

# 'Showcase growth' dangers warned in strip mining talk

By ROSE MARY TRAVERSO

Reclamation attempts of strip mined land in Montana, Missouri and South Dakota, among other states, have amounted to "showcase growth," said Ed Dobson, at an Environmental Action Council meeting last night in the Bryan Library.

Dobson, the northern plains representative of the Friends of the Earth, is being sponsored on his tour throughout the state by the Sierra Club.

"Getting something to grow in there isn't the hard thing—Mother Nature will reclaim anything in the long run. The point is how long it will be before a man can make a

living off the land," Dobson said.

Dobson, who has researched strip mining throughout the United States, Germany and England, has not seen any of the strip mining sites in Texas.

"Every strip mining site is different," he said. However, he cautioned Texans to watch the mining's effects on ground water and be sure that the lignite is worth those effects.

Dobson suggested legislation requiring investigations into the potential environmental aspects of strip mining before mining is begun.

"If Texas is going to have a regulatory law, you have to watch those

loopholes—they might be big enough to walk a dragline through," he said.

There has been no way to replace water retention and surface hydrology in reclaimed land, Dobson said. Other environmental hazards of strip mining are acid drainage into water sources, sedimentation causing flooding and preventing fish spawning and an increased rate of landslides in mountain areas, he said.

Model reclamation areas have needed heavy fertilization and irrigation, not required for good agricultural yields before the mining, he said.

Most of the mineral resources in

the country are too deep to be strip mined, Dobson said. "We should keep the capital development underground," he said.

Dobson said deep mining is deteriorating—570,000 lost jobs last year from closing of underground mine projects—because cheap strip mining methods prevent competition. "Deep mining is more dangerous because they cannot afford to compete and stay safe too," he said.

The future resources will eventually have to be deep mined, Dobson said. "The best thing to do is keep it healthy and clean today."

Dobson warned strip mining may attract more power plants into the state which would carry energy re-

sources to areas in the east. This has occurred in Montana and the Dakotas and is a threat to the clean air standards in these areas, he said.

These power plants should be back east where the energy is used. Solar and wind power need "a shot in the arm," Dobson said.

The leases of the Brazos County landowners who are allowing strip mining require "grading, seeding and fertilization" but will probably not result in restoration of land to a useful state, Dobson said.

"I hope you get good grazing land and maybe even some good agricultural land here in Texas," Dobson said. "This has not been the outcome in the other states I have studied."

# The Battalion

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Final board installments are due today. Students must pay \$127 for the seven-day board plan or \$114 for the five-day board plan. A charge of \$1 will be made for every day the payment is overdue.

# County could up employe salaries

By GERALD OLIVIER Staff Writer

The County Commissioners Court approved the budget for fiscal year 1975 at its monthly meeting Monday morning.

The new budget contains substantial salary increases for almost all county officials. A 10 per cent across the board increase in the salaries of county employes, coupled with increases of \$4,500 for County Judge Bill Vance, \$6,000 for County Attorney Roland Searcy and \$3,000 for the county tax-assessor collector, county clerk, the four county commissioners, the sheriff and the county auditor make up the bulk of a \$663,330 increase over last year's budgeted figures.

Vance stressed that the salaries for next year are not set in this budget. These figures are maximums which may be allocated by the court in January, Vance said.

Controversy arose at last week's public budget hearing over the large percentage increases in the county attorney's and judge's salaries.

Commissioner Walter Wilcox questioned the increase in Searcy's salary, but withdrew his objection when reminded by Vance that salaries are set in January.

The court included \$1,500 for the Retired Senior Volunteers Program in next year's budget.

The commissioners heard a request from John Godfrey, county probation officer, for the court to endorse legislation for the creation of a statewide adult probation program.

The program, Godfrey said, is advocated by probation departments across the state and would establish a nine-member commission to coordinate probation efforts.

Commissioners were concerned that creation of the proposed commission would take revenues now received by the county from the adult probation program. These revenues are currently used to help support the more costly juvenile programs, Vance said.

The court delayed action on the proposal until their December

meeting to give commissioners time to study it.

The court also delayed payment of fire protection expenses to College Station until an explanation of a bill for fighting a recent boxcar fire can be obtained.

The fire occurred two miles outside town, but the city submitted a bill for \$14,015 for expenses incurred in 283 miles of travel.

A representative of Honeywell Associates submitted a proposal for preventive maintenance on the heating and cooling systems in the courthouse complex.

The proposal, costing \$21,936 per year, would cover a regular monthly maintenance program plus the replacement of any part of the system which might fail. The age of the system was cited as the major reason for the high cost of the plan.

Vance said the plan amounted to an insurance program for the county. He said the county now assumes all risk of breakdown. He asked the firm to submit a proposal involving regular maintenance, but not the replacement provision.



Ignoring the rain—hoping for a break

Students waited in the rain Saturday for the Aggies to get the break that would win the game. That break never came. The Aggies fell to the

SMU team, 18-14. See related story page 7. (Photo by Jack Holm)

# Rudder interior costs told

## Design company to get \$300,000

By JIM PETERS Staff Writer

By the time the University Center is completed next summer, nearly \$3.3 million will have been spent on interior furnishings alone.

The cost of the furnishings only represents a portion of the estimated \$28 million expenditure for the massive complex, but it is the feature that has attracted the most attention.

