

THE BATTALION

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CHINESE ACADEMY OF SCIENCE

A&M is working with the academy to bring panda knowledge to the world.

- The CAS has virtual science museums online.
- The museums show pandas in their natural habitat through a "pandacam."
- The museum can be accessed online at: <http://international.tamu.edu/ipa/english/index.html>



SETH FREEMAN • THE BATTALION
SOURCE: CAS

Chinese, A&M foster science

By Bart Shirley
THE BATTALION

The Chinese Academy of Science and Texas A&M's Department of Education and Human Development are cooperating to educate the world about pandas in China.

A&M will now contribute to the CAS's virtual science museums online. A&M Executive Associate Dean Douglas Palmer hosted the signing of the cooperative. He said this effort will help both groups foster interest in science for future teachers.

"It's excellent," Palmer said. "One of the issues is science education."

Students in kindergarten through 12th grades will act as an impetus for the program. A&M's role in the project will be in a parallel study at the Alaskan McNeil River

Project, which studies the habits of grizzly bears. This cooperative will now house the video footage of these bears as a counterpoint to the panda research in China.

Rick Nader, director of the Institute for Pacific Asia, named A&M biology professor Larry Griffing as a key researcher on the project. Nader said this project will increase awareness of science's relation to culture.

"Science is universal," he said. "We want to use culture as a vector in teaching science."

Nader said there are similarities between the United States and China, such as the Great Canyon and the Grand Canyon, and there is a possibility of studying the cultures surrounding the two areas.

The Internet is a science education tool, Nader said. This is the first "panda-

cam" in China.

He said his hope is that the new program will influence how science is being learned and taught.

Nader and Palmer stressed the importance of this cooperation with regard to educating future scientists and educators.

Nader said his organization works on many of these cooperative programs, but that this one was rewarding because it worked out.

"We want to get more students interested in science," he said. "America isn't the only place that the cutting edge is being discovered."

The virtual science museum can be accessed online at <http://international.tamu.edu/ipa/english/index.html>

Jurors: Durst trial verdict was difficult

By Juan A. Lozano
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

GALVESTON, Texas — For five days, arguments, tears, play-acting and doubts swirled around the room where jurors in the Robert Durst murder trial ultimately decided the eccentric millionaire was not guilty of killing his elderly neighbor.

On Tuesday, the eight-woman, four-man jury rendered its verdict after more than 26 hours of deliberations. Durst was accused of intentionally killing his neighbor, cutting up the body and disposing of the parts in Galveston Bay.

When jurors began working Nov. 5, their first vote was nowhere near unanimous. Five jurors voted not guilty, three voted guilty and four were undecided.

"When we went in that room on Wednesday afternoon, that was the worst day of my life because I have never served on a jury before," said Deborah Warren, a surgical technician.

"And I never realized how important it was to come to a verdict."

The deliberations were not easy, Warren said.

"There were people that cried; there were people that fussed and argued. We demonstrated; we had paper all around the room," she said. "My stomach is still knotted up. We did the best with what we had."

Prosecutors claimed Durst planned to kill 71-year-old Morris Black to steal his identity. Defense attorneys said their client accidentally shot Black in self-defense when he discovered the elderly man illegally in his apartment.

Durst, who testified in his own defense, said his neighbor threatened him with a gun the millionaire had hidden in his stove. During the struggle for the gun, the weapon went off as the two men fell to the floor.

"We played out the different scenarios. (One of the jurors) demonstrated to us what would have happened if he had been standing over him versus if he would have fallen on him versus if they would have struggled over the gun," Warren said.

Joanne Gongora, a nursing teacher at Galveston College, said that while jurors considered everything Durst did after Black's death, including the dismemberment and his flight from authorities, they focused on what happened in the millionaire's apartment on the morning of Sept. 28, 2001. Jurors felt prosecutors did not prove their case, she said.

"Based on the evidence presented to us, there was reasonable doubt. It was a big struggle for all of us," Gongora said.

Many jurors said they didn't believe all of Durst's story.

"We took Durst's story completely out of the picture. We took the evidence that was presented to us," said Robbie Clarac, a business manager in Galveston. "We went on the facts that were presented to us from the prosecution. We could not convict him."

Gongora and another juror, Elridge Darby, a maintenance worker, said they could understand that panic drove Durst to run from authorities.

"Flight was something Durst did all his life," Clarac said.

