

THE BATTALION

107 YEARS AT TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

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News in Brief

State

Newspaper carrier shot while working

DALLAS (AP) — A 40-year-old newspaper carrier for *The Dallas Morning News* was shot and killed while making deliveries early Sunday, police said.

Randall Clay Borders was filling a newspaper box outside a laundry in the Oak Cliff neighborhood of Dallas when he was shot in a parking lot.

Witnesses said the gunmen fled the scene in a 1980s brown or red Oldsmobile Cutlass with tinted windows.

Investigators said the slaying may have been the result of a robbery. Newspaper officials said Borders often filled in on two routes but did not have a regular delivery route.

Smoke from marsh fire shrouds bay

TEXAS CITY (AP) — Monday got off to a smoky start on the western shore of Galveston Bay.

A lightning strike Sunday afternoon was blamed for igniting a marsh fire that burned all night and into Monday morning on Goat Island in East Bay, just north of the Bolivar Peninsula, the National Weather Service said.

Smoke from the remote fire is drifting west, shrouding the western shores from Bayou Vista and Texas City, north to Dickinson, League City and Clear Lake. Visibility also is reduced in the Houston Ship Channel.

The island is accessible only by boat, officials said, so firefighters are going to have to let the fire burn itself out. They were hoping for help from scattered showers and thunderstorms predicted for the area Monday afternoon.

Nation

Napster goes offline

SAN JOSE, Calif. (AP) — Napster's song-sharing service was offline Monday as it worked to transform itself into a music company for paying customers.

Napster did not say when its computer servers would come back online, and it was not clear exactly how the down time related to Napster's planned launch of a subscription service, promised for later this summer.

The company has also been upgrading its music-identification system to better comply with court orders that it prevent unauthorized music-swapping.

Napster representatives did not immediately return calls for comment.

The service was sued by major record companies for copyright infringement for allowing computer users to swap songs for free. As a result, it is transferring itself into a fee-based system that will pay royalties to the artists.

Men at work



Alejandro Rocha coats newly-painted lines along George Bush Drive with highway safety spheres, or small spherical shards of glass as Jose Mendoza paints the lines. The glass acts as a reflective medium for driving at night.

BERNARDO GARZA/THE BATTALION

Merchants upset about construction

Elizabeth Raines
The Battalion

For John Raney, owner of the Texas Aggie Bookstore and member of the Northgate Merchants Association, the renovations currently taking place at Northgate may be doing more harm than good.

The city is currently renovating Church Street, an action that Raney said needs to be done. The problem, he said, is that along with the renovations comes the removal of all the short-term parking available on Church Street.

"Short-term parking is the life blood of retailers and we [the retail merchants] are tremendously effected by the removal of short-term parking," Raney said. "Our daily sales have already greatly suffered by the removal of quick parking."

Raney said that with the removal of short-term parking on Church Street, the merchants on Northgate will be surrounded by three high-speed streets. He said that when the merchants went to the city about the situation five years ago, and were told they would still make money from foot traffic by Texas A&M students living on Northside. Raney said this is not so.

"We don't get as many people walking across the street as we

did 25 years ago," Raney said. "Who wants to cross six lanes of 40 to 45 mile per hour traffic?"

Despite merchants' complaints, Church Street will be under construction for the next four months. The city of College Station is renovating in sections and hopes to have it completed by Nov. 8.

The renovations have already begun at the Wellborn Road intersection and will continue to Church Street's intersection with College Main.

Although city representatives could not immediately be reached for comment regarding the short-term parking situation, Bob Mosely, engineer for the city of College Station, said there are many benefits from the renovations.

"Church Street is the main east-west artery through Northgate," Mosely said. "It should be a nice improvement to the Northgate area and improve the traffic flow."

Mosely said the city has been able to complete the work through federal community development grant money.

The renovations include repaving the 28-foot street and 6-foot sidewalks. The sidewalks will also be colored and stamped to look like brick.

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Aggies to race solar car across U.S.

Robin Lewis
The Battalion

The 2,300-mile trip from Chicago to Palm Springs, Calif., may be a pleasant, cross-country trip to some, but for the Texas A&M Solar Power Motor Sports Team, it is a chance to prove how bright they are — as long as the sun stays bright too.

The team will enter Acala, a solar-powered car named after the Japanese god of fire, in the 2001 American Solar Challenge on July 15.

Acala, designed by A&M engineering students, has a carbon-fiber body and is covered with 2,640 solar cells that will propel the car across the country.

The car is powered only by the cells that convert the energy from sunlight to electricity. The power is then delivered to the batteries where the energy is stored for use by the car.

"The maximum energy you can get from the sun is 1,000 watts, and that's about how much it takes to run your hair dryer," said

Dr. Dennis G. Waugaman, faculty advisor for the team. "So you don't have very much power to glide this 700-pound car across the country."

He said this project is primarily for educational purposes, although a lot of the students dedicate their time because they find it fun to be involved.

