

THE BATTALION

72 No. 155
Pages

Wednesday, June 6, 1979
College Station, Texas

News Dept. 845-2611
Business Dept. 845-2611

Weather

Mostly cloudy with a 50% chance of rain today. High in the mid 80's and a low of 70. Winds will be S.E. at 5-10 m.p.h.

Consol to submit special education plans to TEA

By ROY BRAGG
Battalion Staff

A five-year plan for special education in the A&M Consolidated school district will be submitted to the Region 6 education center in Huntsville Thursday. All school districts in the state are required to have such a plan to submit for approval to the Texas Education Agency (TEA).

The plan, approved by the school board Monday night, was originally due June 1. The due date for Consolidated was pushed

forward to Thursday so the district trustees could review the plan at their regular meeting.

The plan is split into eight chapters and outlines the school's responsibilities and goals for the 425 students enrolled in the special education program.

The program aids physically, emotionally or mentally handicapped students, Perkins said.

The Special Services program at Consolidated served 11 percent of the district's total enrollment during the last school year, said program director Phyllis Perkins.

Students are referred to the program by teachers or administrators at their respective schools.

If the parents approve the recommendations, the student is evaluated by a screening committee from the school.

If the committee decides special education would be beneficial, an Administrative Review/Dismissal committee (ARD) consisting of educators, citizens and parents from the same school is formed. This group develops an Individual Learning Program (IEP) for the student based on the student's individual needs.

The IEP can involve a combination of alternative learning methods such as special education, remedial training in needed areas, medical aid, or physical or psychiatric therapy.

There is no cost to the student or his family for the special training.

Every year, students in the program are re-evaluated by their ARD for eventual replacement into regular school curriculum, continued special instruction in their IEP or development of a new IEP.

Parents who do not agree with the pro-

gram prescribed for their child may appeal through a district ARD, the school board, the TEA or several other channels.

The process for admission to special education is outlined by state law.

The five-year plan, Perkins said, calls for a small increase in staff and a large increase in facilities and plans in the existing special education programs.

The plan also recommends the school board establish a policy for implementing new special education programs.

One of those new programs also mentioned in the plan is the initiation of emergency medical treatment plans for multi-handicapped students. Such students are prone to choke when eating, Perkins said.

Another new program mentioned in the five-year plan calls for a change in the use of the "crisis room" at various schools.

The crisis room, Perkins said, is a classroom where emotionally disturbed students are placed for counseling until they can be placed back into the regular classroom environment.

Presently, students placed in the room are withdrawn from their normal instruction. Under the proposed change, the teacher in the crisis room would continue the student's instruction in addition to counseling.

Perkins said the plan also recommends a vocational plan similar to the existing one at the high school level be instituted in the junior high.

The Special Services program in the A&M Consolidated district is funded by a mix of federal, state and local funds. Last year, \$362,000 in state funds and \$17,000 in federal funds were used to administer the program.

No more dorm fees

By ROBIN THOMPSON
Battalion Staff

Starting this semester, dorm residents are no longer required to pay dorm activity fees. This means that if a student does not want to attend activities like parties and mixers sponsored by his dorm, he doesn't have to pay for them.

According to the 1978-79 housing guide, students are required to pay activity fees before receiving a room key.

But a petition presented at the April 4 meeting of the student senate revealed that requiring the collection of such fees is illegal.

Barbara Thompson, president of the Residence Hall Association, said in an interview during the spring semester that the fees have been collected in the past to pay for activities such as social functions, speakers, Sunday suppers and service projects.

However the senate bill states that mandatory fees may not be legally spent on the purchase of food and alcoholic beverages.

The bill also states that the collection of activity fees was never approved by the Texas A&M University Board of Regents.

Apparently when the fees were implemented no one checked into the legality of charging them, said Ron Sasse, associate director of student affairs.

The students are working on trying to get an explanation of where fees are going and there won't be any confusion in the future, he said.

