

THE BATTALION

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University announces new athletics director

BILL BYRNE
Director of Athletics
at the University of Nebraska

**Named National Athletic
Fund-raiser of the year in 1985**

**FACILITY IMPROVEMENTS
UNDER BYRNE:**

• **\$36.1 million Memorial
Stadium Improvement
Project**

• **\$29.53 million baseball
and softball complex**

• **\$4.9 million track
facilities renovations**

• **Nebraska has invested
more than \$100 million
on facility improvements
and upgrades in the past
decade**

MANDY ROUQUETTE • THE BATTALION

By True Brown
THE BATTALION

Bill Byrne, the athletics director for the University of Nebraska, will assume the same role at Texas A&M, University officials announced Tuesday.

Dr. Benton Cocanougher, who has headed A&M's search for a new director, said the committee contacted Byrne early in the process for recommendations and later asked if he would be interested in taking the position.

"It's customary (at the beginning of a search) to call some of the leading people and find out who they have noticed," Cocanougher said. "We, in reflecting on that, said we needed to go back and say 'Bill Byrne, we'd like to talk to you about this.'"

Cocanougher said Byrne was the lone candidate to be interviewed on site for the position. Byrne was in College

Station in late November for a meeting with A&M officials, according to a story by The Associated Press.

Byrne, who has served as the athletics director at the University of Nebraska for the last 10 years, said he looked at the A&M job as a challenge.

"It looked to me like there were great opportunities to build programs at Texas A&M," Byrne said. "It's tough to do things like that, and I can enjoy that. It looked to me as a big challenge, a new opportunity, a new adventure."

Byrne said he received the offer from A&M around noon Tuesday and made the decision after talking with his family.

He expressed some discontent that news of A&M's offer had leaked to the Texas media before he had a chance to discuss the deal with anyone in Nebraska.

"As you get to know me, you'll find that I have a routine that I prefer,"

Byrne said. "This is not the way I prefer doing these types of things."

Byrne said he had no role in the firing of former football head coach R.C. Slocum. University President Dr. Robert M. Gates fired Slocum on Monday, three days after the Aggies finished the regular season with a 6-6 record.

"I must confess that we've been making some coaching changes around here (in Nebraska) as well," Byrne said. "I really have been focusing on that rather than what's been going on in College Station. We've had our own difficulties in football this season."

Nebraska football head coach Frank Solich fired three assistant coaches, including his defensive coordinator, Monday.

Neither Cocanougher nor Byrne said if the monetary details of the contract had been agreed on.

"It will be a multi-year contract,

which is customary for leading athletic directors in the country," Cocanougher said.

While in Nebraska, Byrne was in charge of several facility upgrades, including a \$36.1 million project on Nebraska's Memorial Stadium. The university also broke ground in 2000 on a new baseball/softball complex.

When Byrne signed with Nebraska in 1992, the Athletic Department was faced with a \$2.5 million debt, which Byrne has erased.

The Cornhuskers won several national titles during Byrne's tenure, including three in football and two in volleyball. The baseball team advanced to the College World Series in 2001 and 2002 for the first time in school history.

Earlier this year, he was given the John L. Toner Award, which goes

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Professor emphasizes service in health care

By Eric Ambroso
THE BATTALION

Health care is our most important service economically and in terms of its impact on the quality of life, said Dr. Leonard L. Berry, a distinguished professor of marketing at Texas A&M Tuesday at the George Bush Presidential Conference Center.

Dr. Berry shared his views about health care as a service in his lecture, "Improving Health Care Service in America," the second of three lectures in A&M's Distinguished Lecture Series of the 2002-2003 Season.

Berry took a faculty development leave in 2001-2002 to conduct research in the service quality of health care at Mayo Clinics in Rochester, Minn. and Scottsdale, Ariz. During a five-month period Berry interviewed approximately 1,000 Mayo Clinic patients, doctors, nurses, allied health professionals and administrators. He also participated in hospital rounds, interacted with patients, rode in emergency helicopter rescues and observed 14 surgeries.

Berry used the information that was collected to determine the ideal customer service in health care and what prevents this paradigm from being accomplished.

"Medical services are the most fascinating services I've ever studied," Berry said. "There is no other service that requires us, as consumers, to bear ourselves emotionally and physically."

Berry said the experience that a patient has with a health care service influences patient loyalty, confidence in the caregiver and the outcome of the treatment. Patients can even receive health benefits from natural light, connection to nature, color and quietness, Berry said. He concluded that many hospitals add to the stress of the patient with noise, crowdedness, dim lighting and messiness.

"People do not come to the hospital to have a good time," Berry said. "But buildings that are designed well, buildings with a heart and soul, can help people get better."

Berry's research was also concerned with the interaction between patients and physicians. For instance, patient satisfaction significantly increases when the doctor sits down, Berry said. Taking the time to sit down and talk to patients gives them a feeling that the doctor actually wants to be there. Patients like to feel like the doctor is a partner in their health

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All I want



RANDAL FORD • THE BATTALION

Four-year-old **Olivia Flores** talks to Santa Claus at the George Bush Presidential Library Tuesday night. Pictures with Santa were part

of Holidays in the Rotunda which also included performances from choirs around the area and an arts and crafts workshop.

