

BRIEFS

UPD responds to bomb threat

The Blocker building received a bomb threat Friday, the University Police Department said. Bob Wiatt, director of UPD, said someone called an office in Blocker 12:30 p.m. and said, "Listen carefully. A bomb is set to go off in Blocker in one hour."

Wiatt said an A&M employee in Blocker called UPD at 12:31 p.m., and students were evacuated from the building two minutes later when UPD arrived.

He said the UPD did not find a bomb and students were allowed in the building after the investigation is finished at 2:15 p.m.

Wiatt said he did not believe the call was a serious threat because only a very complicated timing device could be set to explode in an hour.

"We get a number of these bomb threats," he said. "It's not common."

Republic of Texas trials begin Monday

ALPINE, Texas (AP) — An end to years of turmoil may be near for the community that first endured separatist Richard McLaren's paper war, as it hung on through actual gunplay. The first group from McLaren's Republic of Texas will go on trial Monday. Defendants say the proceedings may provide a measure of relief in the secluded Davis Mountains Resort, where the armed separatists held scores of lawmen at bay for a week last spring.

Authorities say Republic followers are retaliating for the arrest of a group member on weapons charges April 27 when they shot their way into resident Joe Rowe's house in the resort, a rural subdivision 175 miles northeast of El Paso.

By the time the siege ended May 1 with the group's surrender, 300 state troopers, Texas Rangers and other officers had descended on the area west of Fort Davis, where McLaren operated an "embassy" in a trailer and cabin.

Repairs start after railroad collision

HOUSTON (AP) — Gusty winds slowed efforts to reopen a Union Pacific rail line Sunday, a day after a two-train collision closed it.

Four crewmen were injured Saturday when two trains collided on the city's southwest side, sending up a huge fireball and thick black smoke that could be seen for miles.

Positions available in Student Senate

There are openings in the Student Senate for two positions: College of Agriculture senator and Off-campus senator. Applications are due Oct. 31 in 27 Koldus.

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Video Pick of the Week: *Halloween Grave*, starring *Wan McGregor*, a must-see. See Page 3

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Texas A&M Soccer Team clinches Big 12 championship with win over Colorado. See Page 7

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Practices of Dr. Jack Kevorkian warrant deep scrutiny. See Page 9

online

http://bat-web.tamu.edu
Keep up with state and national news through The Fire, AP's 24-hour online news service.

Groups support anti-drug parade

By RACHEL DAWLEY
Staff writer

Texas A&M organizations promoted a drug-free community Saturday at the Red Ribbon Week Festival in downtown Bryan.

The parade featured A&M's Parson's Mounted Cavalry (PMC), College Station Mayor Lynn McIlhenny and the Bryan Police Department's D.A.R.E. car.

Alpha Phi Omega, an A&M service fraternity, and the Bonfire Alcohol Awareness Committee also participated in the event.

Paul Simone, commander of PMC and a senior agriculture systems management major, said the parade encourages involvement between A&M and the Bryan-College

Station community.

"The parade was an opportunity for us to show our support for the community," he said. "This builds relationships with the community and brings favorable publicity to A&M and the Corps."

Booths in front of the Palace Theatre provided information about Bryan-College Station groups and programs promoting drug awareness.

Bonfire Alcohol Awareness Committee, a group encouraging an alcohol-free Bonfire, had an information table at the event.

Heather Hettick, director of the committee and a senior biomedical science major, said the group participated in the event to show its support of the community's efforts.

"People can ask questions and talk about their concerns about Bonfire," she said. "It (the parade) is a way to improve the image of Bonfire in the community. The community supports so much of what we do, and we wanted them to know we are supporting what they are doing."

Rachel Ferguson, projects chair for Alpha Phi Omega and a senior interdisciplinary studies major, said the event allows children to see A&M students supporting a drug-free environment.

"It is good to get kids aware that it is OK not to drink and do drugs," she said. "Kids often have bad role models. This shows them that there are people out there who don't drink and do drugs."

The Brazos Valley Council on Alcohol and

"The community supports so much of what we do, and we wanted them to know we are supporting what they are doing."

HEATHER HETTICK
DIRECTOR

BONFIRE ALCOHOL AWARENESS COMMITTEE

Substance Abuse and the Prevention Resource Center Region 7 sponsored the event.

Helping hand



Eric Hyche, a sophomore geography major, helps Heidi Ridenhour, a senior German and history major, take off her boots in front of the Administration Building Sunday morning.

AMY DUNLAP/THE BATTALION

Center funding sought

By BRANDYE BROWN
Staff writer

Texas A&M administration currently is studying funding options for building the new Student Leadership Retreat Center.

The center, which will be near Easterwood Airport, will provide a facility for student organization events. Stephen Dunn, assistant director for Student Activities, said the estimated cost for the first phase of the project is more than \$11 million.