He said that previously students who did not pay the fees were not issued a room key and were taken before a judicial board.

Thompson said the fees, which range from \$5 to \$7.50 per semester, will still be collected but will not be mandatory.

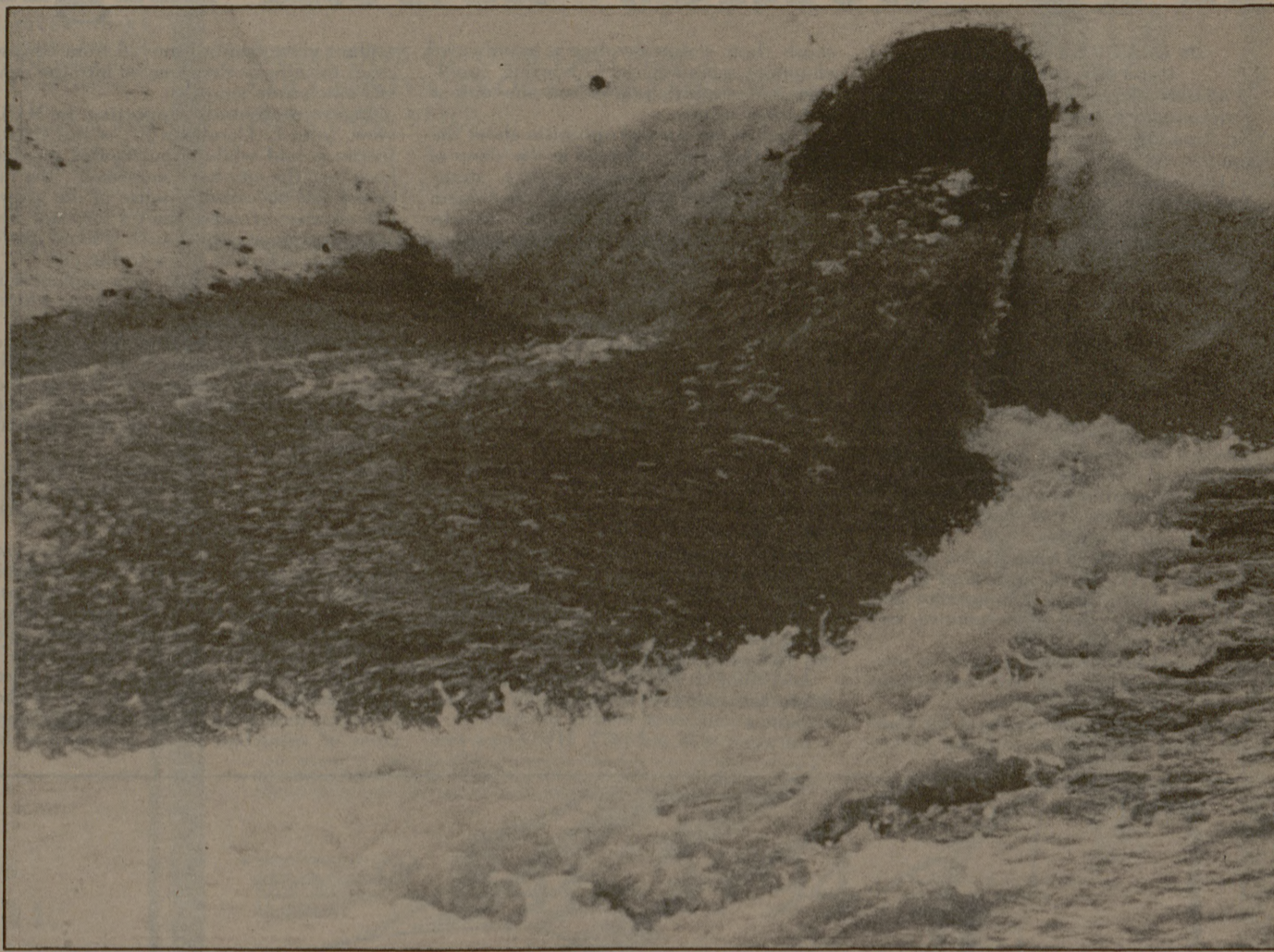
"If a person doesn't want to pay, he doesn't have to," she said.

