

THE BATTALION

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Special Olympics goes on despite wet weather

By Sarah Darr
THE BATTALION

Bea Trevino knows how her son feels now, swimming and competing in front of a crowd with his name and score up in lights.

Trevino joined 21-year-old Brandon Trevino and another mother-son duo from Houston in the 25-meter Freestyle Unified Race as part of the state-level Special Olympics on Saturday, swimming alongside her son to help the team take first place in the event. Brandon Trevino and 16-year-old Justin Parker practiced every week since June for the swim.

"I enjoy participating with my

son, but I was nervous," Trevino said.

Diane Parker said training for the Special Olympics helped her grow even closer to her son.

"It's good to be able to compete, and it brings us closer together," Parker said. "The guys are very happy."

Aquatic activities for the Special Olympics were held Thursday through Saturday at Texas A&M's Student Recreation Center. In the Unified Race, as in many Special Olympics events, peers or family members participate with the athlete, said Randy Foederer, aquatics director.

Dave Herrington, Class of 1980,

joined hundreds of volunteers this weekend at the aquatic events. It was Herrington's 14th year to volunteer for the Special Olympics. Herrington's job is to allocate the volunteers to their specific station and then shift and add as needed.

"Without the volunteers, it couldn't happen. Athletes are the heart and soul, but volunteers make it all come together," Herrington said.

The aquatic events had a good turnout of volunteers all weekend, Foederer said.

All athletes are put into a computer system where their gender, age and ability are taken into account and competitors are placed in races according to their ability,

Foederer said. This system ensures that the athletes compete on about the same level, he said.

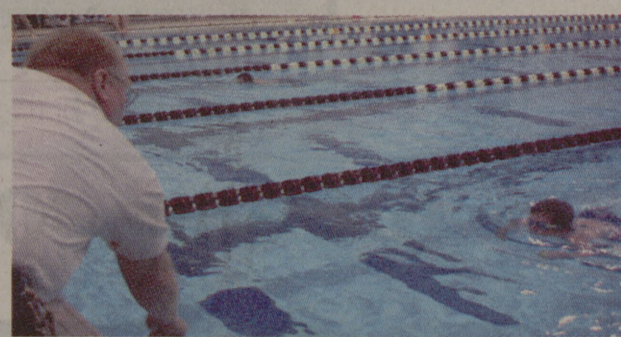
Kevin Hinze, a junior sports management major, volunteered on Friday, escorting athletes from the finish line to the awards.

"I've always wanted to do something like this, and it's great to see the smiles on their faces," Hinze said.

Saturday's events were altered because of the weather, said Mark Hanken, director of competitions.

"Our triathlon turned into a duathlon, because we eliminated the biking portion," Hanken said. "We had four males and three

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ALISSA HOLLIMON • THE BATTALION

Twelve-year-old Kyle O'Conner is congratulated as he makes it to the finish line at the Special Olympics Saturday afternoon at the Rec Center. The aquatic events were the only portion of the competition not affected by the rainy weather.

Strike a pose



RANDAL FORD • THE BATTALION

Freshman chemistry major **Sheetal Wadera** performs a classical Indian dance called Sirashitkam at the Spicmacy Indian concert held in the MSC Sunday

evening. Spicmacy is an Indian student organization which puts on Indian concerts and talent displays open to the public.

Police say student lied about kidnapping

By Rolando Garcia
THE BATTALION

A Texas A&M student who said he had been kidnapped at gunpoint and forced to drive to Corpus Christi told College Station police Friday that he made up the story.

Chris Duke, a senior history major, contacted Corpus Christi police shortly after midnight Oct. 8 and told them he had been approached that afternoon outside his College Station apartment by a Hispanic man with a gun. The two got into Duke's pickup truck and the assailant directed Duke to Corpus Christi, he said. There, Duke reported, they stopped at a quiet parking lot and he passed out when the man pointed the gun at him. Duke said when he awoke, his laptop computer, cash and credit cards were missing.

"For whatever reason, he drove to Corpus Christi and then fabricated this story," said College Station Police Department spokesman Lt. Rodney Sigler.

Sigler said investigators immediately noticed inconsistencies in Duke's story. "None of it made sense. Why go through all that trouble just to rob him?" Sigler said.

When police questioned Duke about the incident, he decided to obtain an attorney after confronted with the problems in his story. At a second interview Friday, Duke and his attorney spoke to investigators and Duke admitted the story was false.

Duke threw away his credit cards, but was not robbed of any property, Sigler said.

"Chris was under a great deal of personal pressure and stress," said Jim James, the Bryan attorney representing Duke.

James declined to comment further.

Prosecutors decided not to press charges against Duke for filing a false report, Sigler said. Making a false report is a Class B misdemeanor punishable by up to 180 days in jail and a fine of up to \$2,000.

Duke is the Memorial Student Center (MSC) Council executive vice president for marketing.

