

# New coffeehouse to open

By ROXIE HEARN  
Staff Writer

The MSC Basement Committee has finally found a place for its coffeehouse, not in the basement, but on the first floor of the MSC.

The new facility, actually a rejuvenated storeroom, is located near the steps leading to the post office.

It opens this weekend, and utilizes approximately 2,000 square

feet of space, including a choice of general seating, balcony seating or separate booths.

All work involved in the renovation has been done by students, says Cheryl Hall, committee chairman.

The Basement Committee, one of the oldest Committees on campus, was originally in the downstairs portion of the old MSC.

When renovations began on the center, the committee was dissolved for about two years.

Last spring, Hall became interested in reviving the group and succeeded in getting two free performances on the academic courtyard organized.

During the summer and fall, the Coffeehouse remained outside, while committee members continued to work for an inside facility.

"Our first problem was trying to find a room," said Hall, "and then

finding the money to decorate it."

As a result, the decorations have been the product of "reaching out everywhere to grab things," she said.

Supplementary funds from the Student Service fees of the University have been requested, but so far there has been no answer.

Refreshments served at The Coffeehouse will include coffee, tea, hot chocolate, soft drinks and popcorn.

Hall admitted that she would like to see liquor served in The Coffeehouse. "I think it's a much better deal for the students to have a cheaper place to go," she said.

Entertainment this weekend will be provided by a series of guests including blues, folk and classical singer Glen Meyers, Rita Browning of Houston, the American Standard (formerly Three Rivers), Steve Smith, and George Ensle and Greg Vaicestino.

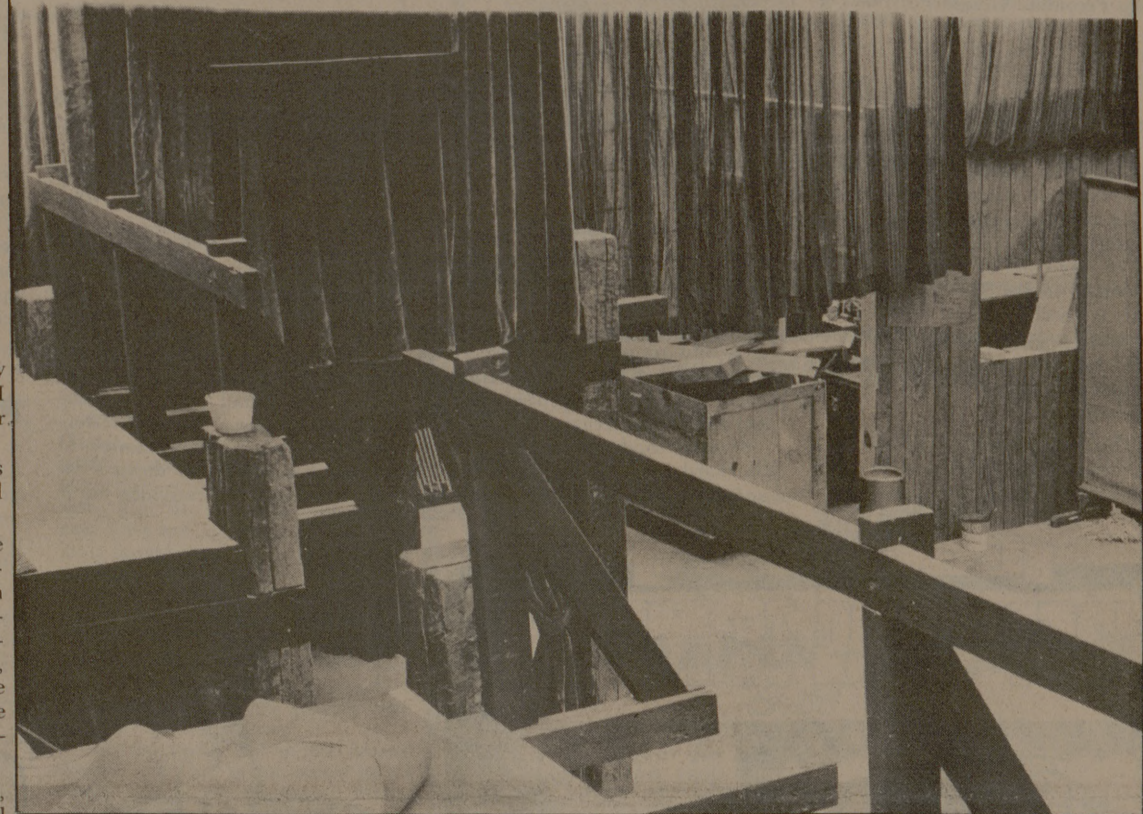
During its grand opening, The Coffeehouse will be open from 7:30 to 12:00 p.m. and admission will be 25 cents.