She said the dorms are planning to issue stickers to be placed on the back of ID cards for admission to and participation in dorm activities.

To inform students of the change, Thompson said there will be a mailout to freshmen before they come in the fall and written material available when people check in.

Sasse said that each semester the dorms are individually on whether to have a program and charge activity fees.

Spence was the only dorm last year that is not programmed, he said.



Battalion photo by Lee Roy Leschper Jr.

The rains take their toll

Rain water rushes from the Bryan Municipal Lake on South College. The lake, like most

local bodies of water, has been swollen by recent thundershowers.

Discrimination issue still in dispute

Veterans preference laws OK: Supreme Court

WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court, over two dissents, Tuesday upheld veterans preference laws, despite claims that they discriminate against women.

The 7-2 opinion reinstated a Massachusetts statute which gives an absolute preference over all other applicants to qualified veterans seeking state civil service jobs.

The decision bolsters veterans preference laws across the country, since the court upheld the state statute believed to be the most susceptible to constitutional attack.

The sensitive issue divided some administration officials and has been closely watched by veterans' and women's groups.

The court conceded the law — the most extreme form of veterans preference in any state — has a severe impact on public employment opportunities for women. But it said the Bay State legislature had not intentionally discriminated against women — the standard necessary for finding a constitutional violation.

Nothing in the record demonstrates that this preference for veterans was originally devised because it would accomplish the collateral goal of keeping women in a stereotypical and pre-defined place in the

Massachusetts Civil Service," Justice Potter Stewart wrote for the majority.

Veterans preference laws "present an awkward — and many argue, unfair — exception to the widely shared view that merit and merit alone should prevail in the employment policies of government," Stewart wrote.

"After a war, such laws have been enacted virtually without opposition. During peacetime they inevitably have come to be viewed in many quarters as undemocratic and unwise."

"The substantial edge granted to veterans" by the Massachusetts law "may reflect unwise policy," he said. But he concluded that challengers in the Massachusetts case have "simply failed to demonstrate that the law in any way reflects a purpose to discriminate on the basis of sex."

Stewart noted that the status of being a veteran is "not uniquely male."

"Although few women benefit from the preference, the non-veteran class is not substantially all female," Stewart said. "To the contrary, significant numbers of non-veterans are men, and all non-veterans — male as well as female — are placed at a disadvantage."

Justice Thurgood Marshall, in a dissent

joined by William Brennan, said the Massachusetts law "so severely restricts public employment opportunities for women (that it) cannot be thought of as gender-neutral."

Marshall said Massachusetts could use a wide variety of other means which have a less severe impact on women.

Nearly all states have some form of veterans' preference. Forty-one states and the U.S. government award preference points to veterans seeking public employment, and thus generally give them an extra edge in competition instead of an absolute, lifetime preference.

Even so, President Carter has proposed revising federal preferences to make them less unfair to women.

A handful of states — like Pennsylvania, Utah, South Dakota and Vermont — and a few federal programs provide a heavier advantage for some veterans for some jobs.

But Massachusetts' 1896 statute, unlike any other in the country, places all applicants who pass the civil service written exam on an "eligible list." Wartime veterans are hired first in order of their composite scores, then surviving spouses or parents, and finally all others.

The law was challenged by Helen Feeney, a widow and mother of four from Dracut, Mass., who worked for the state Civil Defense Agency from 1963 until she was laid off in 1975.

When she considered entering the military during World War II, her mother refused to give her the parental permission

which was required for young women while young men were being drafted into the armed services.

