THE BATTALION

107 YEARS AT TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

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6 pages

News in Brief

Campus

Former regent dies after cancer battle

Former Texas A&M System Regent Ross C. Watkins died Tuesday after a year-long battle with cancer. Watkins, who was 81, served as regent from 1975 to 1981.

Funeral Services will be held Friday at the First Baptist Church in his hometown, Uvalde.

Forum presentation by Bowen on Web

Texas A&M University President Dr. Ray M. Bowen's presentation Tuesday at a public hearing for a proposed increase in University authorized tuition can be viewed on the Web through A&M's department of University Relation's Aggie Daily Website.

Last chance to add summer classes

Today is the last day to add new classes for the first summer term and 10-week classes.

Friday deadline for applying for degree

Friday is the last day to apply for all degrees to be awarded in August for students completing degree requirements during the first summer term.

State

Jury hands woman two life sentences for burning her son

GALVESTON (AP) — League City woman received two life terms and 40 years in prison Wednesday for burning her 11-year-old adopted son with a curling iron and scalding him with hot water.

The Galveston jury that convicted Partina Rhenee Clemens of three counts of injury to a child causing serious bodily harm ignored her pleas for probation. She denied hurting her son. In addition to the prison time, the jury imposed $15,000 in fines. A judge followed the jury's recommendations in sentencing her.

Clemens, a former substitute Galveston teacher, was convicted Tuesday.

Prosecutors said the boy's chest was scalded with hot water from the microwave and his genitals were burned with a curling iron.

Officials at his school noticed in 1999 that he was walking strangely and showed signs of possible physical abuse. An examination found numerous burns and cauliflower ear as well as other injuries.

"The kid's got scars and marks all over his body," Assistant District Attorney Bill Reed said after the verdict was announced.

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• Is darker really better? The effects of overtanning

Opinion
• Smoking ban has mixed effects on restaurant and patrons

Battalion News Radio: 5:57 p.m. KAMU 90.9

www.thebatt.com

Smoking ban affects B-CS

College Station's bowling alley moving because of lost business

By Stuart Hutson
The Battalion

College Station's only bowling alley will be moving to Bryan because of a decrease in business resulting from the College Station smoking ban, said Leroy Prenoveau, manager of Wolf Pen Creek Bowling Alley.

"If we stayed as we are in College Station, we would be closing our doors in August," he said. "We are looking for a place right now, and we expect to be moved by September."

Prenoveau said as much as 54 percent of the alley's business comes from smokers who, because of the ban that only allows smoking between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m., now limit the amount of time they spend in the alley.

"We used to get groups of people who would come in and play something like 10 games and spend two-and-a-half or three hours here," he said. "Now, we are lucky if they play two games."

The owners of Wolf Pen Creek submitted requests to the College Station City Council first for the exemption of the ban for bowling alleys and bingo halls, and then for an exemption that would allow a separate room to be built in the alley for smokers. Both requests were denied, but the Bryan City Council has since adopted the exemption for bowling alleys and bingo halls.

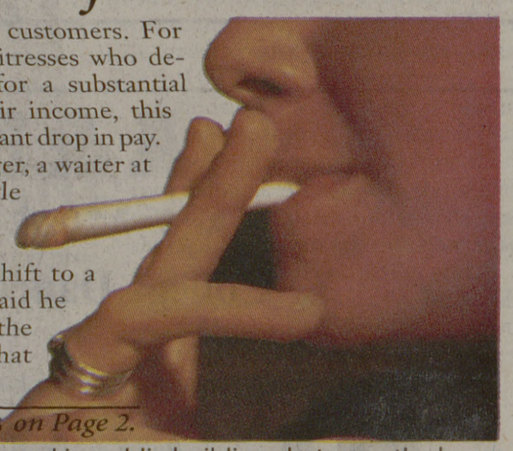
College Station City Councilman James Massey said that while he is sorry that College Station is losing a business, he still stands by the council's decision.

"The city council made a policy decision in favor of a higher quality of life for the College Station residents," he said. "To me, that takes higher precedence."

Bowling alleys are not the only businesses affected by the ban. Staff members from several restaurants in College Station have reported a drop in their number of day customers. For waiters and waitresses who depend on tips for a substantial amount of their income, this means a significant drop in pay.

Jeremy Barger, a waiter at a local Kettle Restaurant, recently moved from a night shift to a day shift, but said he now questions the wisdom of that decision.

See SMOKING *on Page 2.*



Smoking is banned in public buildings between the hours of 6 a.m. and 10 p.m.

FILE PHOTO/THE BATTALION

Wreckage

ANDY HANCOCK/THE BATTALION

Firemen and College Station policemen work to piece together an accident at 8:15 p.m. Wednesday. Traffic was interrupted when a blue pickup traveling westbound on Harvey turned left into a Lincoln Navigator, which was travelling eastbound on Harvey. The Navigator slid into a Honda Accord that was sitting at a red light. The driver of the truck was issued a citation for failure to yield right of way.