War and remembrance



JP BEATO III • THE BATTALION

A war veteran is reflected on the 3,000 etched names on the bronze memorial during the Veterans Day remembrance ceremony held at the Brazos Valley Veterans Memorial on Tuesday to honor current and former military personnel. The names of 487 additional veterans were unveiled during the service which included a performance by the Aggie Band and a 21-gun salute by the Ross Volunteers.

Profs receive research award

By Carrie Pierce
THE BATTALION

Eduardo Urbina, a professor in the Department of Spanish, and Terence A. Hoagwood, a professor in the Department of English, recently received the Liberal Arts Research Awards for outstanding research and developments in their respective disciplines.

"Research is one of the major elements of the University's mission," said Ben Crouch, executive associate dean in the College of Liberal Arts.

The Liberal Arts Research Award has been presented annually to two members of the faculty in the College of Liberal Arts since its founding in 1996. The department heads nominate possible recipients, a standing committee in the liberal arts college reviews the nominations and then recommendations are reviewed by Liberal Arts Dean Charles Johnson, who makes the final decision, Crouch said.

"Several years ago in the College of Liberal Arts, we thought it would be appropriate to have a research award given at the college level," Crouch said. "These two professors have, in their respective departments, provided exceptional leadership on the graduate, as well as the undergraduate, level."

Urbina has been teaching Spanish literature at Texas A&M since 1981. He came to the United States from Madrid, Spain, in 1969, and received his doctorate in Hispanic Studies from the University of California at Berkeley in 1979. Urbina taught at Berkeley for one year, and the University of Michigan for a year before coming to A&M.

Urbina received the Liberal Arts Research Award primarily for his dedication to digital libraries and the growth of the Humanities Informatics Initiative. Urbina has dedicated himself to the Cervantes Project, a reference and research site dedicated to the life and works of Spanish writer Miguel De Cervantes. Cervantes was a major author of Spanish literature who was born in the 16th century. He wrote "Don Quixote," the most often translated and published book after the Bible.



URBINA



HOAGWOOD

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Vatican debates biotech food

The Vatican ended a two-day seminar Tuesday during which they debated the moral implications of genetically modifying food. The conference sought a middle ground between alleviating world hunger and altering creation.

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| Advocates claim ... | Critics say ... |
| ▶ ... it will fight hunger by increasing crop yields. | ▶ ... that it would be changing God's creation. |
| ▶ ... it will improve the environment because farmers will not use as much pesticides. | ▶ ... that claims of easing world hunger are exaggerated. |
| | ▶ ... the long-term health and environmental effects are unknown. |

SOURCE: Associated Press

Vatican weighs world hunger solution

By Nicole Winfield
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

VATICAN CITY — Two Jesuits told a Vatican biotech conference Tuesday that tinkering with God's creation by making new plant species went against church teaching, adding a moral voice to a debate dominated by scientific, political and economic interests.

A paper by the Rev. Dr. Roland Lesseps and the Rev. Peter Henriot, Americans based in Zambia,

was presented to the final session of a two-day meeting on genetically modified organisms that was designed to help the Roman Catholic Church formulate a position on whether biotech foods can alleviate world hunger.

No date has been set for when the Vatican might come out with its pronouncement, and the conference organizer, Cardinal Renato Martino, said it could possibly take years. But in his final

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Lynch disturbed by exaggerated reports of ordeal

By Erin McClam
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK — Pfc. Jessica Lynch said Tuesday she is disturbed that the military seemed to overdramatize her rescue by U.S. troops and spread false stories that she went down shooting in an Iraqi ambush.

"That wasn't me. I wasn't about to take credit for something I didn't do," she told The Associated Press. "I'm not that person."

The 20-year-old former Army supply clerk — twig-thin and weary, one crutch close at hand — described her ordeal in a Veterans Day interview seven months after the rescue made her a national hero.

Reports circulated by the U.S. military early in the war said Lynch waged a fierce gun-battle with Iraqi fighters who ambushed her 507th Maintenance Company from Fort Bliss, Texas, on March 23 at Nasiriyah. She has since

"I'm not about to take credit for something I didn't do. I'm not that person."



LYNCH

said her rifle jammed, and she did not get off a shot.

And Lynch's new book points out that, despite the "tension and

drama" of the military videotape showing gun-toting U.S. soldiers rushing into an Iraqi hospital to rescue her, the hospital staff never resisted, and even offered the troops a key.

"It disturbed me," Lynch said. "I knew that it wasn't the truth."

Still, the ex-prisoner of war from rural West Virginia took pains to say that she does not care why the military

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