When male veterans who scored lower than she did on promotional exams were awarded better civil service jobs on sev-

eral occasions, she decided in her mid-50s to do something about what she viewed as a continuation of military sexual discrimination.

She went to court.

Exterior design blamed for building collapse

United Press International

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — A city engineer Tuesday said the controversial exterior design of an arena that housed the 1976 Republican national convention may have created wind drafts as high as 125 mph and caused the building to collapse.

City officials, however, said there were more questions than answers to Monday night's collapse of the massive Kemper Arena roof and that national building consultants would be summoned for further opinions.

About 15 to 20 maintenance and security workers were inside the 5-year-old, \$23.2 million building when a torrential rain and wind storm struck the city. Moments later the arena roof dropped 95 feet into a pile of rubble.

All the workers escaped injury. City officials first indicated the 4-inch rain that accompanied the storm was the probable cause of the roof's failure. But later city engineer Don Hurlbert said the high wind was the most likely contributing factor.

"The way the building is designed and where it is built, the winds have to climb and rise up to get to the arena," Hurlbert speculated. "Because of that they speed up about 50 percent. So if you've got a 75 mph wind, it could be 125 mph at the arena."

Wind gusts during Monday night's thunderstorm were clocked at 74 mph. Several windows were blown out in other buildings in the Kansas City stockyards.

Hurlbert, however, said it might be several days before an actual cause could be determined.

"We're going to try and reconstruct what happened," he said. "We need to find out what kind of breaks we had at the various steel junctures."

Bill Dunn, the president of G.E. Dunn Construction Co. of Kansas City, the general contractor on the building, said to his knowledge there had never been any structural problems with the building although tests had been conducted because of problems with high winds.

"They put a model of it in a wind tunnel," he said. "They had problems with the wind swirling around some of the doors. But they built some buffers and as far as I know that took care of the problem."

"It is an unusual building and the unusual shape of the building causes some unusual problems in aerodynamics. But I think all that we would be doing on trying to figure out the cause would be coming up with conjecture."

The building's design had been controversial from its inception because all of the support beams and structures were built on the outside of the building — instead of the conventional inside supports — for an unobstructed view of the arena floor. Yet, in 1976, the building was given one of six national honor awards for design by the American Institute of Architects.

"There are a lot of things we don't know the answer to, but we're going to bring in some national consultants to try and answer them," said Berkley. "We're very optimistic about the future of Kemper Arena and it's a facility that we will be putting back into use."

Authorities said they had not been able to determine an exact damage estimate but mayor Richard Berkley said initial reports indicating the damage would top \$1 million were "probably on the low side."



Mind if I take a look?

Ricardo Cartejoso, a junior in mechanical engineering, peers over the shoulder of Greg Andrews to catch a glimpse of his summer schedule while standing in a registration line

at G. Rollie White Coliseum. Late registration continues today and tomorrow though there is \$10 late charge

Battalion photo by Clay Cockrill

Windfall tax could be bad for Texas

United Press International

AUSTIN — Land Commissioner Bob Armstrong Tuesday said Texas could lose more than \$100 million in royalty income if Congress imposes a windfall profits tax on oil.

"As absurd as it sounds, the federal government would be taking dollars out of our permanent school fund and university funds to pay a windfall profits tax on our royalty oil income, unless the law clearly exempts us," Armstrong said.

The land commissioner said he contacted top state officials and the California land commissioner to push for adoption of an amendment removing states out of the windfall profits tax bill. The House Ways and Means Committee begins work on the President Carter proposed bill on Wednesday.

Armstrong said he would try and contact Department of Energy officials and top Carter administration aides.

Armstrong said oil decontrol would produce an additional \$245 million in royalties for Texas during the next five years, but the windfall profits tax would require the state to give half the royalties to the federal government.

"It simply doesn't make sense to equate a state performing governmental service with a corporation," Armstrong said. "Every dollar we get from oil royalties will go to education, not into someone's pocket."