

NEWS BRIEFS

Today marks 10-week Q-drop deadline

Today is the last day for Texas A&M students enrolled in the 10-week summer session to Q-drop classes. To Q-drop a course, contact the department adviser. The last day to Q-drop for second summer session classes is July 28.

Former student to announce candidacy

State Rep. Steve Holzhauser (R-Texas) will announce his candidacy for Texas Railroad Commissioner at the Texas Railroad Commission at 3 p.m. today. Holzhauser is chair of the House Energy Resources Committee and is on the House Ways and Means Committee. Holzhauser is a graduate of the graduate program in veterinary medicine at Texas A&M. Commissioner Barry Williamson is expected to seek another office.

Water tests barred from Chevron trial

HOUSTON (AP) — Tests indicating dangerous crude oil contaminants in a Houston neighborhood have been barred as evidence in an ongoing trial against Chevron USA.

The test results, obtained from the Houston legal department, showed a few samples that contain pollutants and no results indicating contaminants at dangerous levels, say independent drinking experts contacted by the Houston Chronicle. Nevertheless, U.S. District Judge Kenneth Hoy has barred the tests from evidence at the request of plaintiffs attorney John O'Quinn, who claims the city may have been biased in its testing approach.

Residents in Kennedy Heights in southeast Houston claim contaminants from three abandoned crude oil pits below their neighborhood infiltrated the water supply and are to blame for cases of leukemia, cancer, birth defects and other immune system diseases in the neighborhood.

Galveston causeway may be replaced

GALVESTON (AP) — After nearly 30 years of use and 37 years after its last renovation, the Galveston Causeway could be headed for replacement.

The Texas Department of Transportation is about to begin a \$100 million study to determine whether Galveston County needs a new link between the island and the mainland.

The study could recommend construction of a new causeway — probably at a cost of \$40 million. Another \$30 million of improvements to Interstate 45 also could be required.

TODAY IN BATTALION

LIFESTYLES

Get a haircut and get a real look. Students begin preparing themselves for the 'real world.'

See Page 3.

OPINION

National Endowment for the Arts prevents lack of originality in society.

See Page 5.

ONLINE

http://bat-web.tamu.edu

Look for the wire, AP's 4-hour online news source.

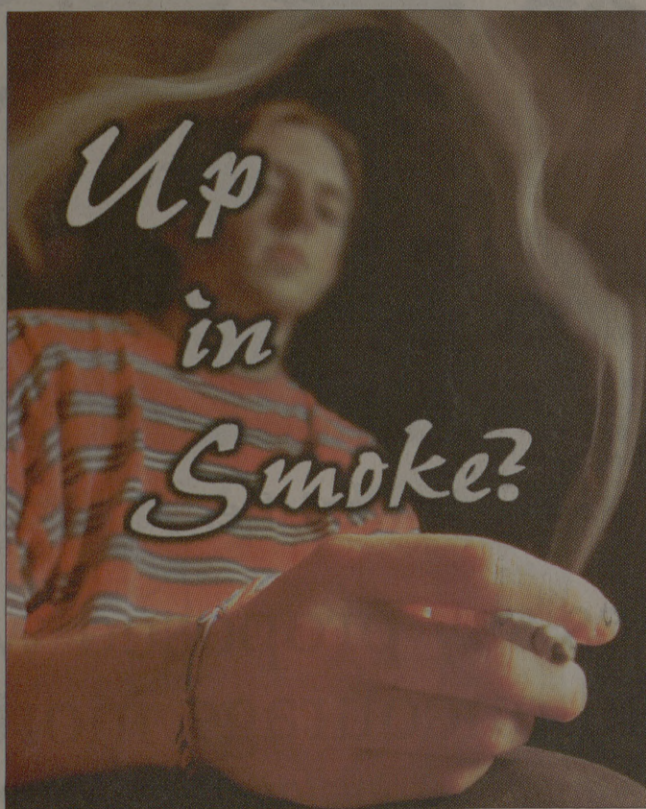
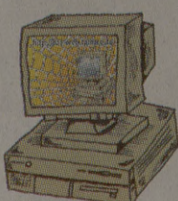


PHOTO ILLUSTRATION: Tim Moog

Students remain divided over tobacco regulation

By ROBERT SMITH
THE BATTALION

Texas A&M students have mixed opinions about the possibility that the tobacco industry will pay billions of dollars to pay for the costs of treating smoking-related diseases and will be forced to stop advertising aimed at children.

Rajesh Vijayagopal, a smoker and an aerospace engineering graduate student, said tobacco companies should not be held responsible for smoking-related illnesses.

"There's a Surgeon General's warning on every pack, and people know what these things do," Vijayagopal said.

Kimberly Kinnebrew, a nonsmoker and a senior education major, said the tobacco industry should pay for damages caused by tobacco.

"I think it's a smart thing to do," she said. "If anyone should pay for it, the cigarette companies should."

Last month, state attorneys general

and the tobacco industry announced an agreement that would require cigarette companies to pay \$368.5 billion over the next 25 years to compensate states for the costs of treating smoking-related illnesses, to finance nationwide anti-smoking programs and to underwrite health care for uninsured children.

The U.S. Congress must approve the settlement for it to go into effect. Congressional debate is expected to conclude no earlier than the fall.

All cigarette advertising and marketing aimed at underage smokers would cease, including Phillip Morris' Marlboro Man campaign. R.J. Reynolds voluntarily dropped its Joe Camel campaign for Camel cigarettes, which the government says was designed to attract younger smokers, earlier this month.

Kinnebrew said this will help decrease the number of underage smokers.

Please see TOBACCO on Page 6.

Buyoff claims arise in court

MIAMI (AP) — Philip Morris, the nation's biggest cigarette maker, paid a small competitor's legal bills for months in an attempt to buy its silence about the dangers of smoking, an attorney charged Monday.

