

# THE BATTALION

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<b>TODAY</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>TOMORROW</b>	<b>47</b>

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## NEWS BRIEFS

### Texas A&M chancellor to be featured on Web

Larry B. Thompson is proud of his role as a teacher in the state public school system, the former president of two state universities and the current chancellor of The Texas A&M University System. He will talk about those careers, other items of interest through 15 on Texas Monthly Ranch's "a Texan" Web page. Thompson is the first educator to be featured on the popular Web site, accessed through the Web site at <http://www.texasmonthly.com>. Users can ask the chancellor questions.

### Rolando Hinojosa-Smith to give lecture at A&M

A conversation with Rolando Hinojosa-Smith will take place beginning at 4 p.m. Thursday in 601 Rudder.

The lecture is a part of a continuing series sponsored by the Hispanic Studies Task Force, the Department of Modern and Classical Languages, the Department of English and the MSC Committee for the Renewal of Mexican-American Culture (CAMAC).

Hinojosa-Smith is a noted Mexican-American novelist, poet and essayist. He is a winner of the coveted Premio de las Americas prize, an annual award presented to Hispanic writers, and is a professor of English at the University of Texas at Austin.

### Heartworm hazards high with El Niño

Blame El Niño for one more thing: a higher than normal possibility that your dog or cat could get heartworms this summer.

But, prevention is still the best medicine when it comes to heartworm disease, according to a veterinarian with Texas A&M University.

"Prevention is the key," said Dr. Zoran, a veterinarian specializing in small animal medicine. "It's the best, simplest thing you can do, and there are so many products out there now."

Basically, if there are mosquitoes around — even in arid regions — there is a chance that pets will get heartworms, she said. Heartworms are transmitted to pets through the bite of a mosquito. Dogs are a natural host to heartworms, and contrary to popular belief, cats also can get heartworm disease, she said. Veterinarians at Texas A&M recommend dogs be checked annually for heartworms. And both dogs and cats — especially in East and South Texas where mosquito populations are much greater — should be kept on heartworm preventative year-round, Zoran said.

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The '98 showcases the best creative artwork, featuring entries by students from Bryan and College Station.

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Texas A&M rally comes too late in 5-4 loss to Sam Houston State Bearkats.

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## opinion

Alloway: Students should pay more attention to the Regie Code of Honor.

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## online

Look up with state and national news through The Wire, AP's 24-hour online news service.

# Student body president debate

## Nickel, Forman answer questions about platforms from students, each other

By AMANDA SMITH  
Staff writer

Student body president candidates Joe Forman and Laurie Nickel squared off Tuesday night on campus issues ranging from academics to tanning beds.

Both Nickel, a senior business

major, and Forman, a senior economics major, were given the chance to ask each other about a specific campaign platform.

Nickel asked Forman about his recommendations to improve student life by adding tanning beds to the Student Recreation Center.

"There are a lot of people who drive off campus to go tanning," Forman said during a debate before more than 100 students inside the MSC. "This could bring money to the Student Recreation Center and save the students

money in potential fee increases."

Forman asked Nickel about her recommendations to improve relations with Parking, Traffic and Transportation Services (PTTS) on campus. Nickel said a student committee was started this semester to begin working with PTTS to help meet student demands.

"Parking is a huge problem on this campus," Nickel said. "I want to make sure that we can continue to work with the director of PTTS. We want to provide parking incentives for students who car pool, by allowing them to park closer to the buildings on campus."

Nickel said the student body president needs to serve as a liaison between the students and the administration.

"As a student body president, you have to be willing to work with the administration and not against the administration."

Forman said the position of

student body president sometimes demands confronting the administration with the requests of the students.

"You need to work with the administration, but a student body president also needs to be willing to confront the administration with the needs of the students," Forman said. "As student body president, you need to be representative of the student body."

Following the formal question-answer session, students from the audience directed questions to the candidates.

Craig Rotter, a previous student body president candidate and an agricultural development graduate student, asked Nickel and Forman to name five contributions made to the campus in the

past four weeks. Both candidates cited their involvement in student organizations on campus and their contributions to students through their campaigns.

PLEASE SEE DEBATE ON PAGE 2



PHOTOS BY BRANDON BOLLOM/THE BATTALION

## Keeping cool



Stephanie Swanzy, a junior biomedical science major, plays in the water at Rudder Fountain during the MSC Rubber Duck Race on Tuesday.

JAKE SCHRICKLING/THE BATTALION

# IHS, truck makers crash over testing

WASHINGTON (AP) — In TV commercials, pickup trucks look indestructible, so much so that one automaker brags they're "like a rock." But back them into a loading dock or bump them into another vehicle and it can be a different story.

An insurance industry study released Tuesday found that some popular small pickups racked up sizable repair bills in crash tests at just 5 mph. Leading the way was the Toyota Tacoma, which sustained \$4,361 in damage over four low-speed tests.

