

Carlos Sanchez is the head graduate student in an A&M study to control cockroaches through the nervous system.



## Remote-controlled roaches

Insect technology could improve surveillance and response

By Connor Smith

It is either breakthrough science or the stuff of nightmares, but remote-controlled cockroaches are now possible.

The mechanical engineering department at Texas A&M has teamed up with entomologists in order to develop remotely controlled cockroaches.

Control of cockroaches has been performed before by stimulating the roaches' antennae. The research conducted at A&M, however, hacked the cockroach nervous system to direct it in any chosen direction — a feat that could one day see cockroaches used as surveillance and emergency response tools.

Liang Hong, mechanical engineering pro-

fessor, said using the roach nervous system has advantages over using its antennae. In this new method of control the cockroaches are outfitted with a small "backpack" that contains many components such as a lithium battery power source and the electrodes that are implanted into the roach's nervous system.

When signaled, the electrodes send a pulse of electricity into the cockroach ganglia, which then throws off its normal walking pattern. By choosing between the left or right ganglia, the researchers can make the roaches turn in a direction of their choice. By going directly into the nervous system, the cockroach can't rely on its other senses like it did

COCKROACH ON PG. 2

LAW



Sydney Farris — THE BATTALION

## Highest court hears case for Confederate flag license plate

Texas filing prompts questions of the boundaries of free speech, discrimination

By Josh Hopkins

The United States Supreme Court began hearing a free speech case Monday regarding Texas' rejection of a license plate that featured a Confederate flag.

The license plate was initially introduced by the Sons of Confederate Veterans in 2011 but was rejected by the state. Now, four years later, the Supreme Court is hearing the case that has sparked debate whether the flag, which many feel is representative of racism and discrimination, should be allowed to be displayed.

Texas offers a selection of more than 350 specialty license plates which drivers can order in lieu of regular license plates for an additional fee. After Texas rejected the submitted design, the Sons of Confederate Veterans contested the rejection on First Amendment grounds. Nine states allow for a similar specialty license plate.

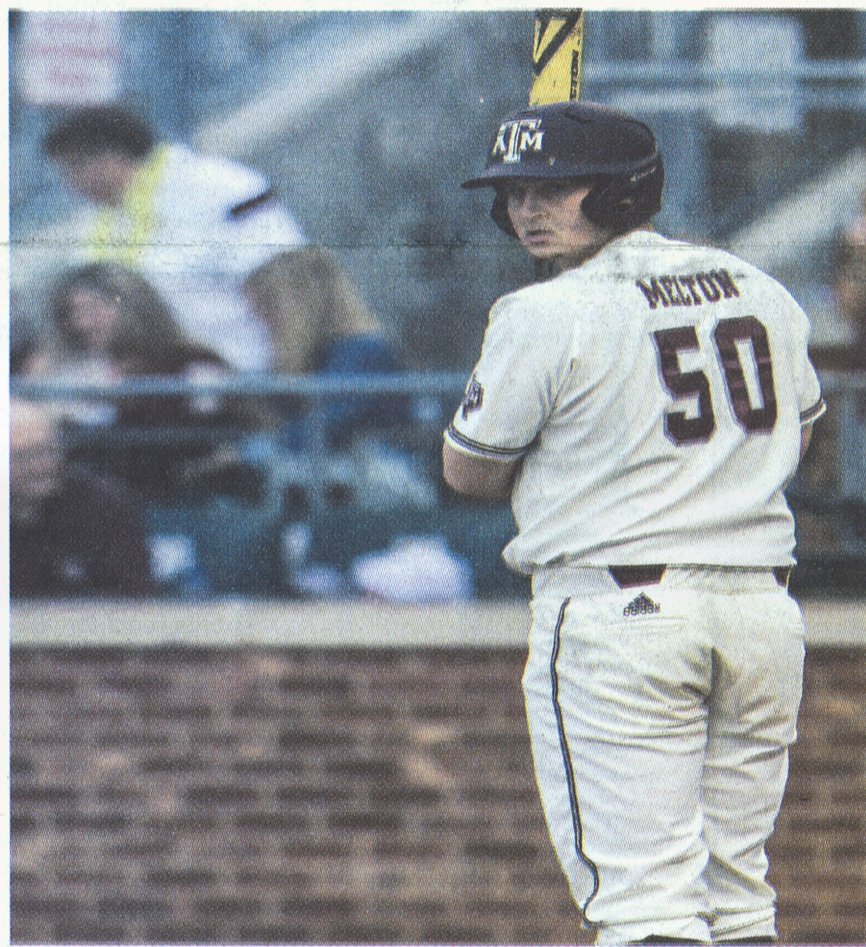
Mary Penrose, law professor at Texas A&M, said the discussion about the license plate revolves around different interpretations of the flag.

