

## NEWS BRIEFS

## Red Cross conducts campus blood drive

The American Red Cross and Blood Bank are conducting a blood drive at Texas A&M today through Thursday. Donation buses are at the Memorial Student Center, the Commons and Spence Street from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Donors will receive a free T-shirt.

## Class of '97 awaits approval of gift

The Class of '97 is waiting for final approval of its class gift, a \$60,000 endowment for renovations of the Grove. David Recht, class gift chair and a senior civil engineering major, said money will be deposited in an account maintained by the Texas A&M Foundation. There, the \$60,000 will earn interest, which will be used for future renovations approved by the MSC director.

Recht said he and Richard Biondi, a representative of the Foundation, have secured the endowment. He said it awaits approval of Dr. J. Malon Southerland, president for student affairs.

The class also has given \$3,000 to the Association of Former Students account. This money will be used at the discretion of class agents for smaller class reunion costs, Recht said. Recht said the money for the gifts was raised by the Class of '97 over the last four years through sales of Dance tickets, Elephant Walk T-shirts and other class memorabilia.

## False alarm triggers evacuation of Evans

More than 1,800 students and faculty in the Evans Library were evacuated for about 30 minutes yesterday after a fire alarm went off around 3 p.m.

The University Police Department reported that a contractor working on construction near the library set off the alarm accidentally.

The College Station Fire Department responded to the alarm to assure it was false.

## Institute to sponsor research symposium

The Research and Technology Transfer Symposium, a one-day program on information and technologies available in food safety, processing, marketing and policy, will be held in the Theater Complex Sept. 30.

The Institute of Food Science and Engineering will sponsor the program, which provides participants problem-solving technologies and information on the future of food processing.

For more information about the symposium contact the Institute at (937) 862-2036.

## TODAY IN THE BATTALION

## LIFESTYLES

Local Color Gallery exhibits art by A&M architecture professors.

See Page 3.

## OPINION

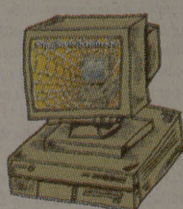
Waylay: PTTS appeals process needs improvement concerning time management.

See Page 5.

## ONLINE

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## PTTS offers ticket appeal process

By JOEY JEANETTE SCHLUETER  
THE BATTALION

More than 100,000 parking tickets are issued each year at Texas A&M University, and about 10 percent are appealed by students, faculty and A&M visitors, Parking, Transit and Traffic Services said.

Tom Williams, director of PTTS, said the number of appealed citations that are dismissed, meaning the violator does not have to pay the ticket, varies each semester.

■ See related column, Page 5.

"Very few people appeal their citations," Williams said.

"We receive about 100 appeals a week during the year."

Williams said students and faculty have two options when appealing a citation.

"We are only the first level of appeal," Williams said.

"If the driver does not like our decision, then they can appeal to the appeals panel for the University. Our decision is not final."

The PTTS procedure for appealing a citation re-

quires that a driver first pay a bond in the amount of the ticket and then fill out an appeals form stating why the driver thinks he or she should not have been ticketed. Parking counselors, four full-time counselors and four student workers with the same authority, consider the appeal. It then is directed to the adjudicator, who makes the final decision.

If the driver then feels the appeal decision is not fair, it can be presented to the University appeals panel, which consists of four to six faculty, staff and students. The procedure for appealing citations by PTTS is under "Parking Tickets" in the University Regulations Handbook.

Williams said only six or seven ticket appeals go before the University Appeals Panel each year.

When considering the dismissal of a citation, Williams said a driver's history of University citations is considered in the appeals process.

"Usually the ticket is dismissed if it is a first-time citation for the driver," he said, "but in cases of abusing the system, the citation may be reduced, or the appeal is denied."

Please see PTTS on Page 6.

## PTTS Appeals Process

Pay bond in amount of the ticket and fill out appeals form

Adjudicator dismisses or reduces fine, or denies appeal

If not satisfied, appeal to University Appeals Panel

GRAPHIC: Tim Moog



PHOTOGRAPH: Tim Moog

**Splish Splash** Emily Varnell, senior kinesiology major, instructs a water aerobics class for students and faculty called "Fit Life" in the indoor pool of the Rec Center Monday afternoon.

## Space station commander suffers from heart troubles

Cosmonaut's condition could lead to delay in planned repairs

MOSCOW (AP) — The commander of the crippled space station Mir complained of an irregular heartbeat Monday and asked nervously whether he was healthy enough to take part in a vital mission to repair the damaged Russian spacecraft.

"For crying out loud!" cosmonaut Vasily Tsibliyev exclaimed after reporting his symptoms. "This is bad timing."

"You have to calm down!" a doctor from Mission Control told him repeatedly, urging the 43-year-old crew leader to get more sleep.

"Will I be able to make the trip?" Tsibliyev asked, referring to the repair mission.

"Let us think and see," the doctor replied.

In coming days, either Tsibliyev or his crewmate, Alexander Lazutkin, needs to make a trek into the airless, ruptured Spektr module — one of six modules that make up the Mir — on a mission to restore full power in the space station, home to the two cosmonauts and American Michael Foale.