At other times Coffeehouse hours will be 8:00 to 12:00 p.m.



"Private" booths and a rail-road tie balcony add to the decor of the new Basement Committee Room in the MSC.

Photos by Steve Krauss



# The Battalion

## CORRECTION

The Book Mart closed on Friday, January 24. The Battalion reported that it will close Friday. It was last Friday not this Friday.

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# House passes raise for state employees

AUSTIN (AP) — The House passed a \$93 million emergency pay raise bill Wednesday to help the 125,000 state employees catch up with increases in the cost of living.

Senators are expected to give final approval to the measure Thursday and send it to Gov. Dolph Briscoe, for whom it represents a victory.

Briscoe must sign the bill by midnight Friday to put the raises on the state employees' February 1 paychecks.

As approved by the House, the bill would provide these increases:

— 13 per cent for "classified" employees in salary groups 2-12 — now making \$4,920 to \$12,000 a year — and for non-classified workers making less than \$876 a month.

— 9 per cent for classified employees in groups 13-21, who now make \$10,512 to \$23,220, and for non-classified workers earning from \$1,267 to \$1,935 monthly.

— A flat \$114 a month for non-classified employees making between \$876 to \$1,267 per month.

— \$174 per month for anyone making more than \$1,935 monthly.

Most state agency employees are covered by the position classification plan. Those outside the plan include state college and university

employees, state police officers, district court and appellate judges, state hospital superintendents and agency executives whose salaries are individually controlled by the legislature through line item appropriations.

The House Appropriations Committee, rewriting a bill that the Senate unanimously passed last week, had approved a \$108 million increase Tuesday. But the sponsor, Rep. Fred Head, D-Troup, bowed to pressure from Briscoe and laid out a scaled down version for Wednesday's debate. The \$93 million provided by the bill is the same amount as in the Senate measure and conforms to Briscoe's demand.

House members accepted Head's substitute, 100-38, then passed the bill, 135-3.

Briscoe met with Head, Speaker Bill Clayton and about two dozen House members Tuesday, and the implication was that he might veto a bill that exceeded \$93 million.

Several attempts to concentrate the raises in the lower racks of state employees — including one providing \$100 a month across the board for all workers and another setting a \$114 per month minimum increase — failed.

Rep. Mickey Leland, D Houston, arguing for bigger raises for the less well paid employees, taunted Head

The emergency pay raise bill ran into a constitutional storm which may threaten to delay final approval, reported the Houston Post today.

Senate experts discovered the House-passed version of the pay raise violates a constitutional prohibition against mixing legislative and appropriations matters in the same bill, a source said later.

He said, as a result, the pay measure will have to be split into separate bills — one authorizing the pay increase and one appropriating money to pay for it — on Thursday. Both Houses will have to vote anew on the proposal.

about the meeting with the governor.

"Have you been intimidated by the governor's threat not to sign the bill?" Leland asked.

"I have not been intimidated by anybody. I have fought as hard as I could to get as much as I could for everybody," Head replied.

Senators also addressed problems of government workers, past and present.

They approved and sent to the House a bill enabling persons to receive retirement benefits from more than one state retirement system. A state university law professor who later became a judge could, if he qualified under both, receive pension checks from both the teacher retirement and judicial retirement systems.

Senators tentatively approved, with a final vote still pending, a bill setting up a uniform group life and health insurance program for all state employees except those working for colleges and universities. With the state paying a minimum of \$15 a month in premiums, the plan would cost the state about \$10 million a year.

# More leases filed for strip mining

By STEVE GRAY  
Staff Writer

The Dow Chemical Co. of Houston has leased nearly 3,000 acres of land in Brazos County since last August for possible strip mining.

That figure was reached earlier this month when Dow filed three leases totaling about 428 acres with the county clerk's office. The land is near Reliance, about five miles northeast of Bryan.

Estella Cargill leased out about 193 acres and Bobby Cargill leased about 196 acres. A smaller tract of about 40 acres was leased by Henry Melansky.

Al Prince, project manager for Dow, said last summer the company views coal as a major source of future energy.

Studies of land contours, surface restoration, shallow water and equipment would delay mining in the area at least five years, according to Prince.

Dow has also leased land in Robertson, Freestone and Limestone Counties to drill for lignite samples. The company presently has no strip mining operations in these counties or Brazos County.

Dow's purchases of land for strip mining provoked a study by the Environmental Action Council (EAC) in Bryan last October into the environmental effects of strip mining.

