

THE BATTALION

106 YEARS AT TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

Monday • September 20, 1999

College Station, Texas

Volume 106 • Issue 16 • 16 Pages

Plane crash kills 5

BY STASIA RAINES
The Battalion

Five people were killed Saturday night when a plane owned by Ags Over Texas carrying a group of skydivers crashed in a private pasture near Coulter Field.

The deceased included owner of Ags Over Texas and former A&M student Mark Woodings; former students Jonathan Warden and Lela Futch; and current students Robert Puryear, the pilot and a senior, and freshman Sarah Miller.

The Department of Public Safety said the plane, a Cessna model 182A, commonly known as "Duct Tape" because of its silver color, ascended 300 to 400 feet, then appeared to stall. The plane veered right and then plunged nose first into the field, catching fire shortly after impact. The cause of the crash is still under investigation by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA).

Mary Eperon, safety and training adviser for Ags Over Texas, said no one can speculate on the cause of the accident until the official investigation is completed and the report is released.

Ags Over Texas had not had a fatality in its 12 years of operation. Eperon said the future of Ags Over Texas is unclear right now, but it is unlikely the program will continue.

Gary Gandy, owner and operator of Coulter Air Field, the airfield Ags Over Texas uses, said after learning the details of the accident, he believes it was caused by the pilot's negligence.

He said this kind of accident usually occurs when the plane's nose is too high, and the turbulence directly over the wings causes the plane's engine to stall.

"Unfortunately, it is very common," he said. "In fact, this is the second time an accident of this kind has occurred at the [Coulter] airfield this month."

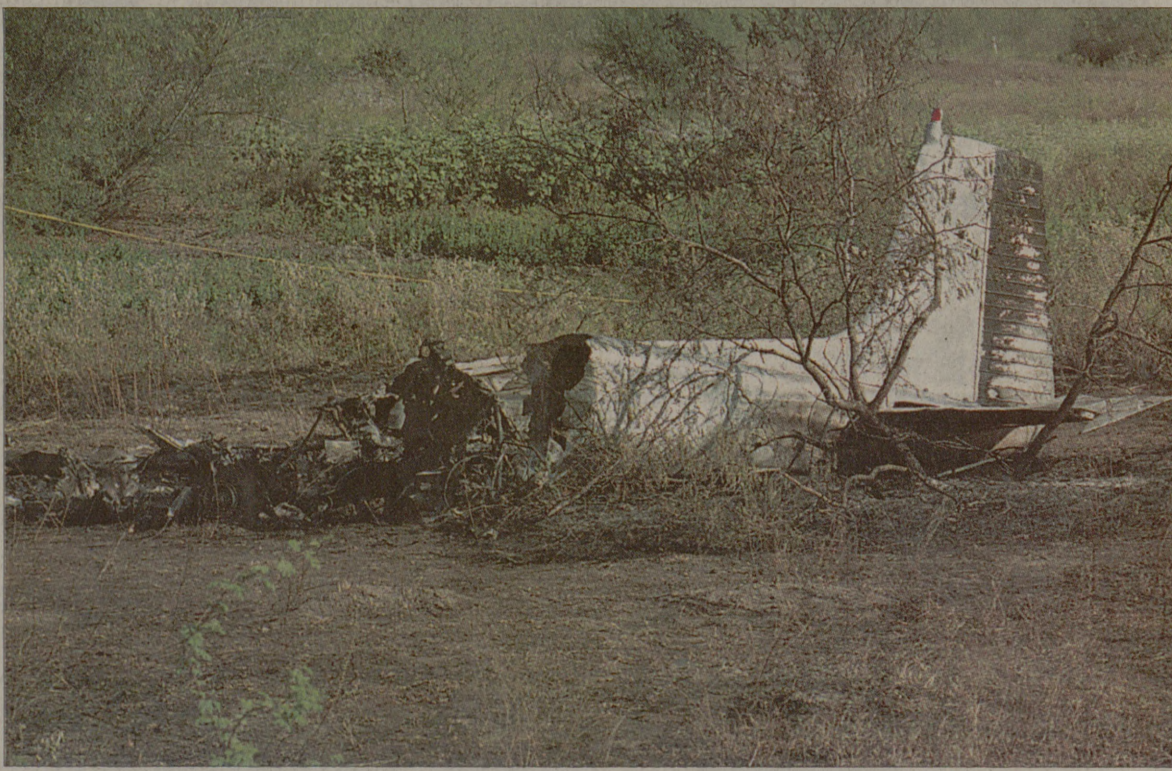
He said the most common cause of skydiving accidents is stalling with no recovery because the back of the plane is overloaded. Gandy said when this happens, it is next to impossible for a pilot to recover from a stall.

