

The Battalion

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Consolidated School Board officials discuss joint election

A&M Consolidated School Board met with College Station officials Monday night to discuss the possibility of having joint city council trustee elections on April 3. Monday night the board passed a resolution expressing its desire to have joint elections. School districts are required by state law to hold elections in the first Saturday in April. Recently legislation requires cities to hold elections on one of three dates including the first Saturday. College Station's election dates have usually been set for the first Tuesday in April. A resolution passed, 5-1, with Trustee Bert Wilkes voting against it. Wilkes felt combining the elections might be complicated because of new election laws imposed on Texas by Congress last year under the original Voting Rights Act.

New laws require that any change in election procedures must be submitted to the Department of Justice for approval 60 days prior to an election. The board's resolution will become effective upon passage of a similar resolution by the College Station City Council, possibly Tuesday's council meeting. The board also appointed a committee, headed by Trustees Joe Natowitz and Les Hensarling, to study the present election structure, which is \$1.77 per property valuation. Hensarling also added to the liaison committee between the city and the school board. Philinger of 1111 Merry Oaks Drive was added to the board of equalization.

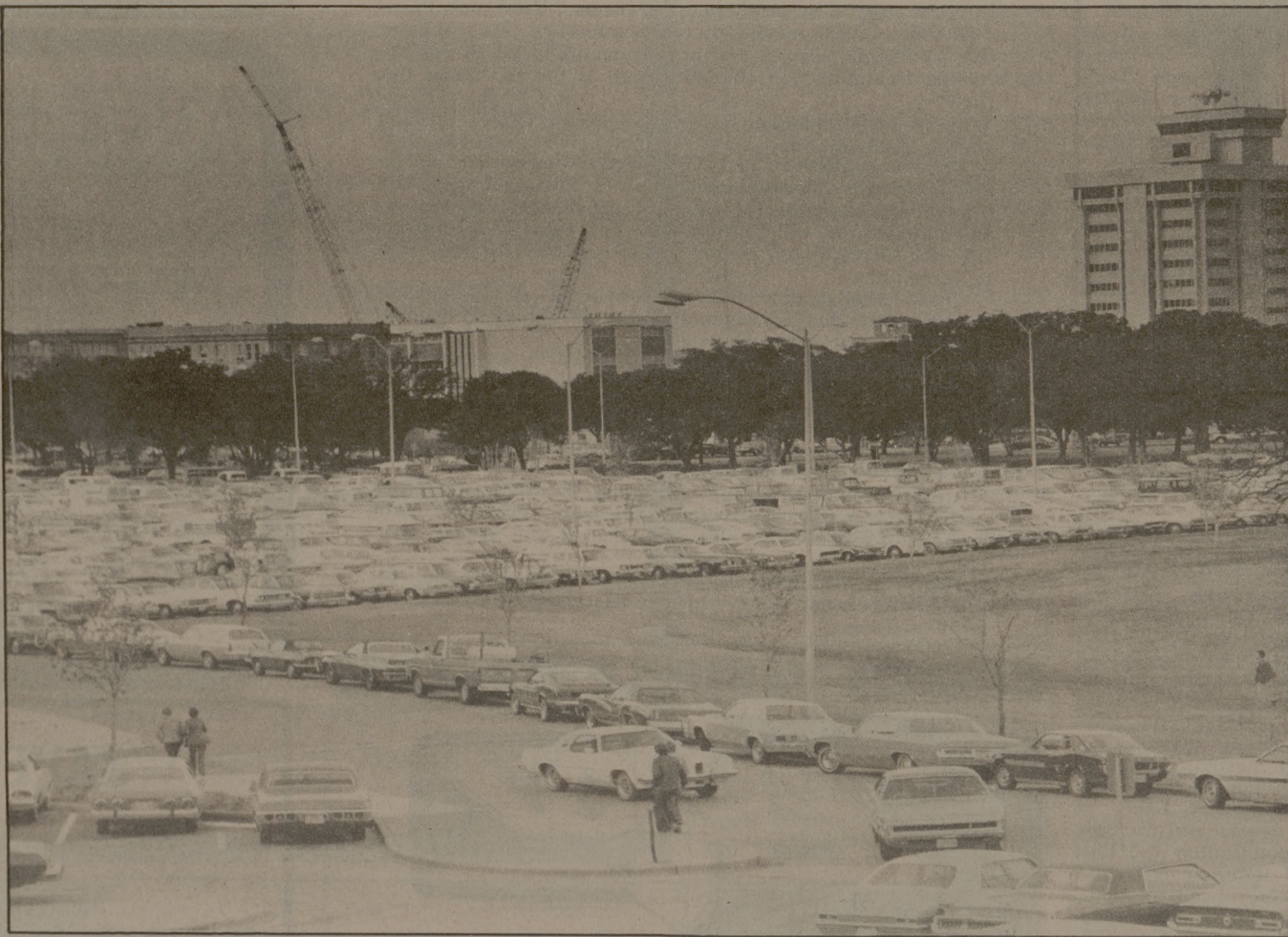


Photo by Ted Roberts

Basketball Game Parking

Parking for last night's basketball game against the University of Houston reached capacity around the Coliseum. A University police spokesman said that a "good number" of police had to be called out for assistance, in addition to area constables. For details of the game, which ended 74-67 in the Aggies' favor, see page 10.

Nuclear arms talks begin

Kissinger says compromise

Associated Press
MOSCOW — Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger opens nuclear arms talks today with Soviet Communist party chief Leonid I. Brezhnev, and most observers were convinced the basic outline of a compromise was in sight.

Kissinger said on his arrival Tuesday night that the United States "will never concede strategic superiority to the Soviet Union." This apparently was intended to reassure critics at home that major U.S. concessions would not be made.