MSC Council President Barry Hammond declined to comment on whether Duke would face any disciplinary action.



DUKE

New tennis complex slated for construction

By Lecia Baker
THE BATTALION

The construction of a new intramural tennis complex is planned to begin on Nov. 26 north of the existing varsity tennis complex on West Campus.

Les Swick, associate director of facilities at the Texas A&M Physical Plant, said the construction has been delayed by the relocation of the archery range. The courts are expected to be completed in June 2003.

Swick said the tennis center will consist of 18 courts, 12 of which will be lighted. Construction of an indoor facility is in the extended plans, but will depend on future funding, he said.

Francis Thomas, a lecturer in the health and kinesiology department, said the construction of the new courts is a phase project. As funding becomes available, he said, a classroom, restrooms, and a check-in area for Rec Sports will be added to the complex.

"Once it's complete, it's going to be one of the premium tennis facilities in the country," Thomas said.

Associate Athletic Director Penny King said the existing intramural tennis courts adjacent to Kyle Field were old and in need of extensive repair.

The funding for the project, Thomas said, is split between the Athletic Department, the health and kinesiology department, Rec Sports, 12th Man Foundation and the vice president of administration's office.

He said the facility will allow the University to conduct better tournaments, camps, and classes and raise the quality of the tennis program at A&M. The new courts will be used for kinesiology classes during the day, and for Rec Sports activities during nights and weekends.

The relocation of the tennis courts to West Campus creates additional parking next to Kyle Field.

King said the need for the relocation of the intramural courts began with the construction of the new sports center on the south side of Kyle Field, which knocked out 500 parking spaces around the stadium. Moving the tennis courts to West Campus will add 350 spaces, King said.

Groups plant 220 trees for Replant

By Brad Bennett
THE BATTALION

Despite Saturday's rain, more than 900 people showed up to plant 220 trees for Replant.

"With 1,400 people signed up, it isn't the best (turnout), but given the rain it is more than we planned on," said Charles Johnson, director of Replant and senior molecular and cell biology major.

The trees, donated by the National Tree Trust, were planted at the Bryan Regional Athletic Complex (BRAC) and at Lake Somerville.

Justin Thaxton, Replant team leader

and senior agriculture business major, said he was surprised by the turnout.

"We didn't expect this many people to show up because of the rain," Thaxton said.

Thaxton, who was in charge of the BRAC site, said some participants planted more than they needed to.

"We had to tell people to quit planting and wait for the 11 a.m. crew so they will have some trees to plant," he said.

Sonia Valdez, a senior community health major, said the rain didn't make digging the 2 foot-deep hole any easier.

"The rain isn't making the ground

any softer, just wetter," Valdez said.

Todd Watson, professor of forestry science and speaker at two of the kickoff rallies, said Replant was a tradition.

"You can see in pictures that in 1876 this campus was just a bald prairie and Aggies started planting trees right away," Watson said. "You people are carrying on a longstanding tradition."

Watson said the Century Tree, which was planted in 1890, and the 50 trees planted on Simpson Drill field to commemorate the 50 Aggies killed in

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Wehner expansion brings grad students up to speed with new technology

By Amy Adams
THE BATTALION

Construction on the addition to the Wehner building on West Campus is set to be finished by July of 2003.

The new Jerry and Kay Cox Graduate Business Center will house graduate students and those receiving their master's of business administration, said Don Hellriegel, liaison between Facilities and Construction Planning and management professor.

"The addition will bring all the business courses to the Wehner building and free up much needed space for undergraduate classrooms," Hellriegel said. "The addition is really a chain reaction in terms of benefits."

Computer classrooms will be located on the second floor and will be equipped for laptop access along with hard and wireless Internet connection. A telecommunications center will be located in the basement of the building that will also contain Internet and telephone connections.

The Cox Center will include a special events center where receptions and luncheons will be held and where recruiters can converge to set up tables and host presentations.

The Reliant Energy Securities and Trading Center will take up the first floor of the Cox Center, aimed to put students in touch with the business world and gain hands-on financial experience, Hellriegel said. The trading center will allow students

to make transactions and decisions that they will face in the future.

The center will cover more than 71,000 square feet, said Bobby McDonald, project manager for the expansion. The cost of the project is about \$15 million, but after completion, an additional \$500,000 will be spent on equipment and furniture.

Donations from individuals and organizations, such as Jerry and Kay Cox and Reliant Energy, helped to fund the addition. The business school also contributed \$4 million.

Most classrooms in the Cox Center will be named after their major contributors.

Jerry Strawser, dean of the business

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THE COX CENTER WILL BE COMPLETE IN JULY 2003

*the addition to the Wehner Building will be 71,000 sq. ft. and will include:

- BASEMENT:**
- Telecommunications center
- FIRST FLOOR:**
- Reliant Energy Securities and Trading Center
- Special events center for recruiters

MANDY ROUQUETTE • THE BATTALION