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Wednesday, June 19, 2002

Jack by R. DeLuna

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Couple accused in 22-year-old kidnapping strike plea deal

NEW YORK (AP) — A couple charged with kidnapping a baby 22 years ago and raising him as their son struck a plea deal Tuesday that spares them lengthy prison terms.

Barry and Judith Smiley said they hoped the deal would give the parents of Matthew Propp "closure and time to heal."

"We broke the law, and we're willing to take responsibility for that," Barry Smiley said after a judge approved the arrangement. "We're truly sorry for any pain we caused."

Propp, now 23, held back tears and buried his face in his hands several times during the hearing. Later, he said he was relieved the "chaotic" ordeal was over.

"It's jail time, and that's upsetting," he said. "They're my parents. My feelings for them haven't changed at all. I still love them very much."

The baby's maternal grandfather had arranged for the Smileys to adopt the baby at birth. But in 1980, when the child was 15 months old, a judge ruled the adoption illegal because the boy's mother, Deborah Gardner, had not given her consent; Gardner has not involved herself in the current case.

The couple fled to Albuquerque, N.M., with the baby and lived under the aliases Bennett and Mary Propp. The couple surrendered last year, but argued that they had acted out of love for the child.

Teachers
 Continued from page 1

However, they will need to meet rigorous requirements prior to acceptance," Glessner said.

The first 14 participants of PACT completed the initial course requirements in Spring 2002. The participants are preparing for year long teaching internships. 10 to 12 students are already on file to participate in the program this fall, Glessner said.

Parrott said the senior students have not found it difficult to complete PACT courses in their last semester.

"Most students have already fulfilled the requirements for their majors and can fill in their electives with the PACT coursework," Parrott said.

A major incentive to participate in PACT is that there is a two-semester paid teaching internship.

"How much (interns are paid) depends on the school district, and some (schools) give bonuses and extra perks to draw in prospective teachers," Glessner said.

School districts offer competitive salaries dependent on their need. Salaries can range from \$25,000 to more than \$35,000, she said.

Parrott said interns are not just put in a room of 20 students for a year to learn about teaching alone. Interns are required to meet weekly with a mentor, and faculty is also available for assistance.

"Mentors supervise and assist the intern to make sure they are meeting the standards of the internship," Parrott said.

In addition to being paid for interning, grants are awarded to help

Input
 Continued from page 1

in the MSC on Feb. 14 explained the reasons behind decisions against it. The reason for the decision allowed for long-term plans with input, Hammond said.

During the past year, students have voiced their opinions on Bonfire in numerous ways, voting online about its design earlier this year, organizing the committee Keep The Burning, submitting Memorial plans and othering an off-campus bonfire in November.

Any student interested in finding out more about the end of the student body Bonfire or any issue should university rules at rules.tamu.edu.

Within the guidelines of student government, students submit revisions to the relation representatives for the organize peaceful protests, distribute pamphlets with the appropriate permit or participate in university committee upon agreement by the student body president and approval by the student body president.

Coventry said the University committees discuss every topic that impacts student life, from parking and meal plans.

One or two students on each committee with appointments every year.

The student perspective considered when faculty staff members make decisions he said.

"It's not just students involved in student government appointed to these committees," Coventry said. "Students all walks of life participate."

Coventry also said the participation of students within student government is important at A&M.

"In the majority of cases made within the University there is an opportunity for student's voices to be heard at A&M has a history of involvement to the students.

Among other things within the A&M system sets the standard of involvement and Coventry said.

students pay for the study program. Some students receive \$4,800, which covers the 15 hours of coursework, workshop, mentoring. There are a limited amount of grants awarded, but of the students have received some kind of grant, Glessner said.

To receive certification, PACT participants must pass two exams. The content exam, the first of the two exams, is passed before interning.

"Students have to know the content of their subject matter they can enter the public school system (and teach it)," Glessner said.

The second TEXES exam, Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities, tests on what students learned from their coursework and skills accumulated from the classroom setting.

The accelerated program puts students into classrooms with mentors to learn real world skills that compliment the traditional certification process.

The newest certification program, Accelerated Certification Program (ACP), is scheduled to be available to students in the fall. The ACP has the same essential requirements as the PACT program but it is different in that it is an online certification program concentrated on secondary life sciences. It is geared to fit schedules and create flexible options for getting teachers certified.

"The ACP appeals to more people at different levels in the field regardless of whether they are midcareer-changers or new teachers," Glessner said.

Interested science or math students should contact an advisor in their college for more information on how to participate in PACT or ACP.

THE BATTALION

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