At issue is a new treaty to limit offensive nuclear weapons. For the first time, Kissinger brought along a senior Pentagon arms specialist for his talks with Brezhnev. He was James P. Wade, a deputy secretary of defense and the top American military specialist on nuclear weapon negotiations. Kissinger's schedule called for talks today and Thursday and a final meeting Friday morning before he leaves for Brussels. Even if agreement is reached on a new

treaty, there will be a long interval before it could be implemented, a senior U.S. official said. But a breakthrough could lead to a visit to Washington by Brezhnev to sign the treaty with President Ford.

During a stopover in Copenhagen, Kissinger said the Ford administration will not let the presidential election campaign this year impede attempts to achieve an arms agreement.

"The necessities of world peace will not be affected by our electoral process," he said.

The chief issue between the two governments has been whether to count the new Soviet Backfire bomber and the American cruise missile against the ceiling of 2,400 strategic or long-range delivery vehicles for each country set at President Ford's Vladivostok meeting with Brezhnev in November 1974.

The Soviet Union has been demanding that its bombers be excluded from the long-range category but that the American

missiles be included. The United States has proposed excluding both by having the Soviet Union agree to station the bombers outside striking range of the United States and by limiting the range on the missiles.

Kissinger said earlier this week that he had a "clear promise" that the Soviets would modify their last position.

The war in Angola is also on the Kissinger-Brezhnev agenda, and the secretary of state will press for an end to all foreign intervention in the African country. En route to Moscow, he repeated warnings he made previously that continued Soviet intervention would endanger Soviet-American detente. But his warnings are expected to have no effect on Soviet aid to the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola, the MPLA.

Kissinger and Brezhnev will also discuss the civil war in Lebanon and the prospects for new peace negotiations between Israel and the Arabs.

Fee requests exceed budget by \$78,000

By SANFORD RUSSO
Battalion Contributing Editor

Over \$78,000 more than is represented by the projected \$1,078,000 in Student Service Fee Allocations have been requested.

The MSC Directorate and Council, Student Government, Extramurals and Director of Student Activities pleaded their cases before the 12-member student committee Monday night.

Extramurals is the title for intercollegiate, competitive sports outside the jurisdiction of the Southwest Conference.