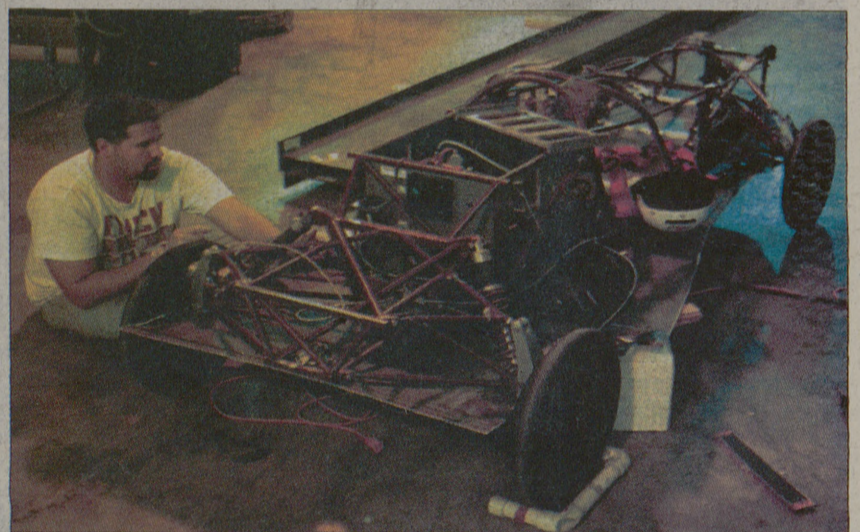
"This [project] is 99 percent students," Waugaman said.

Waugaman said the engineering department has incorporated this project into some of their courses and students may even get credit for their senior projects.

Although corporations and former students sponsor the team, Waugaman said raising money has been the hardest part of this \$1 million project.

Waugaman also said it is a challenge to get the car from one city to another, much less cross-country without a breakdown.

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KRISTI HINES/THE BATTALION

Mark Ellis, a recent graduate, works on putting the final touches on the Solar Power Motor Sports Team's solar car, Acala. The team will race the car in the 2001 American Solar Challenge, which begins on July 15 in Chicago.

Local officials oppose proposed bombing range in South Texas

SARITA, Texas (AP) — Local leaders and environmental groups on Monday urged Secretary of the Navy Gordon England to end consideration of the Laguna Madre area as a possible military bombing and training site.

Kenedy County Commissioners voted unanimously to oppose the idea after hearing from Texas A&M professor Timothy Fulbright, who has studied the inland ecosystems for decades.

Fulbright told the commissioners that the land was critical habitat for wildlife. He said 80 percent of all red-head ducks in the Western Hemisphere winter in the area and 50 percent of all fish caught along the Texas Coast originate in the Laguna Madre.

The ecosystem is even more delicate inland, Fulbright said, with grasses and groves of mesquite trees the result of long and careful tending.

He said disturbing the thin layer of clay below the sand would cause fauna to disappear into the porous sand.

"It's not that we don't like the military," said County Commissioner Tobin

Armstrong, a 77-year-old World War II veteran. "We're all patriots. We love this country. I've been ranching it successfully. There ain't nothing you can do except raise livestock and support wildlife."

Located in the middle of a sparsely populated stretch of sandy coastal plains, Sarita is the closest settlement to

"It's not that we don't like the military. We're all patriots."

— Tobin Armstrong
Kenedy County Commissioner

what 49-year-old civil engineer Patrick Veteto, a Marine Corps veteran, has suggested as a possible site for military training.

The possibility of using 220,000 acres just east of Sarita for practice bombing is one plan being considered as an alternative for training now done on Vieques Island in Puerto Rico. That agreement ends in May 2003.

The plan suggested for South Texas would also have Navy troops use Padre Island, a narrow barrier island that runs along the coast, to practice amphibious assault landings.

Navy officials have said it is too preliminary to comment on the plan.

Since news of the plan broke, the public outcry along the coast has been more substantial than anything in Armstrong's memory.

"There are more people today than I have ever seen. There was not one person in favor," Armstrong said. About 100 people attended the meeting.

Kenedy County's population is slightly more than 400. Supporters are promoting it as an economic development plan, said County Judge J.A. Garcia Jr.

"Studies show it would have just the adverse impact," Garcia said. He said practice bombing could harm the oil and gas industry as well as the cattle industry.

"There's also eco-tourism, the recreation impact, which is tremendously

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Pieces of spy plane head home

WASHINGTON (AP) — Exactly three months after the U.S. Navy EP-3E spy plane made an emergency landing on China's Hainan island, it began returning in pieces to U.S. custody, officials said Monday.

Parts of the dismantled aircraft were flown aboard a Russian-designed cargo plane to Kadena Air Base on the Japanese island of Okinawa on Sunday. The cargo plane is to make a final flight with the EP-3E's stripped-down fuselage on Wednesday, U.S. Pacific Command spokesman Maj. Sean Gibson said.

The EP-3E was part of an electronic surveillance group based at Kadena. Its return in pieces will mark an end to an episode that put severe strain on the United States-China relationship. Vice President Dick Cheney said "the jury's out" on whether the United States and China can forge stronger bonds.

"We're not enemies at this point,

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