

THE BATTALION

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

Students rescue five from drowning



- Man drives his van into Offatts Bayou. Two women, two children and an infant are inside
- 1 minute later: Man surfaces and comes to shore
- Students talk in Spanish to the man. He tells them more people are still inside
- Students form an assembly line to move victims the 87 feet from the van to the shore
- 6-8 minutes later: Students pull the last victim, an infant, from the submerged van

Source: Texas A&M Varsity Sailing Team, Galveston National Department, Galveston Fire Department
CHAD MALLAM • THE BATTALION

By Sarah Darr
THE BATTALION

Five victims, including one infant, remained hospitalized Tuesday after 26-year-old Jose Rodriguez intentionally drove his family van 87 feet into the Offatts Bayou on Saturday, Galveston police said.

The driver's wife, 21-year-old Maria Rodriguez, and her

cousin, 26-year-old Rosalinda Martinez were upgraded from critical to serious condition Tuesday. Martinez's two children, Melvin, 4, and Linda, 6, were also in the van, alongside infant Brenda, Jose and Maria Rodriguez's daughter. Melvin was upgraded Tuesday to serious condition, and Linda and Brenda remain in critical condition.

The van sank 10 feet into the murky water, and Rodriguez surfaced about a minute later against a strong current, witnesses said. A group of students from varsity sailing teams at local universities, including Texas A&M and the University of Texas, were standing nearby, preparing to begin a race. Students began to speak with Rodriguez in Spanish and he

told them there were two children still inside the van.

It only took a second for their instincts to kick in, and students began diving in the water from the boats and the shore, said Jake Scott, the captain of the A&M Varsity Sailing Team. Scott said every-

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TxDOT recognizes A&M innovation

By Brittany Hooten
THE BATTALION

The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) named Texas A&M innovation in asphalt testing — designed to judge the durability of asphalt before it is put on the road and taxpayers pay for its repair — one of the top research findings of 2001.

TxDOT recognized Chemical Engineering Professor Dr. Charles Glover's Stirred Air-Flow Test. Glover submitted a design proposal in March 1999 to TxDOT after it requested proposals of an apparatus that would conduct an aging process on asphalt, to determine if the

asphalt would be strong enough to bear the wear and tear of Texas roadways.

"We wanted something that was easy to operate, easy to maintain, safer, cheaper and faster," said Gerald Peterson, TxDOT asphalt laboratory engineer. "It is exactly what we were looking for."

Peterson said TxDOT sponsors universities to do research for them. Glover was awarded the project, funded by TxDOT.

When exposed to the elements, asphalt becomes brittle and cracks, Glover said. The asphalt cannot continue to take stresses and becomes susceptible to even more damage over time, he said.

