

# THE BATTALION

107 YEARS AT TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

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## News in Brief State

### Officer dies from March 4 accident

AUSTIN (AP) — After lingering in a coma for more than 18 months, an Austin police officer has died, succumbing to injuries suffered March 4 when he was struck by a car outside an apartment complex by a hand-run driver.

Officer Jose "Joe" Reyes died Monday, six days before his 41st birthday, at the Hospice of St. Joseph House. Reyes spent three months at Parkland Hospital before doctors decided there was nothing more they could do for him. Reyes, a 12-year police veteran, was off duty when he received the fatal head injuries in a hit-and-run driver's car about 2 a.m. near his apartment. Police spent two weeks trying to track down the driver and then took about two more weeks before filing charges of failure to stop and render aid against Carla Denise Alvizo, 30, of Buda.

Police spokeswoman Laura Brecht would not say whether the charges would be upgraded now that Reyes has died.

### Nation Man facing death penalty for murders

MARIPOSA, Calif. (AP) — Prosecutors said Monday they will seek the death penalty against a man if he is convicted of killing three Yosemite park tourists.

Cary Stayner, already serving a life sentence in the killing of a park naturalist, pleaded innocent to three counts of murder and a number of additional charges in the deaths of the tourists.

Prosecutor George Williamson said he will seek the death penalty in the February 1999 killings of Carole Sund, her daughter Juli, and family friend Silvana Pelosso of Argentina.

His trial is set for Feb. 25.

### New trial date set for accused student

WASHINGTON (AP) — The student accused of murdering two classmates at a university catering to deaf students will go to trial later than expected.

The trial of Joseph Mesa Jr., of Guam has been pushed back from Nov. 5 to Feb. 4 due to scheduling conflicts. The proceeding will begin a day after the one-year anniversary of the death of one of the victims, Benjamin Varner.

The trial is expected to last three to four weeks.

Mesa, a former freshman at Gallaudet University, was indicted in June for the deaths of Varner of San Antonio and Eric Junkett of Burnsville, Minn.

## Sprinkler installation begins

### Schumacher Hall first in A&M's \$5.2 million campus fire-safety plan

Justin Smith  
The Battalion

Texas A&M was prompted to institute a plan to prevent residence hall fire deaths because of recent fire-related student deaths across the country. A&M has never had a student die in a hall fire, and plans have been made to make sure it never happens.

A&M began work on its \$5.2 million fire-safety plan as soon as school dismissed for the summer. In this plan, 24 of the 41 residence halls will have fire-suppression sprinkler systems installed during the next five years. Schumacher Hall currently is being renovated, and construction will start in other halls soon.

After hall fires in Dorm 9 in 1998, at Seaton Hall in 2000 and at the University of Texas-Austin earlier this year, the State Fire Marshal's office dispatched inspectors to schools across the state to assess the problem. It was found that nearly all of the campuses had major problems.

Fire sprinklers have never been required in residence halls, but since fires have claimed the lives of students, there has been state and federal legislation passed to require fire sprinkler systems in halls.

Halls that are not having the sprinklers installed al-

ready have other defenses set up such as 24-hour alarm systems, smoke detectors, automatic door shutting devices, residence hall staff training and fire drills, to name a few.

The most difficult part of a fire to defend against is how people will react. "It's that unpredictable human element that we try to plan for in our training program," said Chris Meyer, director of environmental health and safety.

People also like to use candles and incense, which are not allowed at A&M, and that can lead to fires, so the staff is trained to look out for those and other devices that are potentially hazardous.

Wayne Smith, director for the Fire Safety Inspection Department for the State Fire Marshal, said, "We are very pleased with the universities across the state working to correct the problems they have. Texas is way ahead of other states because we realized the problem and got to work fixing it rather than setting up committees and boards to just evaluate the problem."

Ron Sasse, director of Residence Life, said that fraternity and sorority houses also are required to follow these new laws, as are high-rise buildings, which primarily house students.



STUART VILLANUEVA/The Battalion

Construction workers are installing a sprinkler system in Schumacher Hall. Twenty-three other residence halls will have sprinkler systems installed over the next five years.

"We are very fortunate at Texas A&M because we have never had a student die in a residence hall fire, and we are committed to doing our best to keep it that way with these renovations and the designs we have for our new halls," Sasse said.

## UPD patrol cars equipped with portable defibrillators

Elizabeth Raines  
The Battalion

All marked Texas A&M University Police Department (UPD) patrol cars now have the equipment to save lives.

UPD purchased eight Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) last month. The AEDs offer an alternative to CPR when someone goes into car-

diac arrest by allowing a person to send an electric current (a shock) to the victim's heart.