Travis McHam, director of public relations for the A&M skydiving club and a senior journalism major, was an eyewitness to the tragedy and said he believes the fault for the accident lies in a random malfunction of the aircraft, and not the pilot.

He said the A&M skydiving club is not affiliated with but uses the services of Ags Over Texas because it is the only drop zone in the area.

McHam said Ags Over Texas is an impeccably run business with excellent safety habits whose instructors have gone through rigorous training programs.

SEE CRASH ON PAGE 2.



A Cessna model 182A owned by Ags Over Texas crashed onto a private pasture by Coulter Field in Bryan. CODY WAGES/THE BATTALION

A&M officials deny tenure to assistant sociology prof

BY STUART HUTSON
The Battalion

As the Texas A&M Football Team was warming up for the game against Tulsa University Saturday, John Boies, an assistant professor of sociology, was packing the contents of his office after having been denied tenure and a future at the University.

According to a letter written by Dr. Ron Douglas, executive vice president and provost of A&M, Boies was denied tenure because Boies produced "scant published work to establish a strong research program."

Boies, however, said he was denied tenure because of the influence of two other professors of sociology, Mary Zey and Steven Murdock.

Boies said his problems with his co-workers began in May of 1995 when he, along with Harland Prechel, another professor of sociology, filed charges of plagiarism against Zey.

Zey filed charges of plagiarism a few days later against Boies and Prechel. Repeated calls to Zey and Murdock by *The Battalion* were not returned.

Charges against all three were reviewed and dismissed by the University administration; however, Boies said the initial conflict led to ill-will between him and Zey, a senior faculty member in the Department of Sociology.

In August of 1997, Boies began the tenure review process, which would determine whether he would be accepted as a full professor at A&M.

Douglas said tenure applicants teach for five to six years as an assistant professor, then are reviewed by their de-

partment faculty and department head, the dean of their college and then the University provost, who decides whether to send their applications to the University president.

"It was in my judgement that his appointment to tenure was not in the University's best interest."

— Ronald Douglas
Executive vice president and provost of Texas A&M

Boies was approved by the dean of the College of Liberal Arts but was denied acceptance by Douglas.

Douglas said that while it is rare someone who is approved by a dean is turned down, it occurs for about three of the 50 to 75 applicants he reviews for tenure each year.

"As for why those who approved the tenure of Boies did so, I don't wish to speculate," Douglas said. "But I looked at what was included in his file, and it was in my judgment that his appointment to tenure was not in the University's best interest."

Boies said he thinks Douglas' decision was influenced by the intervention of Zey and her husband, Murdock, who

compiled a letter signed by five sociology professors titled the "minority report" that claimed Boies had misrepresented his research and publications.

Boies took his case to the Committee on Academic Freedom, Responsibility and Tenure (CAFRT), which ruled the tenure process had not been properly followed and should begin again because Douglas had seen the letter prior to his decision on Boies' tenure.

CAFRT submitted their decision to University President Dr. Ray M. Bowen, who decided not to follow the committee's decision, thus terminating Boies' employment with the University.

Douglas said it is the president's choice whether to follow CAFRT's decision according to his own best judgment.

"The president looked at the case and decided that the minority report did not contain any information that was not already in Boies' file," Douglas said. "Therefore, another review process just was not needed."

Boies believes his denial of tenure also was a result of the University's tendency to punish "whistle blowers" who try to point out plagiarism in other professors.

"The University just wanted to get rid of their problem," Boies said. "So they moved Zey, who has a lot of pull, to the Department of Agricultural Economics, while they gave me the boot."

Douglas said the University does not discourage whistle blowers and adequately investigated all charges brought forth by both Boies and Zey.

"Any previous actions in such a way did not have any effect on the final decision," Douglas said.



CHAD ADAMS/THE BATTALION

First Yell may not be last

Organizers seek to establish program as tradition

BY JULIE ZUCKER
The Battalion

After a sold-out weekend of activities and increased support by Texas A&M football fans, First Yell could possibly be a new tradition at Texas A&M.

Comedian Bill Engvall, the Singing Cadets, Chi Omega Productions and Freudian Slip performed at the Rudder Auditorium to a sold-out house before midnight Yell Friday night.

Rusty Thompson, adviser to the yell leaders, said he knew he could count on Aggies to support a new tradition.

