



# The Battalion

105 YEARS AT TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

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College Station, Texas



## sports

• Men's and women's hoops look to improve Big 12 records over weekend.

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## today's issue

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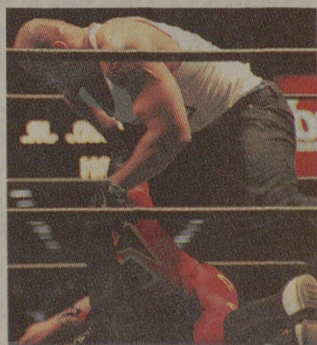
## reminder

Today is the last day for students to drop courses with no record; adding new courses ends Monday.

## aggielife

• World Championship Wrestling brings no-holds-barred action to Aggieland Sunday.

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## Admissions appoints new director

BY MELISSA JORDAN  
The Battalion

Joseph Estrada, who has served as registrar and director of admissions at Texas A&M University-College Station since 1993, has been appointed director of admissions at Texas A&M University effective Feb. 1.

Dr. Ron Douglas, executive vice president and provost, said Estrada's knowledge of recruiting, experience and ability to work with people make him a desirable addition to the admissions department.

"His leadership qualifications are evident," Douglas said. "I think we're very fortunate to have his experience and leadership capabilities."

Estrada said his understanding of state and national issues and how they affect student admissions is an asset he will bring to the position.

"I am hopeful that becomes beneficial to the University," he said.

Estrada said he knows the staff in the admissions department, but he needs to spend time learning how the department works and its mission in helping students.

"I'm really anxious to sit and talk with people about the admissions process and what, if anything, we can do to better that process," Estrada said.

While employed by A&M, Estrada will continue working toward a doctorate in higher education administration.

Estrada said "Aggie spirit" played a large role in his acceptance of the position.

"Aggies are renowned for their spirit and liveliness," Estrada said. "I'm really excited about not only moving to College Station, but becoming an integral part of the University."

## Fire causes traffic delays

• The smoke from morning blaze closes parts of George Bush Drive.