"Our hope is to be able to depend on donations," he said. "We will aggressively pursue gifts. This will be an attractive facility for people interested in being visible to students involved in leadership activities."

Dunn said the land for the facility has been designated by the Board of Regents, and another plot next to the land was a gift to the University, for a total of around 130 acres.

Dunn said money from student fees probably will be necessary.

Bill Kibler, associate vice president for Student Affairs, said there is no time line for building the center because funding is not available yet.

"The primary source will most likely be a student fee analogous to the recreation center, but not as large," Kibler said. "That way, bonds could be issued to fund the building and be paid off over time. We still need research on the funding and amounts of student fees and to engage students across the campus, show them the end result, the cost and ask if they support it."

Carolyn Adair, director of Student Activities, said the Department of Student Activities has presented funding issues to student groups such as the Student Government Association, MSC Council, Student Leader Advisory Board and other students have requested information.

"We have begun to talk to student groups to decide how to pursue funding," she said.

Kibler said a referendum may be voted on in April 1998 to get the student opinion of whether the student body supports the center and the fee increase.

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A&M researcher presents findings

Effects of fetal alcohol syndrome on brain development similar to aging

By TIFFANY INBODY
Staff writer

Although newborns whose mothers consumed alcohol during pregnancy can have brains that function in some ways like an older person, they will not be wise beyond their years.

A researcher from the Texas A&M College of Medicine has found the internal clock of a fetus can be damaged permanently due to alcohol. The internal clock controls sleeping and behavior.

Dr. David Earnest, an assistant professor in the Department of Human Anatomy and Medical Neurobiology, presented a paper on this topic at the Society for Neuroscience meeting yesterday in New Orleans.

Using rats, Earnest studied the effects of alcohol on brain development.

"The effects of ethanol (alcohol) during a period of rapid brain development are very similar to aging," he said.

Fetal alcohol syndrome is a group of birth defects including growth retardation, central nervous system dysfunction and facial abnormalities. Between 7,000 and 12,000 babies are born with FAS each year in the United States.

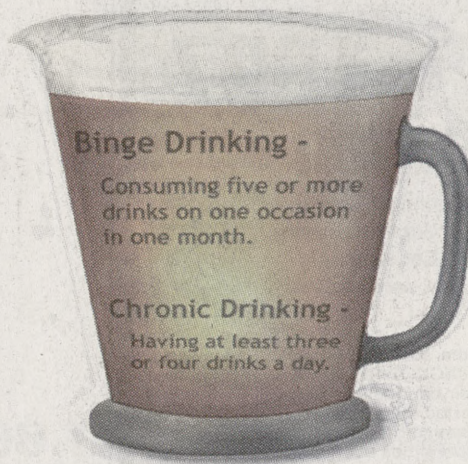
Although these defects are completely preventable, FAS is the leading cause of mental retardation in the United States.

As healthy adults age, they can no longer sleep through the night. Some people go to sleep as soon as the sun goes down and wake up a few hours later, unable to sleep.

While this may resemble a newborn baby's pattern of sleep, for babies with FAS, this may not be a phase. Earnest said this pattern of sleep may continue into adulthood.

A hormone in the brain allows a person to stay asleep. As a person ages, levels of this hormone fall.

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Source: Texas Dept. of Health

PROFILE:



Hopgood

M.T. 'Ted' Hopgood

By RACHEL DAWLEY
Staff writer

Maj. Gen. M.T. "Ted" Hopgood Jr., said as Corps of Cadets commandant, he must ensure cadets are exposed to a disciplined, spirited lifestyle that will prepare them for success in their private and professional lives.

Hopgood said the Corps will play an important role in the future of A&M as it continues to contribute to the reputation of the University.

"A&M provides so many opportunities for growth and development," he said. "A&M has a role in furthering and advancing humankind, and I am very honored and motivated to be a part of the whole process."

Danny Feather, Corps commander and a senior economics major, said Hopgood allows the cadet leadership to make decisions.

"I am impressed with his vision and experience," he said.

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Campus Leaders

Jennifer Burns

By RACHEL GEORGE
Staff writer

As the Panhellenic president, Jennifer Burns strives to improve Texas A&M and the Panhellenic system with dedication

and enthusiasm.

Meg Manning, Panhellenic adviser, said Burns' enthusiasm and energy has helped the Panhellenic system accomplish its goals.

"Jennifer is motivated and dedicated to ensuring that Panhellenic succeeds in each individual project," she said. "She is fair and genuine, and she embodies what the spirit of Panhellenic is all about."

Burns, a senior nutritional science major, said although her role as Panhellenic president has helped her learn more about sororities, she also has learned more about A&M.

"I'm a big people person," she said. "I wanted to go out into the A&M community and meet other campus leaders."



Burns

PLEASE SEE BURNS ON PAGE 2.