"Seeing all the Aggies this weekend was special," he said. "The fellowship and support was pure Aggie land."

Thompson has worked with the yell leaders since April to finalize the details of their hopes for First Yell. He said they wanted to start a weekend of support through First Yell for the kickoff of the football season.

Zach Leonard, a sophomore general studies major, said he was impressed with the activities of the First Yell weekend.

"I was looking forward to the first game," Leonard said, "but with the addition of First Yell, it just made the whole weekend more awesome."

Randi Rose Moon, a freshman at Texas A&M-Galveston, said she was impressed by the sold-out show and the talent in each performance.

"There is no doubt that I will be back next year," she said. "The shows were incredible, with a great turnout."

Jeff Bailey, head yell leader and a senior agricultural systems management major, said he was honored when participants said they liked the First Yell festivities.

"We weren't out to make a new tradition," Bailey said. "But with all of the positive feed-

SEE YELL ON PAGE 2.

INSIDE

aggie life

•Prankster, Prankster

Aggies share tales of Puckish behavior on campus.



Page 3

sports

•Ag volleyball team takes all in tourney

Women sweep GTE Aggie classic.

Page 14

opinion

•Too pretty for the Corps?

Stereotypes of women in A&M's Corps of Cadets are unfair, untrue.



Page 15

Batt radio

For the latest on the Jasper dragging death trial, listen to KAMU-FM 90.9 at 1:57 p.m.

Curbing pollution focus of program

BY ERIKA DOERR
The Battalion

According to the U.S. Department of Energy, the typical U.S. family spends a staggering \$1,300 a year on utility bills.

National Pollution Prevention Week a program to help curb the amount of waste produced by Americans begins today and continues through Saturday.

The Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission said throughout the week, cities and businesses will highlight their pollution prevention and waste reduction achievements, expand on current pollution prevention efforts and create new initiatives.

Katie Fritz, public works recycling coordinator for College Station, said this is the first year to officially recognize the National Pollution Prevention Week.

"College Station has a clean city program, through Clean Texas 2000 and we've taken a pro-active approach to help prevent pollution before it gets worse," she said. "The main goal of this week is to educate people about pollution prevention and about how to help take care of our natural resources."

Fritz said Texas A&M students can participate in pollution prevention week by riding the A&M shuttle bus, using a bike, conserving water and by keeping blinds closed to help reduce the energy used by air conditioning units.

"Pollution prevention practices can be incorporated into student's and families daily activities," she said. "You'd be surprised what a difference it would make in reduction of pollution if 45,000 students would help in this effort."

Ways students can conserve energy and resources

- use the A&M shuttle
- use your bike instead of your car
- keep all blinds and curtains drawn
- take measures to conserve water
- recycle waste at the City of Bryan Recycling Center on Briarcrest

ROBERT HYNCEK/THE BATTALION

Lorayne Perry, a senior biomedical science major, said the week will provide students with the ideas about how they can protect the environment.

"As A&M students, we can reduce the amount of products and chemicals we use that are hazardous to ourselves and to the environment," she said.

Fritz said last year, the city of College Station recycled or composted 2,718 tons of materials into beneficial use.

College Station is trying to improve air quality, which will directly affect students, by creating a bikeway loop to try to lure students away from their cars.

"This loop will start around George Bush Drive, go through Bee Creek park, then under Texas, through Central park, around Wolf Creek amphitheater, around Post Oak Mall, and then finally, head back to A&M campus," she said.

Fritz said students can take their recyclable waste to the City of Bryan Recycling Center, located off Briarcrest, behind Chick-Fil-A.

SEE RECYCLE ON PAGE 2.

A&M employees must register for Selective Services

BY ROLANDO GARCIA
The Battalion

All new Texas A&M University male employees between 18 and 25 years of age must now register with Selective Services, meaning their names are now required for participation in the national draft lottery in order to be eligible for a job at A&M.

Larry Potts, associate director for human resources, said men must comply with the Selective Service law to be eligible for employment in any branch of Texas state government. The policy is in keeping with a new state law that went into effect Sept. 1 including the Texas A&M University System.

Federal law currently requires all male citizens, illegal aliens, refugees and legal permanent residents to register with the Selective Service System upon turning 18 years old. The system is maintained in the event a military draft is reinstated.

Only non-citizens who are in the country on student or visitor visas are exempt from registration.

Potts said the policy would only apply to university employees hired after Sept. 1 and includes full-time employees as well as part-time and student workers. It also

SEE DRAFT ON PAGE 2.