William Pahlmann Associates Inc., an interior design firm based in New York City, was awarded the furnishings contract by the Texas A&M Systems Board of Directors. The firm's fee will amount to about \$300,000 when work is completed, or about 10 per cent of the total cost, Executive Vice President A. R. Luedecke said.

Pahlmann, a Texas native, attracted the attention of board members with residential and commercial decoration he has done throughout Texas.

He was responsible for all the furnishings in the Center, from the lavishly appointed Board of Directors Wing to the decor lining the concourses of the Memorial Student Center and the Rudder Tower and Theatre Arts complex.

Much of the furniture selected for the complex is imported, generally from Mexico where Pahlmann lives. Other pieces bear shipping tags from Sweden, where the a'm embossed cafeteria chairs were specially made.

"You get a certain flair when you buy from Mexico," Pahlmann suggested.

That "certain flair," he said, is of the utmost importance to the Southwestern motif he selected for the complex.

"We've bent over backwards to get the unusual. I got everything I could on Texas history," Pahlmann said. "After all we're out here on the plains."

Nowhere is the "Southwestern style" more apparent than along the first floor concourse of the uncompleted Memorial Student Center.

There, two dozen cowhide benches line the long hallway, dwarfed by the panels of etched glass depicting Texas wildflowers which surround the cafeteria.

The benches, of which there is an additional dozen in storage, are nearly identical to some Pahlmann designed for a New York department store.

"This is cow country," Pahlmann stated, "so I figured why not use cowhide covers?"

An average one-and-a-half South American steer hides were used for each bench.

Each of the "naturalistic" brass legs on the benches (fashioned to resemble tree limbs) cost \$125, Pahlmann estimated. The cost for an individual bench was \$470, excluding shipping and storage.

Pahlmann's furnishings budget, however, covered "moveable furniture" only.

Such things as light fixtures, carpeting and window glass fell under the general construction contract for the complex.

Before Pahlmann was hired two years ago many of the interior design decisions for the Memorial Student Center were being made by the building architect, W. R. Dede Matthews of Bryan.

The etched glass panels surrounding the cafeteria, for instance, originally were scheduled to be clear, with plastic plants to be placed behind them.

Pahlmann disapproved of that scheme and forwarded the 60 panels to Bronx, N. Y. where the etchings of wildflowers were done at a cost of \$19,000 (including round trip shipping to the Bronx), Luedecke said.

Skeptics have noted that no bluebonnets are in evidence on the panels. Pahlmann insists there are, some on one of the panels.

Not all of the furnishings were cast in a Southwestern plains mold.

Roman busts, Oriental rugs and silk screens, marble fireplaces, paintings of heroic soldiers and

other assorted fixtures fill the pseudo-columned chambers of the Board of Directors annex.

Ceramic lions and statues of alleged Greek, Buddhist and American Indian influence fill the anterooms and lobbies of the Rudder Theatre Arts Center.

The furniture is distinctly formal in the second floor corridors surrounding the banquet room areas in the MSC.

"I couldn't put cowhide up there," Pahlmann stated. "After all there comes a time when the girls like to wear formals."

So instead of South American steer hides, the \$605 sofas, \$428 benches in that concourse are upholstered with a blue checkered fabric, while the \$128 apiece coffee tables are finished with a high gloss varnish.

Two "marbelia" murals, which resemble a peanut-butter and jelly-like smear, were added to the walls to continue the formal decor.

The murals, two \$1,000 coffee tables (See MSC, page 6)



Mall construction gets underway

Construction began this week on the north campus mall. The mall will be located in front of the Chemistry Building, between Ross St. and the Library. Presently, the work crews are clearing

trees and leveling the area. The project should last a year, Charles Brunt, construction manager, said. (Photo by Glen Johnson)

# Prosecutor to get White House tapes

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Ford administration has signed a tentative agreement giving the special Watergate prosecutor ready access to tapes and papers left by Richard M. Nixon. The new arrangement amounts to a repudiation of an earlier agreement giving Nixon custody of the materials.

The new pact would prohibit delivery of any of the documents or tapes to former President Nixon until the prosecutor is satisfied they are not needed in his investigation.

The agreement supersedes the written understanding unveiled at the time of Nixon's pardon by President Ford.

The new agreement, submitted to U.S. District Judge Charles Richey Monday, was signed over the weekend by presidential counsel Philip Buchen, the heads of the Secret Service and the General Services Administration and special

prosecutor Henry S. Ruth Jr. Richey is hearing several challenges to that original agreement, and his approval is necessary for any modifications.

In papers filed later Monday, Nixon's Washington attorney, Herbert J. Miller Jr., pleaded that Richey uphold the original agreement in its entirety. He criticized the new deal struck between the White House and Ruth as "depriving Mr. Nixon of any opportunity whatsoever to protect the presidential privilege of confidentiality."

The special prosecutor's office had no role in the Sept. 6 pact between Ford and Nixon.

Under the original understanding, the Nixon materials were to be forwarded quickly to the former President in California. And, unless Nixon cooperated, it would have forced the prosecutor to resort to court action any time he wanted to examine a tape or document.

# Today

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## Weather

Continued fair and mild Tuesday and Wednesday. North-northeasterly winds 10-17 mph. High today 69°; low tonite 44°; high tomorrow 70°.