Stanley Rosenblatt, an attorney for flight attendants suing the tobacco industry for \$5 billion because of illnesses they blame on smoky cabin air, made the charge with the jury out of the room during testimony by Liggett Group owner Bennett LeBow.

Please see COURT on Page 6.

Ironsides sets sail for anniversary

(AP) — Its masts and six billowing white sails towering above the New England waters it once protected, the oak warship nicknamed Old Ironsides set out Monday under its own power for the first time in 116 years.

An estimated 100,000 people on land and sea watched as the *USS Constitution* left its temporary anchorage at Marblehead, Mass., on a one-hour voyage marking its 200th anniversary. The ship is normally docked at Boston's Charlestown Navy Yard, where it has been a floating museum for generations.

The oldest commissioned warship in the world was saluted by modern naval escorts: the Blue Angels flying team, which zoomed past 300 feet above the deck, and the guided missile destroyer *USS Ramage* and guided missile frigate *USS Halyburton*.

The 44-gun frigate sailed the Atlantic at a modest speed of four knots in light winds.

"I'm kind of speechless, you know," said boatswain's mate Joe Wilson, captain of the deck. "I wanted to cry. They were tears of joy."

Please see IRONSIDES on Page 6.



PHOTOGRAPH: Stew Milne

Walking on Air

Construction workers attach the fourth floor skywalk between Sterling C. Evans library and the student study and computing center Monday morning.

Computers may replace Scantrons for testing at A&M

By JENARA KOCKS
THE BATTALION

Texas A&M students may have to trade in their No. 2 pencils for a keyboard and their Scantrons for a computer in the future.

Scantrons are a common way to test students, but some departments at Texas A&M and the Scantron Corporation are developing programs that may be used to test students at a computer terminal.

Willis Marty, a senior lecturer for the Department of Computer Science, said computers will be used more for testing in the future.

However, he said one problem must be solved before computer testing can be used as frequently as Scantrons.

"The replacement of Scantrons

will occur when you can ensure the person taking the test is the one doing the work," he said.

Charles Hughes, an outbound sales representative for Scantron Corp. in Tustin, Calif., said the company is concerned that taking tests on computers will be as popular as using Scantrons and is developing technology to keep up with the times.

Hughes said that with Scantron Corporation's ParTEST Online teachers can create tests that their students can take on computers.

But Hughes said teachers will not use this technology for some time.

"Lots of schools don't have the resources to buy personal computers for all their students," Hughes said.

Hughes also said some teachers will not feel comfortable using com-

puters and will stick with letting their students fill in the bubbles.

Marty said A&M students can use computers to take tutorials or quizzes to help them study for paper exams.

Dr. Martin Gunn, a professor of biochemistry, said that Tim Chester of Computer and Information Systems wrote a computer tutorial program for Gunn's section of Biochemistry 410 that will be available to students this fall through Gunn's Web site.

Gunn said the tutorial's multiple choice questions will be similar to questions on his exams. The program will grade the students' answers, and students will see which questions they missed and the correct answers.

Please see TESTS on Page 6.



GRAPHIC: Ed Goodwin

Some Northern Ireland Protestants out of negotiation talks

BELFAST, Northern Ireland (AP) — Irish Republican Army supporters took their place at the site of Northern Ireland peace talks Monday, prompting some Protestant politicians to bolt for the door.

The largest pro-British Protestant party is still talking with the government, however, despite the party's suspicions about the IRA's new cease-fire.

"They're not walking, we're still trying, so the talks process still holds," Northern Ireland Secretary Mo Mowlam said.

Locked out of the talks for 13 months, senior figures of the IRA-allied Sinn Fein party entered their offices thanks to the open-ended truce the IRA launched Sunday.

British Prime Minister Tony Blair has indicated Sinn Fein can join other parties in negotiations on Northern Ireland's future

if the IRA holds its fire until Sept. 15. For now Sinn Fein can use an office at Stormont, the center of British administration in east Belfast, and start talking informally with anyone who's willing.

On Monday, that meant potential allies including Irish Foreign Minister Ray Burke, leading the Irish government team, and leaders of Sinn Fein's moderate rival for Catholic votes, the Social Democratic and Labor Party.

Sinn Fein's enemies made clear their distaste. The Rev. Ian Paisley's Democratic Unionists avoided Stormont entirely, while the small United Kingdom Unionist Party walked out right after Sinn Fein came in.

"We are talking here about people with a Stalinist or Fascist ideologue mentality," said U.K. Unionist leader Bob McCartney,

who represents Northern Ireland's most affluent legislative district and is one of the province's top lawyers. "There is no question of you meeting them on a rational basis, having your arguments or their arguments subjected to logic and reason. These people are programmed."

Sinn Fein Chairman Mitchel McLaughlin dismissed McCartney's protest.

"Unionist leaders in the past have walked away from the process, only to come back," he said.

Critically, the leader of the largest Protestant party, David Trimble, led an Ulster Unionist delegation to meet Blair in London. Trimble said he'd won no concessions but spoke of "some possibilities of progress."

"We will not shirk our responsibilities. We

are not in the mode of walking out, we're there to try and achieve things," Trimble said. His party received 32.7 percent of the Northern Ireland vote in May's national elections, the largest share of any party.

The British and Irish governments, which cosponsor the talks, have drawn up rules for when the IRA must start disarming during negotiations, the longtime Protestant demand that the IRA insists will never happen.

The rules are supposed to be put to a vote Wednesday, but Trimble says he will torpedo them because they call only for "due progress" toward IRA disarmament — but no guarantees that the British government will expel Sinn Fein if the IRA doesn't cough up guns or explosives at a specific point.