Experts on the subject, including Dr. Chris Mathewson, an A&M specialist in engineering geology, have told the EAC that strip mining has proved to be safer than underground mining because of the danger of combustible lignite. The potential threat of explosion in underground lignite mines resulted in the passing of the Federal Employers Safety Act, which encourages strip mining, Mathewson said in October. He pointed out that strip mined lands could be com-

pletely reclaimed in a few years.

However, Dow Chemical is not required by its leases to reclaim its land, says Coulter Hoppess, a Bryan lawyer who has worked on the leases of at least five owners. Dow has agreed to "pay a pre-negotiated damage to the surface" and will smooth and seed the land, but "that's a far way from reclamation," he said.

## Today

### FAIR

**Inside**

**Weather**

Mostly cloudy and warm Thursday with occasional light rain continuing through Friday. Winds from the south 10-18 mph. High today 76°; low tonight 64°; high tomorrow 74°.



All together now

The San Antonio Symphony entertained young children from all over Brazos County Wednesday.

## In recent questionnaire

# Student center criticized

By JIM PETERS  
Staff Writer

More than two-thirds of the respondents to a Battalion questionnaire said they do not think the new Memorial Student Center is a comfortable facility.

(The survey appeared in the December 10 and 11 editions of the Battalion).

A majority of the 379 respondents pointed to the interior design of the MSC portion of the complex as a major problem.

To the question: "Do you like the furnishings in the MSC part of the complex?" 92 per cent (313) replied no.

Conversely, however, 70 per cent of those surveyed said they did like the furnishings in the Theatre Arts section of the \$28 million University Center.

Seventy-seven per cent said they disliked the overall design of the center.

"The general tone is stiff, formal, unfriendly. It reflects the real purpose — to impress out-of-towners and the alumni . . . an extension of the Rudder Convention complex . . . a cold, cheerless, drafty mausoleum built as a 'show-place' rather than a place for students . . . they're obviously trying to impress someone else . . . little thought for the needs of students and faculty."

While a few criticized the architecture of the new MSC building (sterile, airport terminal, a waste of space) many more said they thought it has "good styling" and is "attractive." "But the interior decoration is another matter," one student opined. "The furnishings look like something a very poor man would buy to impress people if he won the Irish Sweepstakes. A modern bordello . . . an eclectic mix of cultures . . . an insult to our good taste . . . its humiliating to have visitors see it and laugh . . . it makes A&M out to be a school of tasteless country bumpkins . . . promotes hick image . . . the biggest Aggie joke yet."

Among pieces of furnishings in the MSC repeatedly mentioned

were: the etched glass windows ("nice but out of place"), the 56 brass lanterns in the student lounge ("apparent bastard offspring of Victorian carriage lamps"), the Mexican pigskin provincial furniture in the brown bag area ("gawdy, flimsy, should be covered with brown bags") and, of course, the infamous South American steerhide (a.k.a., "Longhorn sofas, cowleg, horsehide, goatskin, cowfur, beefhide, Bevo") benches.

"Hideous . . . god-awful . . . not for sitting . . . (expletives deleted) . . . an insult . . . ughh! . . . downright ugly . . . almost camp . . . they're multiplying . . . too expensive (\$468 each) . . . nice . . . western as a plastic cow . . . don't fit . . . plain pimpy . . . etc. . . smelly . . . tacky . . . when I first saw them I had hoped that they were part of the western exhibit and would be gone soon . . . should run off."

A frequent complaint expressed about the MSC furnishings was their extravagance and specifically the use of antiques.

"Antique furniture belongs in a museum or a private collection, not in a public facility . . . someone has turned our student center into his

(SEE CENTER, p. 3)

# University Center funds explained

The majority of the questions raised by respondents to a University Center survey concerned the construction and furnishing cost for the complex and the interior designer's salary.

Student building use fees will account for \$3.73 million of the \$28 million University Center, records indicate.

The amount will be paid in average annual payments of \$255,000 over the next quarter century. (About \$6/semester per student.)

Tuition fees will retire \$3.1 million of the complex cost over the next 25 years. (About \$5/semester per student.)

State monies from the Permanent Available Funds will pay \$16.7 million, while the remainder will come from the interest on university funds and donations (the latter for construction and furnishing of the Former Students' Wing.)

The expense of furnishing the complex totaled \$3.3 million, with an additional \$402,600 being earmarked for the interior design firm's (William Pahlmann Associates) fee and expenses.

A breakdown of the construction costs for each section follows:

Theatre Arts and Conference Center	\$10.5 million
Memorial Student Center	\$10.9 million
Board of Directors' Annex	\$1.4 million
Former Students' Wing	\$490,000
Landscaping	\$668,000