Bob Wiatt, director of UPD said UPD monitors all 911 calls, including those made to the Texas A&M Emergency Medical Service (EMS). He said having AEDs in the patrol cars will be beneficial because police cars often are the first unit to respond to the emer-

gency because they are already out patrolling.

"If a person has cardiac arrest, you only have five to seven minutes to bring them back from the dead, and if we are the first on the scene, we want to be able to save a life," Wiatt said.

"This is an effort for the health and safety of the entire Texas A&M community."

Wiatt said all officers driving in the eight marked patrol cars have been through extensive training and are prepared to use the AEDs. He also said UPD is the first police department in the Brazos Valley area to put defibrillators in patrol cars.

Charles A. Sippial, vice

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BERNARDO GARZA/The Battalion

Officer Jacqueline Holiday, a Texas A&M University Police Officer for four years, displays a FirstSave AED defibrillator. All marked UPD patrol cars are not equipped with the devices in cases of emergency.

## Houston running for 2012 games

HOUSTON (AP) — John Kelley never got to the Olympics as a boxer, so he took on another dream: Bring the Olympics to Houston.

The former Houston city councilman is listed as "founder" on the Houston 2012 Foundation roster. He was a pioneer in taking the early steps that led to the arrival of the U.S. Olympic Committee to consider Houston as host of the 2012 Olympics.

"When I was young, I wanted to be an Olympian and I almost made it," Kelley said. "When I was a city councilman, I started thinking of ways to help the city and this was one of them. It would be a dream come true for me."

Kelley's early work helped lay the groundwork for Hous-

*"When I was young, I wanted to be an Olympian ... I started thinking of ways to help the city and this was one of them."*

— John Kelley  
Houston 2012 Foundation founder

## Search continues for Baytown man

BAYTOWN (AP) — The water is so murky you cannot see your hand in front of your face. The pitch blackness also hides rusting barrels, broken concrete imbedded with twisted steel reinforcing bars and yards of old fishing line with hooks.

In the underwater no-man's land 24 feet beneath the surface of the San Jacinto River, Harris County Sheriff's Department divers hunted Monday for the last of five people killed when their minivan careened out of control on Interstate 10 just east of Houston, rolled several times and bounced over a concrete guardrail into the water. Two people survived.

The first four bodies were recovered within hours of the wreck Sunday evening but the fifth, a 36-year-old man missing and presumed drowned, eluded divers who worked in 30-minute shifts Monday.

"You've got to be careful," said Lt. Scott Holman after peeling off his protective rubber suit, flippers and gloves. "The faster you move, the more dangerous it gets."

"You feel around, just feel your way."

The Harris County Medical Examiner's Office released the names of three victims

Monday: Victor Reynolds Jr., 9; Kanisha Reynolds, 6; and their uncle, George Meyers, 37. The two children, brother and sister, were from Houston. The fatalities also included a 15-year-old boy from Georgia, whose name was not released.

The 56-year-old grandmother and her

*"My son said the boys told them they were going away. That was the last I saw of them."*

— Debra Haskett  
victims' neighbor

11-year-old grandson were rescued. They were in good condition Monday at Ben Taub General Hospital in Houston.

The grandmother was pulled from the water by two bystanders. Her grandson, Demetric Carter, stepbrother to the Reynolds siblings, was ejected onto the

roadway before the vehicle sank.

The grandmother, Barbara Meyers, from Riverdale, Ga., was returning home after a visit with her daughter, Katrina Reynolds, who lives in an apartment complex in northwest Houston. The missing man, from Marietta, Ga., was a family friend.

Medical examiners were planning autopsies before releasing the bodies to the family.

"I want to see them," Katrina Reynolds told Houston television station KHOU as she cried Monday. "I want to touch them. I want to let them know I'm there."

Neighbors described Reynolds as a protective mother who was holding up as well as could be expected.

"For something like this to happen to your children, she's as strong as she can be," Omega Davison said. "She's being real brave."

The Reynolds children apparently were accompanying their grandmother to Georgia to spend the rest of the summer. Debra

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ton 2012 Foundation chairman George DeMontmond III to get the project rolling.

The Houston organizers were set Monday to welcome the USOC to begin touring the venues that would be available for the Olympics. It is a moment Kelley has long anticipated.

As chairman of the Houston International Sports Committee, Kelley helped attract USOC events to the city, including the 2000 USOC Media Summit, hosting athletes and media prior to the Sydney Olympics.

"In every city there is a guy who has the dream," said Bob Condon, director of media services for the USOC. "In Dallas it is Grady Hicks and in Houston it starts with John Kelley."

"John has been there for us. He was involved in two very

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Aggielife

- Summer Concert Mania

Opinion

Just not right  
China underserving of Olympics because of human rights

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