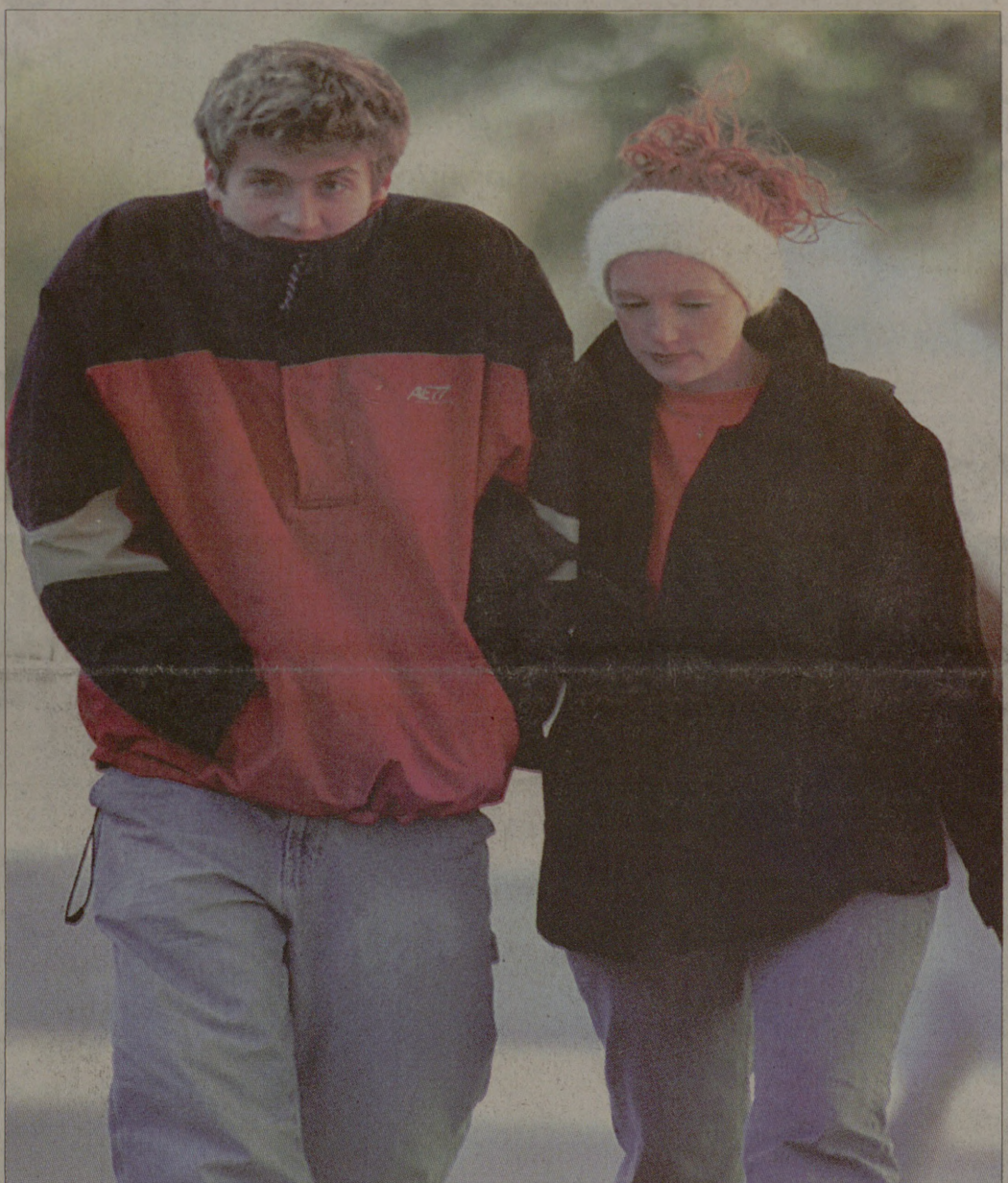
The Stirred Air-Flow Test solves that problem by aging asphalt in a controlled manner. Glover said the test burns asphalt at a slow rate, exposing certain components of the asphalt to the elements. Testing it this way allows roadway specialists to predict the behavior of asphalt before it is laid, he added.

This new system can also tell specialists the stability of the asphalt.

"It's a matter of long-term aging in roads costing money," Glover said. "You want to know as much about the aging process as possible and how to slow it down."

See **Asphalt** on page 2A

Wind blown



JOHN LIVAS • THE BATTALION

Justin Mickey and Mindy O'Chery weathered the strong winds near the Zachary engineering Center as temperature lows

reached the 30's. The cold front blew in Monday night and is expected to last until the end of the week.

Texas schools to strengthen health education programs

By Marianne Hudson
THE BATTALION

Texas children do not participate in enough daily vigorous physical activity, according to a bill passed in the state legislature last year that requires all school districts to examine their health education programs.

Although many schools have physical education programs, some activities, such as dodgeball, leave many students idle once they are out, said Carl Jabbada, professor of kinesiology and director of motor development studies.

The legislature will require all school districts adopt a state-approved health program by 2007 that will increase the time and quality spent on health education in elementary schools.