A&M competes for second Bush library

By Rob Phillips
THE BATTALION

While the Texas A&M Board of Regents is pushing for a father-son package that would bring an additional Bush Library to campus, the University faces stiff competition from several Texas universities, Board of Regents Chairperson Erle Nye said.

Southern Methodist University, first lady Laura Bush's alma mater, is a strong contender for President Bush's library, Nye said. Other Texas universities competing for the library include Baylor, Texas Tech and the University of Texas, he said.

As host of former President Bush's library and museum, the University has visions of multiple Bush libraries. The Board of Regents has already invited President Bush to place his future library on the A&M campus, Nye said.

"The feeling was that it would be a unique and powerful opportunity to spotlight not only the accomplishments of this President, but also to celebrate an unequalled period of public service and leadership by a father and son and, in fact, a family," Nye said.

Nye said the Board of Regents is following the matter but a decision may not come for several years.

A&M President Dr. Robert M. Gates and former President Ray M. Bowen declined to comment. Other regents could not be reached for comment or declined to speak.

According to a November article in *The Dallas Morning News*, SMU is widely considered the front-runner in acquiring the library due to the first lady's connections with the University and funds for the museum that could reach \$200 million.

Brian Blake, public relations specialist at the Bush Library, said the total cost of the library was \$83 million, less than half of what SMU may have access to.

Blake said the library museum cost \$43 million, with private funds from the Bush Foundation, while the library conference center and the Bush School of Government and Public Service cost \$40 million. The funding, he said, came from state and A&M money.

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Athletics director to help choose new football coach

By True Brown
THE BATTALION

New Texas A&M athletics director Bill Byrne said Tuesday he expected to play a major role in deciding who the Aggies' new football coach will be.

"I intend to be very much involved in finding a replacement for R.C. Slocum," Byrne said. "We will make it our top priority to hire a great coach at Texas A&M. Like other athletics directors, I have a short list of coaches that I watch and admire. I haven't talked to anyone though."

Byrne, who was in his 11th season as athletics director at the University of Nebraska, was announced as A&M's new director Tuesday evening.

Dr. Benton Cocanougher, head of A&M's athletics director search committee, said the search for R.C. Slocum's replacement will be carried out in a quick manner.

"I can't get into any names but we are actively engaged in that search," Cocanougher said. "We will close this as quickly as we can identify the right person

and come to an agreement. We recognize that there are some very good reasons for this not to be a long, drawn out process."

A majority of the speculation about A&M's new head coach has centered around current Alabama head coach Dennis Franchione. Franchione signed with Alabama before the 2001 season and has found himself as a possible candidate for the A&M job.

Byrne declined to name any possible candidates Tuesday night, but said there are some qualities he will look for in a new head coach.

"One of the things I look for is people who will be part of the culture," Byrne said. "I look for people who are great teachers. I want people who stand by and do the right thing with their student athletes. Of course, you have to have someone who treats their assistant coaches with respect too."

In his 10 years at Nebraska, Byrne has made 15 head coaching hires, including current football coach Frank Solich. Last

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Inspectors search Iraqi palace

BAGHDAD, Iraq (AP) — International weapons hunters went straight to the heart of Saddam Hussein's regime on Tuesday, searching the rooms of an opulent presidential palace in a show of U.N. power, just when Washington was openly questioning their ability to do the job.

A senior Iraqi official, meanwhile, said Baghdad will reaffirm in a crucial upcoming U.N. declaration that it has no weapons of mass destruction despite U.S. and British claims to the contrary.

Melissa Fleming of the U.N. nuclear control agency in Vienna, Austria, said the Iraqis were expected to submit their report to the U.N. office in Baghdad on Saturday — one day before the deadline mandated by the Security Council.

The unannounced visit to the Al-Sajoud palace was the biggest test yet of the arms monitors' authority under a new U.N. resolution, which led to resumption of inspections here last week after a four-year break.

Seven minutes after the inspectors rolled up to the palace entrance, the towering front gates swung open, allowing them access to the palm-lined compound. Inside, they found a sprawl of ostentation and luxury, but there was no word they found anything else.

"Our inspectors were able to inspect every corner of the presidential palace," said their



SOURCE: GlobalSecurity.org, Digital Globe

AP

Inspectors probe palace

Weapons inspectors arrived unannounced at the Al-Sajoud (Sajoud) palace in western Baghdad on Tuesday. The visit reinforced their mandate for quick, unrestricted access.

spokesman, Hiro Ueki. The chief Iraqi liaison, Gen. Hossam Mohammed Amin, said the Iraqis were cooperative and "the inspectors were happy."

Video from inside the palace, obtained by Associated Press Television News, showed inspectors, clipboards in hand, quickly moving through darkened rooms with flashlights, stopping occasionally to peruse, for example, a utility room or a refrigerator. "Marmalade," one announced after looking over a jar.

The visit by 17 U.N. inspectors lasted just 1 1/2 hours, hardly enough for an exhaustive

search of scores of rooms and the vast grounds.

But it bore a symbolic message: that this time, unlike in the 1990s, the U.N. teams have a free run of Iraq, under a Security Council mandate requiring Baghdad to shut down any chemical, biological or nuclear weapons programs.

President Bush alleges the Iraqis have retained some chemical and biological weapons — missed during previous inspections — and haven't abandoned their nuclear weapons program.

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