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Aggielife:

Summer movie craze over comets, meteors prompts in-depth expert report on impact possibility with Earth.

THE BATTALION

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY • COLLEGE STATION, TEXAS

A watery past

A&M nautical archaeology department discovers a bit of Southern history

BY PATRICK PEABODY
Staff Writer

The Texas A&M Department of Nautical Archaeology will explore a piece of Confederate history sitting on the ocean floor.

The project officially began when the *Denbigh*, one of the two most successful blockade-runners of the Confederacy, was rediscovered in December 1997. Archaeologists and students have been mapping out the site since May 1998.

Barto Arnold, the project's lead archaeologist, said the sunken ship was not hard to find. "We expected to find it some time," Arnold said, "but it came as a surprise when we found it our first time out."

The project gained momentum when the project received donations totaling over \$200,000 from Houston Endowment, Inc., The Hillcrest Foundation, The Strake Foundation, and the Trustees of Communities Foundation of Texas.

Liverpool, England in 1860 as an ordinary merchant vessel. It is approximately 180 feet long and 22 feet wide.

It was purchased in 1863 by the European Trading Company, a consortium of Confederate, English and French companies.

Two months after refitting, the *Denbigh* arrived in Cuba and began preparing for the trip to Mobile, Ala.

On Jan. 10, 1864, it successfully completed the first of its many runs through the Union blockade.

The converted merchant ship continued to make runs from Havana, Cuba, to Mobile, Ala., and Galveston where it provided supplies to the Confederacy.

On the night of May 23, 1865, six

weeks after the Confederacy surrendered, the *Denbigh* was sunk near Bolivar Point by blockading Union ships.

Although the nautical archaeology department recently found the ship, the *Denbigh* was never truly lost.

The iron-hulled steamer was a harbor landmark for many years after the Civil War, and parts of the ship can be seen when the tide is extremely low.

An 1880 Corps of Engineers map clearly marked the location of the wreck, and sport divers and fishermen have known about it for years.

SEE DENBIGH ON PAGE 2.



PHOTO COURTESY OF BARTO ARNOLD

Professor recognized for work in medical journalism field

BY ROD MACHEN
City Editor

A professor in the department of journalism has been honored for her accomplishments in medical journalism.

Barbara Gastel, associate professor of journalism and of humanities in medicine, has been awarded the Harold Swanberg Distinguished Service Award by the American Medical Writers Association.

Gastel will receive the award at the AMWA annual meeting in Vancouver, British Columbia in October.

She recently returned from the People's Republic of China where she taught an intensive four-week course in medical writing at Beijing Medical University.

In the course she taught editors of Chinese medical journals and faculty members how to submit articles to English language medical journals.

Gastel's most recent publication is the *Health Writer's Handbook*, a guide for writers of medical journalism for the popular media.

Gastel believes medical journalism is an established field that has recently gained popularity.

"As the population has aged, interest in health has increased," Gastel said. "Also, various institutions have become more active in disseminating information on health."

Gastel came to Texas A&M in 1989 as the University began preparation for a graduate program in science and technology journalism.

The program was first requested in the late '80's, and after several setbacks from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, the first students entered the program in the fall of 1996.

The journalism department had long desired a graduate degree. Dr. Charles Self, professor of journalism and head of the department, said science journalism fits with A&M's strong science programs.

"One of the things that has distinguished A&M is its science and technology mission," Self said.

Gastel summarized her mission and the goal of the graduate program.

"I teach people how to distill technical information clearly, interestingly and accurately," Gastel said.

Dr. Barbara Gastel, associate professor of journalism and humanities in medicine, received the Harold Swanberg Distinguished Service Award by the American Medical Writers Association (AMWA) for her accomplishments in medical journalism. Gastel will receive the award at the AMWA annual meeting in Vancouver, British Columbia in October.