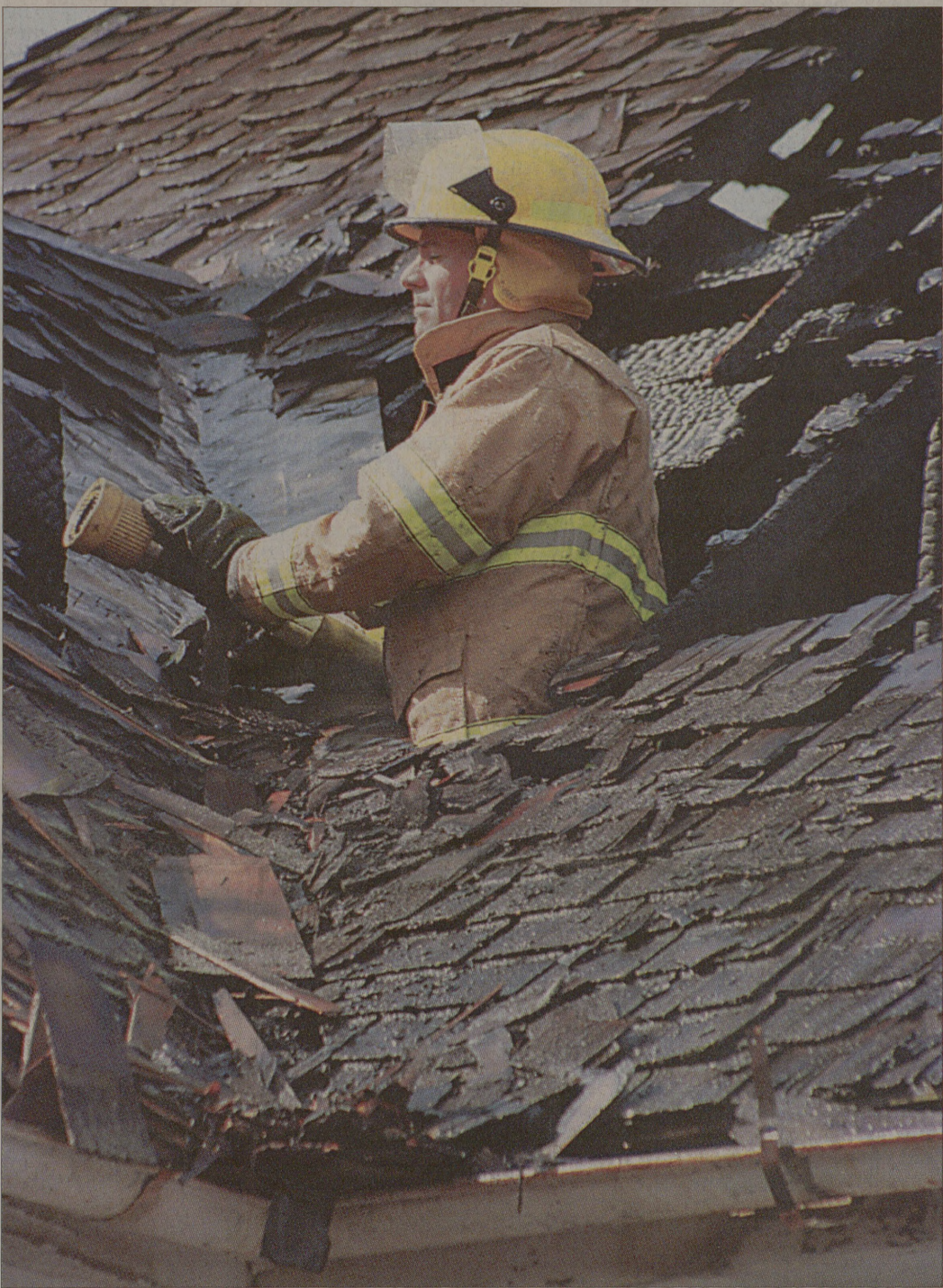
BY AMANDA SMITH  
The Battalion

A fire at 101 Pershing Drive in College Station yesterday caused extensive damage to the two-story house at the location but resulted in no injuries, a report from the College Station Fire Department said.

Thomas Goehl, fire chief for the College Station Fire Department, said the department received a call at 10:49 a.m. from a neighbor of the house's owners.

Goehl said it took one hour for firefighters to extinguish the fire. He said the residents were not at the house when the fire started, and the department suspects the incident was caused by a malfunction in the water-heater closet.

Gary Jackson, director of Bus Operations, said smoke emerging onto the street and diffusing throughout the area resulted in closure of the southbound lane on George Bush Drive. Jackson said the closure slowed four of the off-campus bus routes for two hours.



SALLIE TURNER/THE BATTALION

Greg Janda, a College Station firefighter, works to water down the roof of a home that caught fire off of George Bush Drive Thursday morning.

## New election head named

BY EMILY R. SNOOKS  
The Battalion

Dawn McGill, a senior finance major, has been appointed to the position of Student Senate election commissioner for the spring semester.

McGill was appointed after the resignation of Chris Chase. Chase served as election commissioner last fall but resigned because of an injury requiring surgery.

At the first Student Senate meeting of the semester, Student Body President Laurie Nickel commented on Chase.

"Chris did a great job for us last semester," she said.

McGill has served on the Student Senate for three years — two years as a senator and one year as the recording secretary. In 1998, she served as a sub-chair on the Rules and Regulations committee. McGill is also the vice president for the Class of 1999.

McGill said she gained experience in the Senate and is prepared for her new role.

"Serving on Rules and Regulations gave me the most experience for this job," she said.

McGill was a candidate for election commissioner last fall when Chase was elected to the position.

She said she wanted to run for election commissioner because she saw a few occurrences of unfairness last year.

"I got interested last year because I would see some things that I thought were unfair," she said.

SEE COMMISSIONER ON PAGE 10.

## Task force to rid parking woes

BY MEREDITH HIGHT  
The Battalion

Tom Williams, director of Parking Traffic and Transportation Services, and Dr. Jerry Gaston, vice president of administration, have appointed 23 faculty, staff, students and members of the community to serve on the Campus Access and Parking Master Plan Task Force, a committee designed to eliminate parking problems on campus.

Gaston said the problems have increased as the campus has grown.

"The growth of the campus in the past decade continues to create difficulties for mobility into and around campus," he said. "We want to do everything possible to improve it."

Gaston said the task force wants advice and counsel from a wide range of people and interests on campus.

Mary Miller, co-chair of the task force and associate vice president for administration, said the task force was assembled with a broad range of interests in mind. "It was established to see if we can take a look at where we are with campus access for all constituents, whether it's emergency vehicles or vendors," she said. "It's anybody who needs access to, from or around campus."

Robert Kimmel, an undergraduate representative on the committee and vice president of student services policy for Student Government, said the task force is attempting to implement lasting improvements to the parking situation.

"I think the big focus is trying to get an overall direction for transportation and access instead of theodgepodge system we have now," he said. "Basically right now we fix one problem at a time as it comes up."

