRAHAM HARVEY
THE BATTALION

Artfest '97 began last night in the Visual Arts Gallery of the Memorial Student Center, inviting the students and faculty of Texas A&M to view and appreciate student art for the rest of the semester.

Clyde Brown, a senior environmental design major and former chair of the Visual Arts Committee, helped organize the event.

"The purpose of the Visual Arts Committee is to increase awareness of art on campus," Brown said. "Artfest is an effective way to do that because it profiles student art."

Artfest is a prize-oriented contest, Brown said, with artwork separated into the categories of painting, drawing, computer-generated art, sculpture and photography. First, second and third prizes are awarded for each category, as well as honorable mentions. Artfest also presents a best-of-show award, Brown said.

Students entered 105 works of art this year, some with multiple entries. More than half of the contestants, who paid a \$5 entry fee, are architecture majors.

Three art professionals from fine arts schools throughout the nation judged the contest, and winners received gift certificates from

local art supply stores.

"Artfest is an opportunity to see first-hand that students all over campus are participating in art, even though there's no fine arts college," Brown said.

Colin Davis, a senior environmental design major, submitted two oil paintings to the contest. He said one of his photography professors encouraged him to enter.

One of the works was completed while Davis was studying in Italy. It metaphorically depicts his observations of the city, including such structures as rooftops and towers, he said.

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Corps, fraternity host fight for charity

By REBECCA TORRELLAS
THE BATTALION

Kappa Sigma is sponsoring Fight Night, 10 boxing matches pitting fraternity members against members of the Corps of Cadets, tonight at 8 at Lakeview Dance Hall on Tabor Road.

Danny Webber, a Kappa Sigma member and a senior agricultural engineering major, said the competitors have undergone basic boxing training.

"They've been in mandatory

training for two months," Webber said. "They are also members of the U.S.A. Amateur Boxing Association."

Webber said the matches will consist of three, one-minute rounds. Each fighter will receive a trophy.

Advance tickets are available for \$6 at Rother's or Marooned Records and \$8 at the door.

Webber said a portion of the profits will go to the Make-A-Wish Foundation.

"It is a charity that takes care of terminally ill children," Webber said.

"They help the children do what they wish to do before they go."

Webber said the fraternity promised the charity \$1,000.

David Hakimi, a Kappa Sigma member and a senior political science major, said getting together with the Corps to set up the fights was a good idea.

"There have been fights with fraternities against other fraternities," Hakimi said. "Now we have a twist to it with the rivalry, which makes things different."

Chad Hatfield, a Kappa Sigma member and a junior wildlife and fisheries sciences major, said the event was inspired by a similar event at Southwest Texas State University.

"It's a unique system here at A&M since we have the Corps," Hatfield said. "Makes it more interesting."

Hatfield said this is the first year Kappa Sigma has sponsored the fight.

"We hope to make it a tradition," Hatfield said.

Experts examine 'fuzzy' citizenship tests

WASHINGTON (AP) — To become an American citizen, Yolanda Bolanos of Maryland had to answer three questions about the U.S. government and write the sentence, "How is the day today?"

An immigration officer in California fired 10 questions at Juan Noguera, including fairly tough ones like: "How many amendments are there to the Constitution?" (Answer: 27.)

"It's the luck of the draw," says Blossom Chen, a teacher who helps immigrants at the E. Manfred Evans Community Adult School in Los Angeles.

The government's fuzzy test guidelines are getting more attention at a time when the number of citizenship applications is increasing wildly in response to the new welfare law and a crackdown on illegal immigrants. An estimated 1.8 million people will apply for citizenship this year, up from 300,000 in 1992.

Struggling to keep up, the Immigration

and Naturalization Service has hired a consulting firm to do a \$4.3 million review of the naturalization process from application to oath — the third such study in three years.

Immigrant advocates and experts say qualified applicants sometimes fail because their accents are too heavy for the examiner to understand, an examiner simply has had a bad day or because they can not answer obscure questions such as "What is the Ninth Amendment?" (Answer: It states that Americans may enjoy rights not mentioned in the Constitution.)

Yin-Man Che recently sat down with an immigration officer in Los Angeles who quizzed him about matters on his application such as the Constitution, polygamy, allegiance, drugs and the armed forces.

"I replied, but the examiner just stared at me," recalled the 68-year-old retired Chinese cook. "The examiner looked at me in a blank way and said 'goodbye.' So I said 'goodbye' back and left."

So, you'd like to be an American...

Here are 10 of the 100 sample questions that Immigration and Naturalization Service employees use to test would-be citizens' knowledge of U.S. history and government. The answers follow.

1. How many stripes are on the flag?
2. Why do we celebrate the Fourth of July?
3. Who elects the president of the United States?
4. What is the Constitution?
5. What are the names of each of the branches of our government?
6. Who said "Give me liberty or give me death"?
7. What is the basic belief of the Declaration of Independence?
8. What is the national anthem of the United States?
9. Who signs bills from Congress into law?
10. Name one right guaranteed by the First Amendment.

Answers

1. 13. 2. To celebrate Americans' anniversary of their independence. 3. The electoral college. 4. The supreme, or highest law of the land. 5. Legislative, executive, judicial. 6. Patrick Henry. 7. That all men are created equal. 8. The Star-Spangled Banner. 9. The president. 10. The First Amendment guarantees the freedom of speech, press, religion, peaceable assembly and requesting (petitioning) for changes in the government.

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