



HOW BERRY PRETTY

The American beautyberry, a native shrub, is putting on quite a show.

GARDEN

CROUCHING HUNTER

Archers may have to hunt a little harder for hiding deer this season.

OUTDOORS, B4

READY FOR FLU?

The government says there's plenty of vaccine to go around.

HEALTH, A6



High 94,
Low 68



Mostly sunny
Forecast/A7

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Thursday
September 20, 2007

The Eagle

Vol. 133, No. 263, 3 sections *

theeagle.com

Bryan-College Station, Texas • 50 cents



1st responders study survival

Classes teach accident scene safety

By ARENA WELCH
Eagle Staff Writer

Lt. Mark Jones was concentrating on one thing — cutting an injured woman from a minivan that crashed along Earl Rudder Freeway — when his worst fear played out.

"I heard a screech from behind and a crash," said the Bryan Fire Department veteran, describing how he and other first responders turned to find a second wreck unfolding just a few feet away.

A woman drove straight into the crash site, smashing her small truck into the back of a trailer and pinning her legs under the dashboard, Jones said. As he crawled into the truck to check for signs of life, he felt a faint pulse in the woman's neck — then, nothing.

"She died almost instantly," he said. It happened more than eight years ago, but Jones said he still thinks about it every time he responds to an accident.

He was among 190 participants in a class offered by the Texas Engineering Extension Service this week to teach first responders to stay alive while trying to save the lives of others. Students "responded" to simulated crashes on a vacant airstrip at Texas A&M's Riverside campus.

A spike in the number of fatal wrecks has made safety while working an even bigger issue, Jones said. The death toll on Brazos Valley roads in the past three weeks was at 17 late Wednesday.

Emergency responders need to be even

See **SAFETY**, Page A8



Eagle photo/Stuart Villanueva

Vans carry emergency responders through a series of simulated crashes at the Texas A&M Riverside Campus on Wednesday. TEEX was teaching rescuers to avoid being hurt at accident sites.

Get in the GAME

Kyle open to students trying to break record

By HOLLY HUFFMAN
Eagle Staff Writer

Leave it to the Aggies. Once Texas A&M officials announced that Thursday's Orange Bowl match-up between the Aggies and the Miami Hurricanes would be broadcast live at Kyle Field, Aggie fans started devising a plan. It would be easy, they figured, to break the record for the biggest crowd at a game-watching party in a venue that holds more than 80,000 people.

That's what made Texas A&M officials a little nervous. And then it prompted them Wednesday to limit the viewing party invitation list to current students only.

"Aggies being loyal fans like they are, there was some concern the turnout might be more than they were going to be staffed up to handle," said Scot Walker, spokesman for the Association of Former Students, one of the organizations

■ All the details on the Aggies' game against Miami /B1

See **GAME**, Page A2

Little bit of shakin' goin' on

Small earthquake hits Milam County

By MATTHEW WATKINS
Eagle Staff Writer

In terms of destruction, the earthquake was hardly significant.

Emergency responders said they knew of only one report of damage: A teapot fell off of a woman's stove.

In California, people probably wouldn't have even noticed the tremor. But this earthquake happened in the Lone Star State and left Brazos Valley residents baffled.

"You just don't expect your house to shake," said Burleson County resident Karen Bolt. She was in her trailer home cleaning dishes when the temblor began.

According to the U.S. Geological Survey, a 2.7 magnitude earthquake rattled parts of Burleson and Milam counties at 6:16 p.m. Saturday. Its epicenter was about 7 miles northeast of Milano.

Researchers said earthquakes with a magnitude in the range of 2.7 are not generally dangerous.

See **QUAKE**, Page A8

Rising up



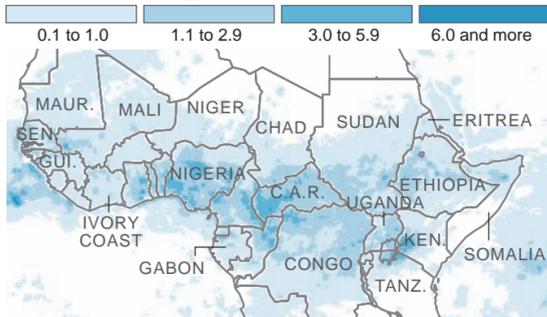
Eagle photo/Stuart Villanueva

Construction worker Ira Keown operates a scissor lift while installing galvanized roof trusses on the new Academics Building at Allen Academy this week. The building, which is approximately 47,000 square feet, is scheduled to be completed in the spring.

Heavy rain throughout Africa

Most of Central Africa has had some precipitation in the last week with certain countries receiving up to 6 inches.

Estimated rainfall, Sept. 11-17, inches



SOURCE: NOAA

AP

Floods engulf Africa

200 killed, thousands displaced by storms

By KATY POWNALL
Associated Press

SOROTI, Uganda — Fish swam alongside the dugout canoes residents were using to flee their flooded homes, riding the water gushing through the streets of this town in eastern Uganda.

Across Africa, torrential downpours and flash floods have submerged whole towns and washed away bridges, farms and schools. More than a million people have been affected by the rains since the summer, according to the United

Nations. At least 200 people have been killed, and hundreds of thousands displaced in 17 countries.

In Uganda, one of the hardest-hit, humanitarian workers were trying to reach villages that have been cut off by water amid warnings of food crises and a rising risk of disease outbreaks.

"I've lost everything," Martha Amogin, 56, said Wednesday in Magoro, a town in eastern Uganda that is surrounded by floodwater and has become

See **FLOOD**, Page A2

Contractors outnumber troops in Iraq

By RICHARD LARDNER
Associated Press

■ More on Iraq /A5

WASHINGTON — The United States has assembled an imposing industrial army in Iraq larger than its uniformed fighting force and responsible for such a broad swath of responsibilities the military might not be able to operate without its private-sector partners.

More than 180,000 Americans, Iraqis, and people from other countries work under a slew of federal contracts to provide security, gather

intelligence, build roads, forge a financial system and transport supplies in a country the size of California.

That figure contrasts with the 163,100 U.S. military personnel, according to U.S. Central Command in Tampa, Fla., the organization responsible for military operations in the Middle East. The Pentagon puts the military figure at 169,000. There are another 12,400 coalition forces in Iraq.

But the arrangement has its dangers. Employees for

Blackwater USA were involved in a weekend shooting that left 11 Iraqis dead.

The heavy reliance on contractors in a war zone is partly the result of a post-Cold War shrinking of the armed forces and the Bush administration's preference for contracting out government functions to the corporate world.

It's also due to the compressed nature of the war in Iraq. Combat operations are ongoing at the same time as the reconstruction of Iraq's infrastructure and asserted

economic development efforts, pushing the number of contractors to high levels.

While having contractors on and around the battlefield is not new, the situation in Iraq raises questions about whether U.S. troops have become so dependent on contract help they could not function properly in their absence.

"If the contractors turn tail and run, we've still got to be able to fight," said Steve Schooner, co-director of the

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Today's smile



COURTNEY METZGER
Bryan

I'm smiling because ... "the weekend is almost here."

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