Bryan ISD will enact the Coordinated

Approach to Child Health (CATCH) program with a kick-off in March, said Patty Wellams, learning facilitator for Bryan ISD.

The Austin-based program focuses on a series of lessons from third to fifth grade, said Peter Cribb, CATCH program director for the University of Texas Health Science Center. The program uses a variety of facilities to teach students the importance of a healthy lifestyle. The objectives of CATCH are to coordinate classroom teachers, physical education teachers, food services and families in the education process.

"It is important to deliver these healthy messages from multiple directions," Cribb said.

Physical education training extends beyond

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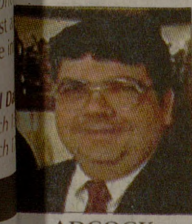
2002 ELECTION

7 candidates vie for District 31 seat

Seven Republican candidates are vying for the newly created District 31, which stretches from West Houston to Round Rock and includes the Bryan-College Station area. If no candidate receives a majority of the votes in the March 12 primary, the top two finishers will compete in an April 9 runoff. The winner will face Democrat David Bagley in November. As a service to our readers, each candidate will be profiled this week. *The Battalion* will also select a candidate to endorse.

By Rolando Garcia
THE BATTALION

Flynn Adcock



ADCOCK

Cutting taxes and reforming Social Security are at the top of Flynn Adcock's agenda.

Adcock, a 37-year-old trade economist at A&M, said he wants to accelerate President Bush's tax cuts by implementing them over five or six years instead of 10. The estate tax should be permanently eliminated and the capital gains tax

should be reduced, Adcock said. In addition to stimulating the economy, he said, lower taxes will actually increase government revenue by strengthening the economy.

Adcock said the government should close special interest tax loopholes and eventually move to a single income tax rate of approximately 18 percent.

"That will do away with all the games and gimmicks in the tax code," Adcock said.

With the Social Security program currently running a small surplus, Congress should begin to gradually reform the system before it goes bankrupt in 30 years,

See **Adcock** on page 7A

Brad Barton



BARTON

Students may be forgiven for thinking Brad Barton is running for yell leader — his sales pitch to students has been light on political substance but heavy on Aggie credentials.

Barton, a businessman who moved to College Station from the Dallas area to run for Congress, has sent campaign literature to students promoting his "pro-Bonfire" stance and urging students not to vote for his "t-sip" opponent, Peter Wareing. Barton, 31, a 1993 A&M graduate, said he is hoping to get more students involved in the political process.

"A lot of candidates ignore students because of the assumption that they don't care and don't vote. I steadfastly refuse to believe that," Barton said. "If you provide a compelling reason, they will vote."

Barton said his top priority is tax cuts. Accelerating President Bush's tax cuts will help stimulate an economy slipping into recession,

See **Barton** on page 2A

John Carter



CARTER

Wisdom, experience and maturity are what separate John Carter from a field of political novices, the candidate said, and at a time of crisis, America needs proven leaders.

Carter, 60, retired last year after serving 20 years as a state district judge in Williamson County and said he is the only candidate with an extensive public track record. Carter touts his court's reputation as a stern dispenser of justice to violent criminals.

"I promised to give them (Williamson County residents) a safe place to raise their kids," Carter said. "We worked with law enforcement to get tough on crime and now we have the lowest crime rate of the top 50 counties in Texas," Carter said.

Carter criticized two other candidates, Peter Wareing and Brad Barton, for moving into the district to run for Congress. With his deep roots in central Texas, Carter said he shares the conservative values

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INSIDE



Sports Pg. 1B
Buffaloes too much for Ags to handle

Four Colorado players score in double digits as men's basketball falls, 92-77

WEATHER

TODAY
HIGH 50° F
LOW 17° F

THURSDAY
HIGH 55° F
LOW 25° F

FORECASTS COURTESY OF www.collegeweather.com