

THE BATTALION

Volume 109 • Issue 112 • 10 pages

Texas A&M University

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Monday, March 17, 2003

Parsons members may face school sanctions

By Rolando Garcia
THE BATTALION

Parsons Mounted Cavalry members will not face criminal hazing charges, but the future of the Corps of Cadets unit remains uncertain with 30 cadets facing possible disciplinary sanctions from Texas A&M.

After a five month criminal investigation that included a grand jury inquiry, Brazos County Attorney Jim Kuboviak told the Bryan-College Station Eagle March 14 that even though he believed hazing occurred, he would leave it to

University officials to discipline the students. Kuboviak could not be reached for comment Sunday.

Operations of the cavalry unit have been suspended since October.

An internal Corps investigation, prompted when Unit Commander Ty Keeling reported hazing to Corps Commandant Lt. Gen. John Van Alstyne in October, concluded that juniors had been hazing sophomores by hitting them with axe handles and forcing them to perform exercises in a pit of urine and horse manure, Van Alstyne said.

A disciplinary panel in the Department of Student Life will hold hearings for each of the cadets, and then may hand down sanctions which

"In general, anyone who has violated the University's hazing rules will not be allowed to continue."



VAN ALSTYNE

"In general, anyone who has violated the University's hazing rules will not be allowed to continue," he said, but added exceptions could be made under certain circumstances.

After interviewing the cadets and deciding which ones will remain in the unit, Van Alstyne said he will determine whether the cavalry should continue.

"The future is very uncertain at this point," he said.

Although the unit's operations are suspended, cadets still care for their horses and maintain the cavalry's facilities at Fiddler's Green. Also, 27 sophomores in the unit are conducting equestrian training.

could range from a warning to expulsion from the University. Once Student Life concludes the disciplinary hearings, Van Alstyne said he will personally interview each of the 60 cavalry members to determine if they should remain in the unit.

A&M opens San Antonio student center

By Melissa Fowler
THE BATTALION

The University's third regional prospective student center opened February in San Antonio, allowing area high school students to learn more about Texas A&M without traveling to Aggieland.

Regional student centers in Weslaco and Dallas opened last year.

"We want to plant the A&M flag in communities and have a presence and a place where we can work from," said Executive Associate Provost Dr. William Perry.

The center is manned by Angelica Melendez, an A&M admissions counselor, and is housed in the Texas Engineering Extension Service South Central Texas Regional Training Center.

To keep the cost of the centers down they lease space from other A&M system members for reasonable rents, Perry said. The Weslaco center rents office space from the Texas Agricultural Research and Extension Center.

The regional centers offer many of the services available at the Prospective Student Center located on campus in the Koldus building, Melendez said, providing potential students with one-on-one admissions counseling and information on housing, financial aid and transfer guidelines.

Melendez said she will also visit area high schools and meet with community groups and school superintendents to let them know what the

May I have your autograph?



JOHN C. LIVAS • THE BATTALION

Seven-year-old Lockhart native **Ryan Vogel** (top) and College Station native 7-year-old **Sam Crenshaw** get autographs from an Aggie baseball player Sunday afternoon. More than 4,000 people enjoyed the favorable weather Sunday at Olsen Field.

See **Center** on page 2

Engineering building to open Fall 2004

By Melissa McKeon
THE BATTALION

Construction on the new chemical engineering building is proceeding at a steady clip and will be complete by June 2004, University officials said.

The new building will be located across from the Zachry building off of University Drive.

"The building's furnishings will be installed and it will be ready for people to move into by Fall 2004," said Timothy Donathan, director of facilities,

planning and construction for A&M.

The total cost of the project is \$3.9 million, which includes construction costs and furniture.

The building's seven levels will feature lecture halls, research labs and other facilities, Donathan said.

"The lower level will be mostly lecture halls and the second floor will house computer labs," he said. "Faculty offices will be further up and the uppermost levels will include teaching and research laboratories."

Plans for the new building

began on a smaller scale in 1990 to expand the chemical engineering department's space, but the project did not take shape until three years ago, said Dr. Kenneth Hall, head of the chemical engineering department.

"This (project) will move our program to the next level because there will be extra space for joint projects with other departments such as chemistry and physics," Hall said.

