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Melissa Guerra,
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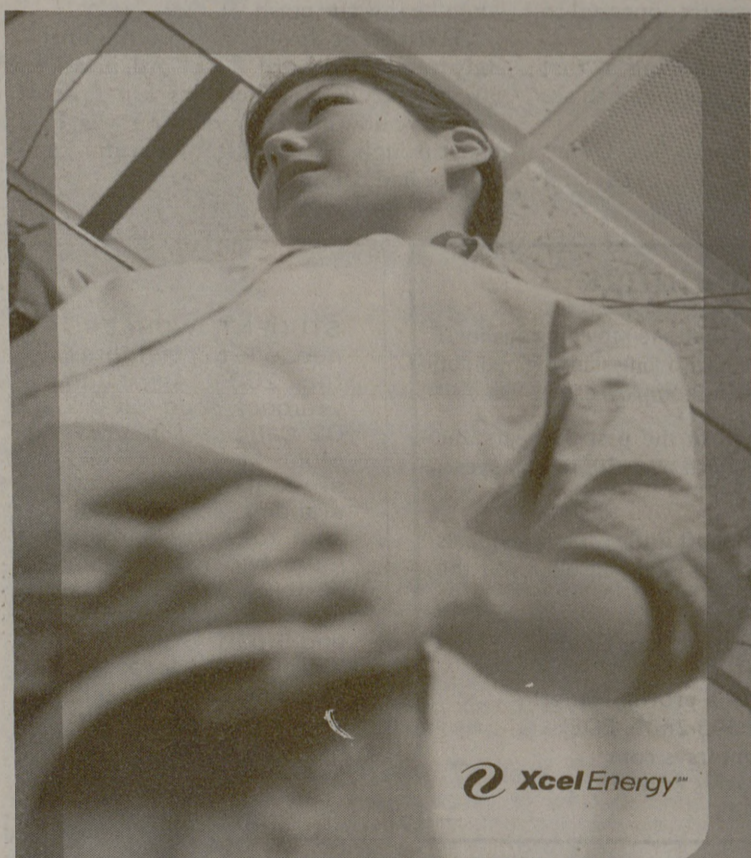
To hear more about Williams, stop by the Presentation on October 9th, 5:30 pm to 6:45 pm at 707 Rudder. Williams representatives will be available to answer your questions about a possible career with us. Williams will be on campus on October 10th to interview graduating seniors and intern candidates. Resumes are due at Career Services by September 21st.

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State

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THE BATTALION

Monday, September 10, 2001

Barge knocks sections from bridge, at least 4 dead

Only bridge leading into South Padre Island closed

PORT ISABEL (AP) — A group of barges smashed into a pillar of the only bridge leading to popular South Padre Island early Saturday, toppling three 80-foot sections of the bridge, and killing at least four people whose vehicles plunged into the water 85 feet below.

Adrian Rivera, spokesman for the Texas Department of Public Safety, said four people were dead and three were hospitalized.

An unknown number of people were missing, while 13 were rescued from the Laguna Madre, part of the Intracoastal Waterway shipping route along the Gulf Coast, officials said.

Rhonda Fife stood near the four-lane bridge Saturday afternoon and said she had not heard from her 18-year-old daughter, Tiffany, since she went to the island with friends late Friday.

"Nobody called and they always call," said Fife, her voice trembling.

Michael Burke, father of two sons who had gone out with Tiffany, anxiously waited with Fife.

"I just want to know where my kids are at. I hope they're all right and just can't call me," Burke said.

Five vehicles were located in the 50-foot-deep water by early afternoon and divers took pictures of their license plates for identification, said Cameron

County Sheriff Conrado Cantu. The sheriff said as many as 10 vehicles could be in the water.

Crews had pulled two vehicles out of the water by midafternoon when the piling damaged by the barges toppled into the water. No injuries were reported when the piling fell.

The Coast Guard was notified around 2:30 a.m. that the tug Brown Water V and its four barges, loaded with coiled steel

and phosphate, had struck the 2.37-mile-long span, the longest bridge in Texas. None of the cargo spilled.

The tug operator was questioned and passed a sobriety test, officials said.

The crash dropped two adjacent 80-foot segments of the Queen Isabella Causeway into the channel near the center of the span.

Rescue efforts were suspended until Sunday morning when a third 80-foot section of the bridge collapsed about 2 p.m. Saturday, Rivera said.

"There's a consensus that we're in the recovery phase, not the rescue phase," Cantu said.

Three people died at the scene, and the fourth died at a hospital, authorities said. One

victim was identified as Port Isabel Fire Marshal Robert Harris, said Desi Najera, an emergency management coordinator.

The three other victims were Stevan Rivas, 22, of Humble, Texas, who died at the scene; a 52-year-old man, who was pronounced dead at Valley Baptist Medical Center in Harlingen; and a male in his 50s, who died shortly after arrival at Valley Regional Medical Center in Brownsville.

A 27-year-old man was reported in guarded condition at Valley Baptist Medical Center. A man and woman, both in their mid-30s, were reported in stable condition at Valley Regional Medical Center.

The state hired two boats to serve as ferries, and was considering bringing a state-owned vehicle ferry from Corpus Christi, said Randall Dillard of the Texas Department of Transportation.

Faustino Ramirez was on the bridge when the pillar collapsed.

"I don't know. I just ran and heard a roar under my feet. I felt it shake," Ramirez said.

South Padre Island has about 2,000 permanent residents. Island hotels were about 75 percent booked for the week. Most tourists on the island to celebrate Mexico's Dia de Septiembre independence.

In addition, thousands of volunteers had been on Saturday to help with beach cleanup, part of a Beach Day, said local builder Clayton Brasher.

The island is perhaps known as a Spring mecca, when crowds of 200,000 students arrive, staying on the island and in nearby cities.

"The disruption of the ice of the causeway some time when ... the demand for tourism services is down," Jeff Moseley, executive director of the Texas Department of Economic Development.

The barges were owned by American Commercial LLC of Jeffersonville, Ind. They were being pushed by a tug owned by Brown Water Services Inc. of Rockport. American Commercial vice president Jim Adams said they were loaded with Tennessee, Adams said. Officials of Brown Marine Service did not repeat telephone calls Saturday.

"I just ran and heard a roar under my feet. I felt it shake."

— Faustino Ramirez, witness

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Session I

September 19, 2001

Langford Building A

Zeta Tau Alpha Welcomes New Member Class 2001

Kelley Amort	Andie Kelly
Jennifer Blades	Mandy Klopsteck
Morgan Brady	Angela Klusman
Natalie Brandt	Laura Lyne
Lauren Bron	Lindsey Mathews
Kim Brzozowski	Natalie McElroy
Dana Carnahan	Mitzi Milligan
Renee Chapman	Lindsey Mims
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Carin Compton	Whitney Morriss
Emily Davis	Brenda Neff
Gina Della Valle	Cecily Norris
Kristen Ellis	Stacey Pool
Carly Feuerbacher	Chelsea Ray
Jessica Files	Ashley Reed
Ryann Fox	Ana Rincon
Erin Garrison	Lindsey Rudloff
Sarah Glasscock	Mary Katherine Slocum
Courtney Graybill	Amber Somers
Kristen Hamilton	Jessica Templett
Carrie Hanley	Katy Walden
Kristen Harshaw	Kelsey Walker
Cara Hart	Leigh Whitaker
Jennifer Hicks	Kelly White
Lindsay Hitt	Sarah Williams
Karrie James	Holly Winn
Melissa Kalka	Courtney Wren

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