



# The Battalion

105 YEARS AT TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

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## aggielife

• This weekend Mardi Gras celebrations reach their peak in three southern cities.

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## today's issue

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## Friday's issue

Gays in the military should have kept to the 'don't ask, don't tell' policy for the benefit of all.

## sports

• Texas A&M men's basketball team ropes in 79-74 win against Kansas State University Wildcats.

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## Student worker bill to be submitted to registrar

BY RACHEL HOLLAND  
The Battalion

The Residence Hall Association recognized student advisers as student workers Wednesday and will submit its recommendation to the registrar. Recognizing resident advisers as student workers will allow them to register early for classes. Student-worker early registration is currently available to students who work a minimum of 12 hours between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. Resident advisers are on duty 7 p.m. to 7 a.m., Monday through Friday, and do not qualify as student workers. Nicole Carlson, an author of the bill and a sophomore history major, said resident advisers

have expressed concern over the difficulty of planning their class schedule around the hours they work in the residence halls. "It's a 24-hour job," she said. "It entails a lot more than the 7-[a.m.]-to-7-[p.m.] duty hours. Resident advisers get calls for lots of things, like lock-ins, all throughout the day." "This is our recommendation to the registrar," he said. "If it was only up to the RHA, we probably would have done it a long time ago." The first reading of the bill was Jan. 28 and the decision was postponed. The bill was passed unanimously last night without a second reading or debate. There are 150 resident advisers who serve more than 9,000 students in residence halls on campus.

## Big 12 Champions



MIKE FUENTES/THE BATTALION

(R to L): Dan Campbell, Rich Coady, Toya Jones and Brandon Jennings present the Big 12 South Division Championship, the Big 12 Championship and the Sugar Bowl trophy to the public at the men's basketball game vs. Kansas State University Wednesday night during halftime at Reed Arena.

## Hot weather plagues Texas

BY CARRIE BENNETT  
The Battalion

Unseasonably hot weather in the Brazos Valley has people wondering if winter is over if it is time to take out the shorts. For the last week and a half, the average high has been 75 degrees, and the humidity has been 60 percent. This time of year the high temperature is normally in the 60s. Dr. John Nielsen-Gammon, associate professor of meteorology, said the warm weather is not unusual for this time of year. "This hot spell is not unprecedented," Nielsen-Gammon said. "About two years ago it was this warm around New Year's Day." Nielsen-Gammon said that is needed in the atmosphere for warm weather is a

zonal jet, which is a jet stream blowing from east to west across the northern part of the United States. He said the cold fronts do not penetrate through Texas when this happens. "Typically, the Pacific Coast is wet, and the Great Lakes are stormy when there is a jet stream blowing east to west," Nielsen-Gammon said. A cold front is expected to come through Texas late Thursday or early Friday and to bring temperatures in the upper 50s and thunderstorms to the Brazos Valley. However, the cold weather will only last a couple of days, and temperatures are predicted to be in the upper 60s Sunday. Nielsen-Gammon said there should not be any long-term effects on future weather conditions because of the hot spell. "The atmosphere doesn't

remember short spells of temperature like this," he said. "If the sea surface temperatures had changed, then we could expect long term effects such as a long, hot summer." Nielsen-Gammon said because water temperatures change slowly, a noticeable change in sea surface temperatures would indicate a change in the atmosphere that would affect future weather conditions. He said one of the effects of this weather will be plants will bud early and a freeze could kill them. "It is possible for some more cold weather to come through the Brazos Valley," Nielsen-Gammon said. "Canada and Alaska are experiencing below-normal temperatures right now, and a big change in the jet stream would bring a cold front this way."

## Details of suspects' suicide released

EDGEWOOD (AP) — Nicholas Armstrong and Jeremiah Wilkerson were both 21. They both had attended Southwest Texas State University. Their paths apparently crossed for the first time last weekend. By Tuesday, they were dead. Armstrong, a communications major and Tau Kappa Epsilon pledge at Southwest Texas State, was beaten Sunday morning while he was sleeping on the couch of his fraternity house after a party. He died in an Austin hospital Monday. Wilkerson was the prime suspect, but before San Marcos law enforcement officers could prepare an arrest warrant, he had returned to his father's home in East Texas and committed suicide. "We regret that this terrible tragedy has

profoundly touched the lives of two families and at least two communities," San Marcos police Chief Steve Griffith said. The Canton Herald reported that Wilkerson shot himself once in the head with his father's 9mm pistol Tuesday afternoon. Wilkerson was apparently sitting in a chair under an oak tree — a favorite resting spot — when he fired the fatal shot, according to the weekly newspaper. "He's back in the back and he blew himself away," Gary Wilkerson told the ambulance driver, according to a 911 tape. "He's my son." No suicide note was found, but his father said the campus tragedy had been weighing on his son's mind. "He was at that frat party and police got called. Other minors got busted for

(charges of) minor in possession," Wilkerson told Dallas-Fort Worth television station KXAS. "Wished it would have never happened." Officials said the younger Wilkerson was among four people who had been ejected from a party at the TKE house Saturday evening. He and another person returned to the house, where Armstrong was found sleeping. "The motive for going back was to act out that anger" for being thrown out, Griffith said. Griffith said police had interviewed the people who had been with Wilkerson the night of the party. "We do know who the second individual is who went back to the TKE house," he said.