The committee members are putting aside the interests of the departments and groups they represent to

## CAMPUS ACCESS AND PARKING TASK FORCE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- RICK FLOYD, DIVISION OF FINANCE
- DICK FORESTER, CAMPUS VISITOR
- JOHN HERRERA, UNIVERSITY EMPLOYEE
- ROYCE HICKMAN, CAMPUS VISITOR
- GARY JACKSON, PTTS
- ROBERT KIMMEL, UNDERGRADUATE
- PENNY KING, ATHLETICS
- ALVIN LARKE, FACULTY
- JAMES MASSEY, FACILITIES COORDINATION
- KATHIE MATHIS, PTTS
- MARY MILLER, MASTER PLAN COMMITTEE
- ANNELIJE REINEMEYER, GRADUATE STUDENT
- KAREN ROGERS, ZONE ADMINISTRATION
- WYNN ROSSER, DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS
- JANE SCHNEIDER, DIVISION OF ADM.
- PETER SCHULLE, PTTS
- JONATHAN SMITH, FACULTY SENATE
- TOM TAYLOR, DIVISION OF FINANCE
- JULIE VILLAREAL, PTTS
- DOUG WILLIAMS, PTTS
- SHERRY WINE, PTTS
- DEBORAH WRIGHT, GIS

reach the common goal of improving campus access.

Jonathan Smith, chair of the planning committee for the Faculty Senate and an associate professor of geology, said the task force is trying to come up with better methods of dealing with campus access.

"Part of our charge is to envision a solution before we try to understand the problem," he said. "They want us to think more creatively, instead of just saying we need more buses or parking spaces."

Miller said one thing the task force has identified as part of the solution is better communication.

"We're going to use surveys, focus groups and a lot of different methods for contacting different customers to get input," she said.

## A&M to host 11th SBSLC

BY NONI SRIDHARA  
The Battalion

Texas A&M is hosting the 11th annual Southwestern Black Student Leadership Conference (SBSLC) where 1,050 young black collegians from around the nation have gathered to enhance their leadership skills.

The theme for this year's conference is "Renewing the Mind, Body, and Soul to Meet the Challenges of the New Millennium."

Christina Aguilar, director of public relations for the SBSLC, said one of the goals of the conference is to provide students with leadership opportunities.

"We want to empower them with abilities to be productive leaders in every aspect of their lives in the new Millennium," she said.

Aguilar said the workshops will cover topics including relationships, investment banking and money making.

Students will also have a chance to participate in a career fair featuring 25 corporations, including Sears, Roebuck and Co. and Neiman Marcus, and more than 27 graduate schools.

Aguilar said the fair will provide students with valuable networking opportunities.

Keynote speakers for this conference are Jewel Diamond Taylor, author and motivational speaker; Dennis Kimbro, public

speaker and business consultant; and Claudette Sims, talk show host and author.

Aguilar said the main foci of the speeches will be success and leadership.

Black Entertainment Television's Jay Lamont and Montana Taylor will appear in a comedy performance.

Theresa Cooper, director of programs for the SBSLC and a sophomore agricultural development major, said the conference will also feature an oratorical contest in which students present speeches relating to the theme of the conference. Cooper said there are currently 16 contestants and the first place winner will receive a \$500 scholarship.

"My main hope for this year is for those students coming out of the conference to gain a better understanding of themselves and renew themselves so they can look towards a better future," Cooper said.

Stephanie Erwin, conference chair and a graduate accounting student, said the staff has high expectations for the conference this year.

"Our goal is to prepare college leaders for the problems that are associated with the turn of the century," Erwin said.

Aguilar said the the career fair, comedy night and speech by Kimbro are open to the public.

## Prof to speak at conference

BY AMANDA STIRPE  
The Battalion

Dr. Dennis Kimbro, a professor at Clark University in Atlanta, Ga., will discuss methods for achieving success at 7 p.m. in Rudder Auditorium.

Kimbro's speech will be one of the events scheduled for the Southwestern Black Student Leadership Conference, an annual event sponsored by the MSC and the Black Awareness Committee (BAC).

Kimbro has interviewed successful CEO's from various companies to gain insight for his three books titled *Think and Grow Rich: A Black Choice, What Makes the Great and Daily Motivations for the African American*.

Joel Garrett, chair of BAC and a senior management major, said Kimbro is an energetic and powerful speaker who personifies his beliefs.

"Kimbro speaks about work ethic, attitude and importance of reading, knowledge and service," Garrett said. "He believes in what he speaks."

SEE KIMBRO ON PAGE 10.