Police look into Bush's daughter

Jenna Bush may have used fake ID

AUSTIN (AP) — Police said Wednesday they were investigating whether President Bush's 19-year-old twin daughters illegally tried to buy alcohol at a restaurant.

One of the twins, Jenna Bush, pleaded no contest to a charge of being a minor in possession of alcohol in an unrelated incident less than a month ago.

Police responded to a 911 call Tuesday evening from the manager of Chuy's restaurant in Austin who said minors were trying to buy alcohol.

> *"As no offense was witnessed by APD officers, following routine procedures, further investigation is required to determine if any charges will be filed."*
>
> — statement released by the Austin Police Department

Police spokesman Kevin Buchman said officers were told Jenna Bush tried to buy drinks using a third person's identification card. Her sister, Barbara Bush, was present but did not show any identification.

"As no offense was witnessed by APD officers, following routine procedures, further investigation is required to determine if any charges will be filed," a police statement said.

Police would not give any information on the whereabouts of the daughters' Secret Service agents. The Secret Service also would not comment on the location of the agents.

The legal drinking age in Texas is 21. Police and the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission are investigating. It is unclear what the punishment would be since it is unclear what type of ticket, if any, might be issued.

Jenna Bush's attorney, William P. Allison, would not comment on the matter, said an employee in his office.

White House spokesman Scott McClellan declined comment. "If it involves the daughters in their private lives, it is a family matter," he said.

When asked whether President Bush was aware of this latest incident, McClellan repeated the statement.

See ALCOHOL *on Page 2.*

Tax-cut checks expected to be mailed in summer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Let the mailbox vigil begin. Millions of tax-cut checks should be arriving by the end of summer, if not sooner.

Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill said Wednesday he'll do everything he can to speed delivery of the checks — up to $300 for individual taxpayers and a maximum $600 for couples — in the government's first mass tax refund in a quarter century.

Congress authorized the rebates in the $1.35 trillion, 10-year tax-cut package approved last weekend.

As it now stands, most of the estimated 95 million taxpayers eligible for rebate checks probably will see them in their mailboxes in September. But O'Neill said he is pushing officials at Treasury and the Internal Revenue Service to explore all options for getting the checks out before then.

"We may not be able to do better than that, but I am not satisfied that we can't yet," O'Neill said during a brief interview session at the Treasury Department. Neither O'Neill nor Treasury officials elaborated on the possibilities.

The hope is that people will spend the money, thus providing a boost to the sagging economy.

"Roughly half of the population is struggling and living almost paycheck to paycheck and those folks will use the tax rebate almost immediately," predicted Mark Zandi, chief economist at Economy.com. "It will be good timing." In all, he believes roughly half of each refund check will be spent and half saved.

Under the legislative package, which Bush is expected to sign into law soon, individuals would get a maximum $300

See REFUNDS *on Page 2.*

Violent crimes rise slightly

WASHINGTON (AP) — After declining dramatically over the last several years, violent crimes in America increased marginally in 2000, preliminary FBI crime figures show.

Statistics for murders, rapes and other violent crime last year, which were released Wednesday, represented the first indication that a significant series of decreases in crime in the early 1990s have essentially bottomed out, criminologists said.

"I cannot imagine any clearer indication that the crime drop is over," said professor James Alan Fox of Northeastern University in Boston.

Preliminary figures released by the FBI for last year show that the total of violent crime increased 0.1 percent, while the overall crime index was unchanged from 1999.

Experts in the field had attributed the declines of the '90s to a number of factors, including the maturing of a large teen-age population and a strong economy.

Republicans regularly acknowledged those trends during the years of the Bill Clinton presidency, but said they believed the trends were not directly the result of Democratic policies.

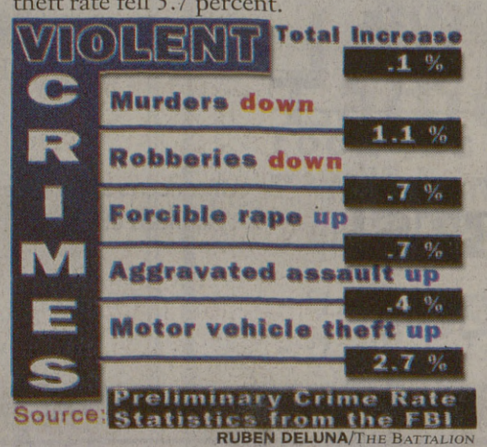
Republicans argued, instead, that the declines resulted from tougher enforcement of the law, increased prison capacity and sterner sentences for repeat offenders.

Murders in 2000 fell 1.1 percent compared to the previous year, the new FBI figures showed, and robberies dropped 0.7 percent. Forcible rape increased 0.7 percent and aggravated assault rose 0.4 percent.

Motor vehicle theft rose 2.7 percent and larceny-theft increased 0.1 percent.

Though the increases were small, they contrasted sharply with declines recorded in previous years.

Last year the FBI said, for instance, that the burglary rate fell 10 percent, the auto theft rate fell 7.7 percent and the larceny-theft rate fell 5.7 percent.



RUBEN DELUNA/THE BATTALION