A final dress rehearsal for the five-hour mission is set for Tuesday — three weeks after the Spektr was hit by a cargo ship, forcing the crew to seal it off and disconnect the power cables.

The accident was the latest in a series of mishaps that have struck the 11-year-old orbiting station since February, when Tsibliyev began what has turned out to be a tense tour of space duty.

Tsibliyev blamed his heart problem on the stress of the collision, which occurred while he was practicing docking the cargo ship using manual controls.

Valery Lyndin, a spokesman for Russian Mission Control, said Tsibliyev's heart rate showed some irregularities during a recent ride on a stationary bike, but his condition did not appear to be serious.

Russian officials downplayed concerns over Tsibliyev's health, saying a shift in the crew's sleeping schedule last week may have played a role in his symptoms Monday.

"Tsibliyev is a late riser, and he has been struggling to adjust to the schedule all the time," deputy mission chief Viktor Blagov told The Associated Press.

There was a note of exasperation in Blagov's comments. "We have been hearing his complaints of a workload being too heavy since the very first day of his flight," he said at another point. "Maybe it's just personal and he can't work as fast as we urge him to."

Blagov refused to speculate whether Tsibliyev's condition might lead them to postpone Saturday's planned venture into the Spektr.

"Let's wait until doctors make their conclusion and not do any guesswork," he said.

## Texas to open DNA database of sex offenders

DALLAS (AP) — Texas is joining the list of states using "genetic fingerprints" to try solving sexual crimes.

A computer database is being filled with the DNA information of some criminals. Authorities hope for it to one day be an important crime-fighting tool both on state and national levels.

About 500 DNA profiles have been entered in a few months into the database, known as Combined DNA Index System, or CODIS.

Dr. Meghan Mendenhall, who supervises the Texas Department of Public Safety program, said she expects to eventually add about 1,000 records per month.

"The purpose is to provide DNA profiles that law enforcement agencies can search through, like a fingerprint data-

base," Mendenhall said. "The ultimate purpose is to solve sexual assault crimes for which there are no suspects."

The system will allow police to conduct electronic searches based on fluid or tissue samples, similar to the way fingerprint matches are currently sought.

Investigators have yet to test the system; therefore, no crimes have been solved with it.

"We knew it would take some time to build," said state Rep. Brian McCall, R-Plano, who sponsored the 1995 law that created the database. "But I'm ready for a hit. I'm ready for it to prove its value."

Since the FBI sponsored the creation of a DNA database in the late 1980s, all but four states have passed laws requiring certain convicts to submit samples, said

Dawn Herkenham of the FBI forensic science systems unit.

Some states collect DNA samples from people convicted of murder, assault, robbery and kidnapping.

Texas requires any adult convicted of a sex crime to submit a blood sample, regardless of when the crime was committed. Juveniles who committed a sex crime on or after Jan. 1, 1996, also must provide blood samples, as must certain adult probationers and parolees.

Officials note that sex offenders often strike more than once — sometimes after they've been convicted and released.

The state spent about \$700,000 building its DNA lab in an old bus garage. Mendenhall said it will take about \$800,000 per year to run the program.

## Merchants dispute proposed hotel site

By ROBERT SMITH  
THE BATTALION

Some Northgate business owners say the revitalization efforts in the area may be threatened after the College Station City Council voted to have a hotel and conference center built at Wolf Pen Creek rather than Northgate.

Some Northgate merchants believe a Northgate hotel and conference center would be more beneficial to the community than one at Wolf Pen Creek.



Don Ganter, owner of the Dixie Chicken, said the city made a mistake by voting for the Wolf Pen Creek site.

Ganter said the city should have considered proximity to Texas A&M in their decision on the hotel location.

"It's real stupid," Ganter said. "My observation is that it is incompetent not to understand that the reason people come to the Brazos Valley is Texas A&M University."

The city voted 4-3 on Thursday to begin negotiations for a Wolf Pen Creek hotel, office building and conference center. Citizens will vote in November to decide if the hotel will be built.

Ganter said a Northgate hotel would be more convenient to visitors of A&M and would help revitalize the area.

"This one (hotel) would be right across the street from the school and there would be no transportation problems," Ganter said. "It would also rejuvenate an old part of town."

Mayor Lynn McIlhenny said Wolf Pen Creek offered more development opportunities than Northgate.

"The Northgate vicinity is already developed and the Wolf Pen Creek will allow more development with businesses," McIlhenny said. "It was a matter of choosing development over redevelopment."

Please see HOTEL on Page 6.

## Report shows AIDS deaths are declining

WASHINGTON (AP) — Deaths from AIDS are dropping — 19 percent during the first nine months of 1996 — with white men accounting for most of the change, the government announced Monday.

Deaths among minorities and women are not declining nearly as much, and AIDS activists warned that the gap will widen as more poor people cannot afford the expensive drugs that promise to prolong their lives.

"AIDS is not over. If we act like it is, it may never be," warned Daniel Zingale of the advocacy group AIDS Action.

Some 30,700 Americans died of AIDS between January and September 1996, down from 37,900 during the same time period in 1995, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported.

The CDC reported in February that AIDS deaths had dropped during the first six months of 1996, the first decrease since the epidemic began in 1981. Monday's report tracks an additional three months to show the trend is continuing.

Please see AIDS on Page 6.