## Yellow bicycles make debut on campus

TAMC's 'Borrow-A-Bike' program distributes twenty bicycles for A&M students' use.

BY SALLIE TURNER  
The Battalion

Texas Aggies Making Changes released 20 yellow bikes on campus yesterday as part of the Borrow-A-Bike program, which provides free bicycles for student use on campus. Joey Neugart, co-director of the Borrow-A-Bike program and a sophomore political science and history major, said anyone can use the bikes to get around campus. "The bikes are community bikes for a one way trip," he said. "If somebody sees a yellow bike, they can take it." He said students should leave the bicycles on the racks unlocked so other students will be able to use the bikes. The bicycles were donated by Parking and Transportation Services (PTTS), who allowed the committee to select from unclaimed bicycles repossessed over the past year. Neugart said it took three years to start the Borrow-A-Bike program due to the condition of the donated



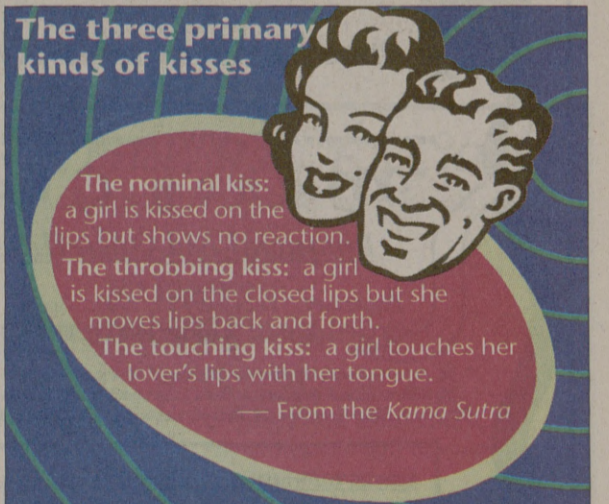
SALLIE TURNER/THE BATTALION

Paige Sherman, a sophomore psychology major, tests out a Borrow-A-Bike bicycle Wednesday at Rudder Fountain. Twenty bicycles are available to students across campus. bikes and the lack of a place to store the bikes while they were being repaired. PTTS donated storage space. "The key element was PTTS giving us a place to keep the bikes," she said. "We also had awesome committee members who were dedicated to the program." Tida Pichakron, co-director of the Borrow-A-Bike program and a sophomore business administration major, said the program will continue if students do not abuse the bicycles. "The bikes are to help people and will remain if people don't abuse them by taking them off campus or damaging them."

## Prof explores origin, history, styles of kissing with passion

BY ANDREA BROCKMAN  
The Battalion

In time for Valentine's Day, Dr. Vaughn Bryant, professor and head of the anthropology department, presented "Kissing: The Great American Passion" and gave the origin, history and style of what he called one of America's favorite pastimes. Vaughn has researched the origin of kissing for 30 years and said his favorite definition is Henry Gibbon's: a kiss is the anatomical juxtaposition of two orbicularis muscles in a state of contraction. Vaughn said there are countless reasons to kiss, including that it is a language all its own. "Kissing gives us the ability to express our deepest feelings that words alone cannot do," he said. "It sends sensations directly to the limbic portion of our brain where love, passion and lust all originate." Vaughn said research has shown kissing is healthy. "A kiss releases hormones and endorphins that relieve stress, help us recover from depression, lowers our blood pressure and can make you feel younger," he said. Vaughn said kissing was probably started as a method of greeting, and it developed into an erotic act between lovers. He said there is no way of knowing if the Neanderthals or earlier humans may have kissed. "Their remains consist of bones and stones but they left no love letters, no paintings of kissing and no books on the subject," he said. "Because of this, the true origin of kissing remains a mystery." Vaughn said the earliest and best records on kissing come from India. By 1500 B.C., the Vedic Sanskrit texts of India were transcribed from an oral history to a written history.



"In these texts I have found many references to customs of rubbing and pressing noses together," Vaughn said. "I suspect this is the precursor to what we now call kissing." Vaughn said the Romans popularized kissing and spread the custom to most of Europe and parts of North Africa. "They were devoted kissing missionaries," he said. Vaughn said the Roman poets explained various types of kissing. The osculum was the friendship kiss, the basium was a more erotic type generally done between opposite sexes, and the savium was a soul kiss, now better known as a French kiss. Vaughn said kissing spread from Europe to other parts of the world as adventurers, explorers and travelers migrated to different places.