The best of the lot, the Chevrolet S-10 LS, had \$2,246 in damage. The other trucks tested by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety were the Ford Ranger XLT (\$2,952 in total damages), the Dodge Dakota Sport (\$3,863) and the Nissan Frontier XE (\$3,867).

The institute, which is sponsored by the insurance industry, said the trucks sustained the damage because most are equipped with rigid bumpers. By contrast, cars have bumpers that contain energy-absorbing materials such as foam.

"People may think that pickup trucks are tough. But they quickly find out this isn't true when they bump into something at a slow speed and then have to shell out thousands of dollars to repair the damage," said Adrian Lund, the institute's senior vice president.

Truck makers took issue with the test results, as well as the group conducting them.

"The Tacoma meets all the general requirements for crash worthiness," said Julie Alfonso, spokesperson for Toyota Motor Sales USA Inc. Last year the company sold 145,911 Tacomas, little brother to the full-size T-100 pickup.

Kyle Johnson, spokesperson for General Motors, maker of the Chevrolet S-10, said the institute was releasing the data as part of a campaign to get the federal government to raise the bumper standard to 5 mph. It was at that speed in the early 1980s.

## Truck damage

In 5 mph crash tests, a recent study found some small pickup models sustained sizable damage. A look at total damage amounts:

1998 test results:	
<b>Toyota Tacoma</b>	<b>\$4,361</b>
<b>Nissan Frontier XE</b>	<b>\$3,867</b>
<b>Dodge Dakota Sport</b>	<b>\$3,863</b>
<b>Ford Ranger XLT</b>	<b>\$2,952</b>
<b>Chevrolet S-10 LS</b>	<b>\$2,246</b>

Source: Insurance Institute for Highway Safety

AP

"The insurance industry is once again staging dramatizations in its selfish concern over bumper repair costs," said Johnson.

Before changing the speed, he said, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration studied the issue and determined that 2.5-mph bumpers were sufficient when weighed against the added cost of equipping passenger cars with 5-mph bumpers.

# Water lost in space

## Scientists liken conditions on Titan to the beginning of life on Earth

LONDON (AP) — Orbiting high above Earth, Europe's infrared space observatory has discovered water around stars and planets and in many other surprising places, raising expectations of life elsewhere in the universe, the European Space Agency said Tuesday.

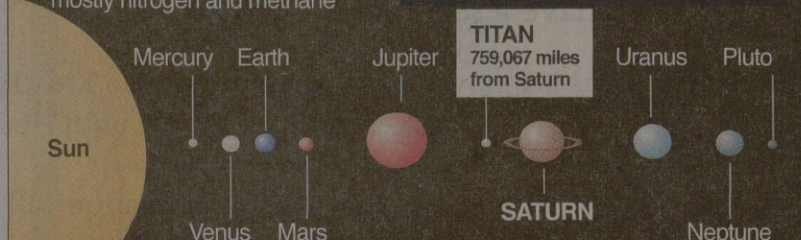
The discovery of water vapor in the atmosphere of Saturn's largest moon, Titan, has generated the most excitement, because that moon may duplicate the conditions that led to the creation of life on Earth, said Roger Bonnet, the agency's director of science.

"Now that water has been discovered ... this lends more support to the possibility that we have all the conditions which prevailed on Earth 4 1/2 billion years ago to give birth to life."

## Titan facts

Europe's infrared space observatory has discovered water on Titan, Saturn's largest moon and the only satellite with a thick atmosphere.

**Diameter:** 3,200 miles (5,150 km)  
**Atmospheric pressure:** 1.5 times that of Earth  
**Atmospheric makeup:** mostly nitrogen and methane



Source: NASA

AP

# Seniors leave more room for freshmen

By JENNIFER WILSON  
Staff writer

Texas A&M's incoming freshman class will be even larger than last year's despite decreased numbers in applicants, new application processes and a higher application fee, according to a report by the Office of Admissions and Records.

The number of applicants for freshman admission has decreased from 14,783 last fall to 13,129, but the number of students offered admission increased from 10,856 in 1997 to 11,350 for 1998.

"The reason for the increase in admissions is a change in the admission target from 6,200 last year to at least 6,300 freshmen for this coming year," said Gary Engelgau, executive director of admissions and records.

Engelgau also said the increased numbers are the result of a record-sized graduation class which has cre-

ated more spaces for incoming freshmen.

Ron Douglas, A&M executive vice president and provost, said the legislation requiring the automatic admission of high-school seniors in the top 10 percent of their classes has had no effect.

"While analysis is not complete, preliminary data suggests the number of admitted applicants from the top 10 percent is similar to last year," he said. "Because of the legislation, many of these applicants received their notice of admissions earlier; thus we hope the 'catch rate' [those who actually enroll] will increase."

Despite the overall higher admission rate, the number of both incoming freshman minority applicants and minority students admitted has decreased.

PLEASE SEE FRESHMEN ON PAGE 2.