

BRIEFS

Position on J-Board open for Class of '00

Texas A&M Student Government is opening on the Judicial Board a member of the Class of '00. Applications are available in the Student Government office at 127 Olds and are due Dec. 8.

Yell practice to be at Hard Rock Cafe

Midnight yell practice will be Friday at the Hard Rock Cafe on the River Walk in San Antonio. The football game between Texas A&M and the University of Nebraska will be at 3:30 p.m. Saturday in San Antonio.

Co-defendant talks in ex-mayor's trial

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — A former co-defendant of former Ingleside mayor Mark Crawford took the stand Tuesday to describe events leading to a 1996 killing. Kirk Johnson was the first witness as testimony began in Crawford's capital murder retrial. Johnson described events leading to the death of businessman Nick Brueggen, 49, of Houston. Crawford is accused of kidnapping Brueggen, forcing him into a metal box and gassing him with exhaust fumes. Federal prosecutors allege the murder was committed to keep Brueggen from testifying in a California insurance scam investigation.

Bribery law upheld by Supreme Court

WASHINGTON (AP) — People can be convicted under a federal bribery law even when the transaction did not involve federal funds, the Supreme Court ruled yesterday in upholding a Texas jail official's conviction. In a unanimous ruling, the justices also said people can be convicted of racketeering-conspiracy without proof that they agreed to commit the two acts required for a conviction of an actual racketeering offense. The justices upheld the federal bribery and racketeering-conspiracy convictions of Mario Salinas, former chief of detention in Hidalgo County, Texas. He was sentenced to three years in prison and fined \$5,000 in connection with bribes prosecutors said were paid by a federal prisoner, Homero Beltran-Aguirre.

Bush appoints new Secretary of State

AUSTIN (AP) — Gov. George W. Bush's search for a new secretary of state ended not far from his Capitol office. Bush picked his lawyer, Alberto R. Gonzales, for the job. Gonzales, 42, replaces Tony Garza, who resigned last month to seek the GOP nomination for land commissioner.

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Get on the Bus: Texas A&M students work shuttling fellow Aggies across campus.

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Junior cornerback Shun Horn has emerged as a big-time player for the Aggies.

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opinion

Kelly: McCaughey septuplets' fame overshadows problem with fertility drugs.

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online

http://battalion.tamu.edu
Hook up with state and national news through The Wire, AP's 24-hour online news service.

A&M to receive graduate-study grant

By STACEY BECKS
Staff writer

Texas A&M and five schools in the Texas A&M University System will receive the Social and Behavioral Sciences Supplement from the National Science Foundation for a summer program geared toward minority students. The Texas A&M Department of Sociology is heading the program that will prepare fifteen students from A&M alliance schools for graduate study by bringing them

to College Station for courses in research and methodological techniques. Dudley Poston, a sociology professor, said the program will expose students from other schools to graduate school at A&M. "This is a wonderful opportunity for students to come to A&M to see what we offer in graduate programs," he said. Mark Fossett, a sociology professor who works with the program, said he hopes the program will bring up the number of students

from selected schools who apply to A&M graduate programs. "The sister campuses produce good students who are not prone to apply at A&M," he said. "We're hoping to change that." The departments involved in the grant are sociology, economics, psychology, educational psychology and political science. Faculty members from the participating schools will nominate students interested in the areas of study. The students will take training courses that are crucial to prepare for grad-

uate school, Fossett said. "This is a wonderful opportunity for students to come to A&M to see what we offer in graduate programs." **DUDLEY POSTON**
A&M SOCIOLOGY PROFESSOR

The supplement is part of the broader Texas Alliance for Minority Participation (AMP) grant that is trying to increase minority participation in graduate programs. Dr. Rita Caso, who works with Texas AMP, said the grant has helped almost double the number of science, math, engineering and technology bachelor of science degrees from the five alliance schools since the grant started in 1991. Texas A&M was the first institution in Texas to receive the Texas AMP, she said.

Lap top



Four-month-old **Cassandra Gordon** of College Station enjoys a visit with Santa Claus at Post Oak Mall Tuesday.

DEREK DEMERE/THE BATTALION

Campus group stresses traffic safety

Texas Aggies Making Changes reminds students of need for caution

By RACHEL DAWLEY
Staff writer

As the holiday season approaches, a group of Texas A&M students are warning drivers about traffic fatalities. Members from Texas Aggies Making Changes (TAMC) developed a program focused on highway safety. Madison Mauze, chair of TAMC and a junior chemistry major, said the program wants to remind others to drive with caution. TAMC, a group of 115 students, began last year in the Student Government Association to address student concerns on campus.

"The main focus of TAMC is to solve problems that directly face A&M students," Mauze said. "Highway safety is a huge problem. We are working to get Aggies to drive safely." University officials said 22 A&M students have been killed on roads and highways across Texas in the past 15 months. Sixteen students have died in traffic accidents since January 1997. The group is working with the Texas Department of Transportation to have billboards posted around the Bryan-College Station area to promote safe driving. The billboards will be placed on Highway 6 and Highway 21 and are scheduled to be put

up next semester. The group also sends e-mail to students and places fliers around campus as a reminder of the accidents. Committee members said they are asking people to pass the word to drive safely over the holidays. Farah Mensik, co-chair of the highway safety committee and a senior community health major, said the major focus of the committee is putting up the billboards. Mensik said the group also is speaking to Aggie Mom's Clubs around the state to inform them of traffic problems and to get donations for the project.