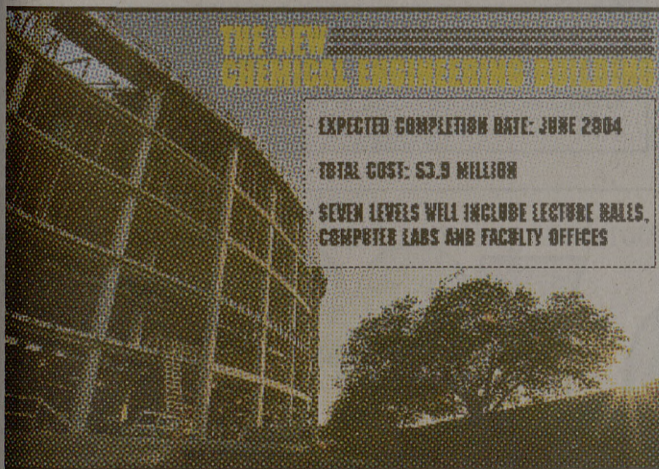
Junior chemical engineering major Angela Smith said she and fellow chemical engineer-

ing students are looking forward to moving into the new building.

"Having a new building for the department will add some appeal to the curriculum because we will have an area that is made for us to use," she said. "It will be great and (it will) benefit students as well as faculty to have our department in one central location."

The chemical engineering department currently uses space in Zachry, Richardson, and the University Services building.

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JOHN C. LIVAS AND TRAVIS SWENSON • THE BATTALION
SOURCE: TIMOTHY DONATHAN, DIRECTOR OF FACILITIES PLANNING AND CONSTRUCTION FOR TEXAS A&M

Mysterious lung illness spreads

By Emma Ross
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

A deadly, mysterious respiratory illness spread largely among health care workers in Asia could be a new strain of flu or even an exotic virus passed from animals to people, a health official said Sunday.

Probably the most feared by health experts, however, would be a new and deadly strain of flu.

The illness, which carries flu-like symptoms, has killed nine people — seven in Asia and two in North America. Its rapid spread in southeast Asia in recent weeks caused a rare worldwide health alert to be issued on Saturday.

Health officials say it may be several more days before they are able to identify the disease. However, they said several of its

features suggest it is caused by a virus, which can often be difficult to pinpoint quickly using standard lab tests.

"Certainly influenza is on the minds of many people," said Dr. David Heymann, communicable diseases chief for the World Health Organization.

Lab tests have ruled out some varieties of flu as well as some viruses that cause hemorrhagic fever. However, many other possibilities remain, Heymann said.

Those include "a new strain of influenza" or such exotic diseases as the closely related Hendra and Nipah viruses — both newly recognized, causing flu-like symptoms and capable of being spread from animals to people.

"If it really is the flu, it could be we have a new organism that could cause a pandemic," said

See **Illness** on page 10

CDC investigating mysterious illness

Federal health officials said Sunday they are investigating reports from a mysterious pneumonia-like illness that has afflicted more than 100 people in seven countries and caused nine deaths.

Canada — Seven cases reported from two family clusters, each with at least one family member who had traveled to Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of China.

France — One case reported on March 11 when a person who had recently returned from Hanoi, Viet Nam, reported symptoms on March 15.

Hong Kong — One case reported on Feb. 26. Patient died on March 13 after being transferred to Hong Kong S.A.R.

Hong Kong S.A.R. — On March 12, health officials reported a person who had been in contact with the sick case.

Philippines — Unpublished report on March 11 of a person who had been in contact with the sick case.

Source: CDC, World Health Organization, Associated Press

Bush and summit leaders set U.N. deadline for today

By Ron Fournier
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

LAJES, Azores Islands — On the brink of war, President Bush and summit partners from Britain and Spain gave the United Nations a Monday deadline to endorse the use of force to compel Iraq's immediate disarmament.

"Tomorrow is a moment of truth for the world," said Bush, commander-in-chief of 250,000 troops ringing Iraq and ready to act with or without U.N. approval. He spoke Sunday after an Atlantic island summit with British Prime Minister Tony Blair and Spanish Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar.

Though the leaders pledged to seek compromise with U.N. foes through the night and all day Monday, they offered little hope of a diplomatic

breakthrough. Even if a compromise plan somehow secured approval of a U.S.-Britain-Spain resolution at the U.N., it would delay military action only a week or so, officials said.

Bush suggested the resolution might not even be put to a vote.

"If Saddam refuses even now to cooperate fully with the United Nations, he brings on himself the serious consequences," the leaders said in a joint statement. They went on to list their plans for Iraq after hostilities, including repairing damage that might be caused by Saddam Hussein and preserving oil and other natural assets.

The leaders gathered with more than 250,000 troops, a naval armada and an estimated 1,000 combat aircraft

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