"So the state of Texas took testimony and said, 'Well a lot of people see that Confederate flag and attribute to that flag racism, slavery, all of the negative parts of the Civil War,' which undoubtedly is one viewpoint," Penrose said. "But individuals that are seeking this license plate are looking at a different view of the Civil War, and looking at their ancestry and their family heritage and they have a different viewpoints."

CONFEDERATE FLAG ON PG. 3

BASEBALL

## With 24-1 record, Aggies snare top national rank



Cody Franklin — THE BATTALION

Hunter Melton leads the A&M baseball team in RBIs with 18.

### Aggies travel to San Antonio for date with UTSA

By Andre Perrard

Twenty-five games into the season, Texas A&M baseball has 24 wins and a No. 1 national ranking.

The SEC planted the top three teams in the Collegiate Baseball poll released Monday, led by A&M. No. 2 LSU and No. 3 Vanderbilt round out the top three.

Pitcher Grayson Long earned co-SEC Pitcher of the Week honors Monday for the second time in three weeks. In a 4-2 win against Alabama Friday, Long struck out 14 of the 23 batters he faced to move to 5-0 in his last five starts.

At 5-1, the Aggies lead the SEC stand-

ings. They suffered their first loss of the season Saturday, but also set an SEC record for wins in a row with 24 during their weekend series with Alabama. Now that the winning streak is over, the Aggies look to start a new one Tuesday in San Antonio against UTSA.

For UTSA (13-10), Trent Bowles is a player to watch, with 11 doubles and 10 RBIs on the season. Jesse Baker leads the team in home runs (four) and also has 13 RBIs to his name this season. Matt Hilston has the most RBIs with 16.

The Aggies (24-1) come in as the hottest team in college baseball, featuring eight players who have more than 15 RBIs, led by Mitchell Nau, Ryne Birk and Hunter Melton, who each have 18.

UTSA ON PG. 4

POLITICS

## Cruz seals spot as first presidential candidate

Prof's weigh in on candidate's place on political spectrum

By Wade Feilin

Sen. Ted Cruz became the first Republican to announce his candidacy for United States president in 2016 on Monday.

George Edwards III, university distinguished professor of political science, said Cruz's stance is heavily right-wing, conservative and in line with Tea Party ideology.

"Today he said, 'Look, I don't like same-sex marriage, I don't like the Affordable Care Act,' so it's clearly a hard-right, small-government stance, which is not in the mainstream of American public opinion, which isn't to say that it's right or wrong — everybody can figure that out on their own," Edwards said.

Edwards said the Republican primary electorate — the Republicans who actually vote in primaries — is much more conservative than the typical Republican and even more so than the typical American. He said it doesn't matter in the long run that Cruz differs from most of America because of those to whom he must appeal.

"For people like Cruz, who are

CRUZ ON PG. 2



Ted Cruz is the first candidate to announce a presidential run.



Wendy Keeney-Kennicutt teaches chemistry courses through Second Life, an online virtual world.

## Q&A: Inside a virtual chemistry classroom

The Battalion reporter Lenae Allen sat down with Wendy Keeney-Kennicutt, a chemistry professor with a doctorate in chemical oceanography. Kennicutt conducts a virtual Chemistry 101 class using the 3D computer program Second Life.

**THE BATTALION: How long have you been at Texas A&M?**

KEENEY-KENNICUTT: Since 1975, and I started teaching in the

chemistry department in 1984. I love teaching General Chemistry 101 and 102.

**THE BATTALION: What is the program Second Life? How did you come to use it?**

KEENEY-KENNICUTT: They call it a 3D program, but it's really a 2 1/2-D program because 3D really makes a lot of people uncomfortable or sick. You can see its perspective. My avatar

was "born" in December 2008. We have a virtual Heldenfels, where we are doing our National Science Foundation project.

The program platform is made of islands and we have a few bought by Texas A&M. Ecology, the college of medicine and nursing, agriculture, they all have "islands." The vet school also makes their students work in Second Life. Our place on Second

KEENEY-KENNICUTT ON PG. 3