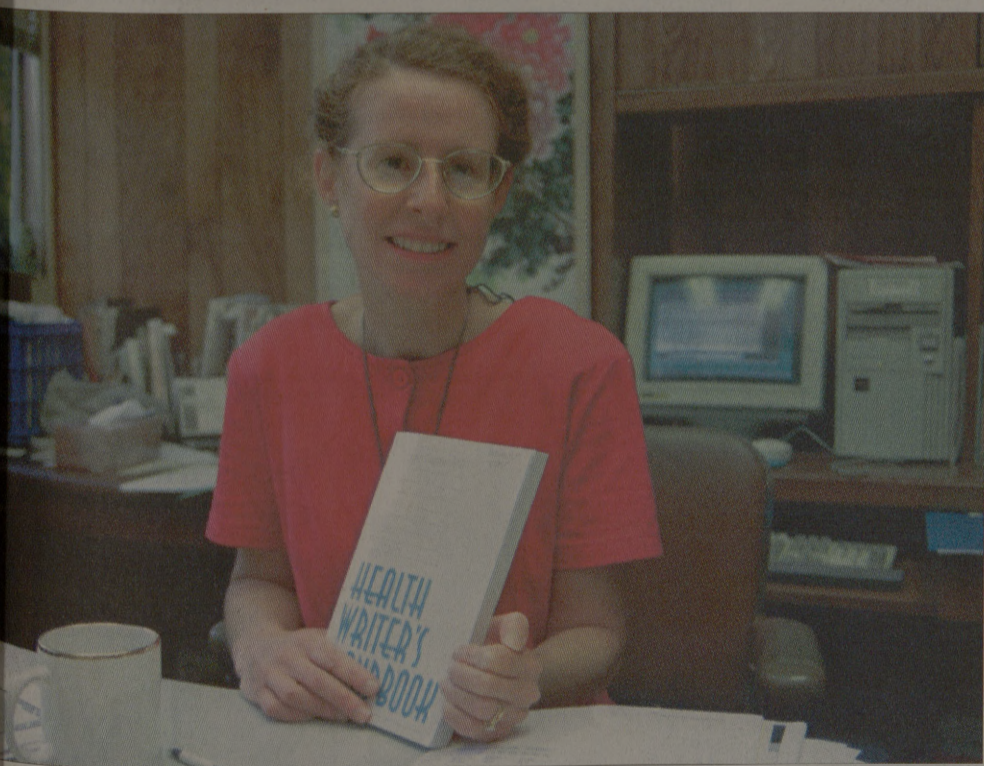


PHOTO BY JAKE SCHRICKLING / THE BATTALION

Artistic expression



STEPHANIE CORLEY / THE BATTALION

Basel Hunter, a Ph.D. student in Recreation, Parks and Tourism Science and a local artist, paints a portrait of the legendary Sullivan Ross. Basel considers art "an expression of the soul — it has nothing to do with literal representation."

NEWS BRIEFS

from staff and wire reports

Accounting fraternity recognized as 'superior chapter'

The Texas A&M University chapter of the national accounting fraternity, Beta Alpha Psi, has earned "superior chapter" recognition for the seventh consecutive year.

The members of Texas A&M's Delta Iota chapter completed more than 1,800 hours of service during the past academic year.

This was a major factor in earning recognition as a superior chapter, noted a local spokesperson for the fraternity.

Students donated their time to more than a dozen organizations across the Brazos Valley, providing

services to elementary schools and a nursing home, for example.

In addition, chapter members offered support to the Lowry Mays College and Graduate School of Business through tutoring and grading practice problems.

The national fraternity is composed of upper-level accounting students with a 3.0 or better grade-point ratio. Members remain active by earning points through participation in service activities, professional meetings and committee.

The A&M chapter was chartered in 1974.

Austin ISD spends \$1.2 M for '98-'99 school year to increase number of bilingual teachers

AUSTIN (AP) — In an effort to attract more bilingual teachers, trustees of the Austin Independent School District have voted to spend \$1.2 million in the 1998-99 school year to pay certified bilingual and special education teachers \$1,000 annual stipends.

Some 12,000 students, about 16 percent of AISD's enrollment, sought help last year from the district's bilingual program, which offers instruction in four languages through high school.

Spanish-speaking students make up about 93 percent of students in the program. Most other students speak Korean, Chinese or Vietnamese.

But educators say support for the program sometimes falls short. And like other districts, Austin has fewer certified bilingual education teachers than it needs.

Such shortcomings make learning English more difficult, teachers said. They want de-

ficiencies addressed soon, because state officials want districts to use state achievement tests to determine whether a student should be promoted.

Kocurek Elementary teacher Rita Haecker said students in Austin's bilingual program could succeed on the same level as their English-speaking peers if they got Spanish editions of the same textbooks and materials.

"We do need the tools and we need the same quality of tools as the English-speaking students get," Haecker, president-elect of the Austin Area Association for Bilingual Education, said.

Della May Moore, director of the district's bilingual education department, said Austin hires about 500 teachers each year.

It hired 80 bilingual teachers in the 1996-97 school year, 69 for 1997-98 and another 28 by the end of May.

Yet the district still was understaffed by 62 certified bilingual teachers at the end of last school year.

"We recruit all year long," Moore said. "Bilingual teachers in particular are in high demand. And we're up against some big, big competition."

Other districts, such as Dallas, Fort Worth, Houston, San Antonio and Manor, offer incentives to recruit and retain certified bilingual teachers.

Austin already offers those teachers one-time \$1,500 signing bonuses.

The district also wants to offer \$1,500 to entice certified teachers who are working elsewhere in the district back into the classrooms where they are needed.

The 1998-99 budget proposal also includes \$150,348 for two additional bilingual coordinators.