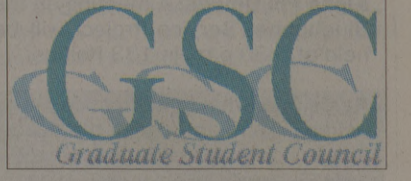
PLEASE SEE TRAFFIC ON PAGE 5.

Graduate Council requests news of changes in tuition

By ROBERT SMITH
Senior staff writer

The Texas A&M Graduate Student Council requested Monday night that the University inform students and faculty on possible changes in the price of tuition. The Texas State Legislature passed a bill last spring that reduced doctoral level graduate subvention funding to publicly supported universities, including Texas A&M. Under the bill, state universities will not receive subvention funding for students who exceed 100 hours. The legislature has given state universities the option of increasing tuition to doctoral level students who exceed 100 doctoral hours. The bill will go into effect Fall 1999. The GSC resolution requests that the subvention funding issue be addressed at the Graduate Student Orientation next semester. Clifton Griffin, GSC President and a wildlife and fishery sciences doctoral student, said graduate students should be informed on state

laws that change tuition rates. "You need to be able to plan for that," Griffin said. "We're asking for increased communication in relative policy that affects graduate students." Griffin said it is not uncommon



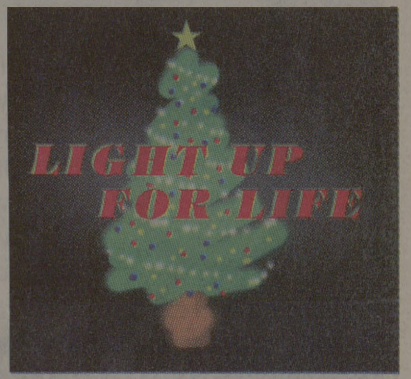
for doctoral students to surpass 100 doctoral hours and that the tuition increase could affect some students. "It is possible for a student to receive a Ph.D in four years, but it is not very probable," he said. The GSC Executive Committee will take the next step in presenting the resolution to the University. Griffin said the committee will likely present the resolution to the A&M Academic Program Council.

PLEASE SEE GRADUATE ON PAGE 5.

'Light up for Life' to benefit research

By JULIETTA JORDAN
Staff writer

The Texas A&M Cancer Society will host a "Light up for Life" reception benefiting children's cancer research in the MSC Flagroom from 6 to 8 p.m. today. The reception is in honor of people who have donated money to help fund cancer research for children. Rhonda Simper, president of the A&M Cancer Society and a senior biology major, said the Bryan-College Station community is invited to attend and will have the opportunity to donate money to help fight cancer. "It's a great time of the year to be generous," she said. The A&M Cancer Society raised \$500 this holiday season for children's cancer research. 4.0 & Go Tutoring is one of the contributors to the A&M Cancer Society. Gary Holub, manager of 4.0 & Go and Class of '96, said funding is needed for cancer research. "Sooner or later they'll find a cure, but that won't happen until they have the money to do [research]," he said. Suzanne Rigamonti, marketing chair for the A&M Cancer Society and



a junior biomedical science major, said everyone is invited to attend the reception and view the lighting of the Christmas tree in the Flagroom. Each light on the tree represents one dollar donated to children's cancer research. "The Christmas balls on the tree are dedicated to people lost to cancer or who are currently fighting cancer," she said. Rigamonti said she encourages families to attend the reception. Children will have the opportunity to visit Santa Claus, and the Reveliers and Aggie Wranglers will provide entertainment for the evening.

PLEASE SEE RADIATION ON PAGE 5.

FDA approves radiation use by meat industry to kill bacteria

STAFF AND WIRE REPORT

Searching for ways to ease food safety fears, the meat industry won approval Tuesday to zap beef with gamma rays to kill E. coli and other harmful bacteria. The Food and Drug Administration approved use of irradiation in low dosages on beef and other red meats such as lamb, and changed the dosage levels for pork, which could already be treated with gamma rays for certain disease-causing organisms. Some consumers were wary.

"It's just the word — 'radiation.' I'm not sure it's safe," said Lucy Geller, 45, who was shopping at a suburban Maryland grocery store. "It would take me a while to be comfortable with it." FDA declared that the process does not make the meat radioactive and does not trigger other changes affecting the taste, wholesomeness or nutritional content. It kills most — but not all — bacteria such as E. coli and salmonella in food. "We think it is safe and we think it is appropriate," said Dr. Michael Friedman, the acting

FDA commissioner. "But the consumer should not believe that he or she does not have to use good cooking and handling techniques." Dr. Gary Acuff, an associate professor of food microbiology at Texas A&M, said that although irradiation can kill most of the bacteria in meat, cooking meat properly can solve all of the problems. "If you cook properly, that will take care of it [bacteria]," he said. Irradiation has been available for years for poultry, pork, spices and some fresh produce, but interest in the process for beef in-

tensified after this summer's recall of 25 million pounds of Hudson Food Co. hamburger that may have been tainted with E. coli. Acuff said irradiation is used in many countries and is accepted as a safe method. "It's been used around the world," he said. "They've been using it for years in Europe." Americans are eating 13 percent less beef than in 1970, but it is still the nation's leading meat at about 64 pounds per person every year.