Their spokesman, Dennis Corrington, recommended a 121 per cent increase over last year's request by asking \$35,338. He explained that the increases were because of addition of four new activities, an increase from four cents to eight cents per mile for travel expenses and adding billing for long-distance off-campus competition.

Corrington said that the budgets submitted to him from which he prepared his request did not represent the total sum that each club needs. "A good deal of the money that the clubs deal with is directly out of the participants' pockets," he said.

He also said that many of the clubs make their own money by work projects such as the water polo teams' stadium clean-up, selling T-shirts, bake sales and admissions sales for those activities where spectators can participate.

Town Hall requested an additional \$15,000 over last year's \$45,000. The additional funds are needed to help with the

\$7,500 per-show cost of series or free attractions and to create a greater discount for students purchasing single-performance OPAS tickets.

The budget is \$10,000 more for the Series performances, increasing by two shows next year, and \$5,000 for OPAS discounts.

Mark Probst, chairman of Town Hall explained that because there are six home games next year the Town Hall program will have to expand since its existence is part of the "home game tradition."

The OPAS discount is being asked because Town Hall feels that students need more incentive in the form of lower prices to attend concerts, said Probst. He added that "a little less than half of the audiences (numbering between 2,300 and 2,500 people) were students."

The speaker's programs, Great Issues and Political Forum presented a six per cent increase, with most of the additional coming from Great Issues.

"Because the cost of travel and honorarium keeps pace with the amount of inflation, we need an additional \$1,000," said Lawrence Schumann, chairman of Great Issues.

Great Issues sponsors about eight programs a year with a present budget of \$16,200.

Political Forum requested the same amount as last year's \$12,926 saying that the nature of its programming was different from Great Issues.

Political Forum plans to bring a program about every week and a half and considers itself limited by manpower rather than funds.

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THE FORECAST for Wednesday is fair and mild with a high of 56 degrees. Tonight's low will be 36. Continued fair and mild Thursday. Tomorrow predicted high will be 64.

Speedway's past plagued with failure

By ROD SPEER
Contributor

Active for the past two years, Texas World Speedway is on the verge of being sold to a racing syndicate, the World Series Auto Racing, with two races scheduled this year.

On April 4, a 200-mile championship car and a 200-mile stock car race, both sponsored by the United States Auto Club (AC), will be held, pending the track's approval. A similar USAC-sponsored slate is set for Oct. 17.

At the time, the history of the speedway, located eight miles south of College Station on State Highway 6, has been a story of investments and little success. Here The Battalion will examine the rocky road raceway has traveled since its conception in 1969.

When the board chairman of a Michigan firm chose Bryan-College Station as site for a major raceway in 1968, he had a clear vision.

The chairman, Lawrence LoPatin, hoped to build a raceway that would quickly become

area has been a string of liquor stores, a massage parlor, and a topless-dancer night club across Highway 6 from the speedway.

Deer blinds stand in the vacant dirt parking lot that once accommodated as many as 40,000 racing fans. The plate glass windows surrounding the press box have been shattered by vandals. The concert platform for Willie Nelson's three-day progressive music jamboree is the centerpiece of the speedway infield. A 10-foot high caricature of Willie's smiling, bearded face peers at the speedway scoreboard, which reads "Texas 500, November 18, 1973" — a race that was never held.

In 1968, LoPatin, representing Michigan-based American Raceways Inc., came to Bryan-College Station seeking a 5,000-acre tract of land with access to a major highway that would lead to Texas' largest population centers. The racing facility, including parking, would require fewer than 1,000 acres. But, should the speedway be successful, the firm reasoned the value of the adjacent land could skyrocket or the land could be used to provide auxiliary racing services.

Billboards facing Highway 6 advertise Willie Nelson's 1974 Fourth of July picnic, the last event held at the speedway.

part of the national race-car circuit to attract racing fans from throughout the central United States.

built in less than seven months, Texas International Speedway (as it was then called) held its opening race in November 1969 with much fanfare.

Now, six years later, the track lies idle, its sheet metal wall surrounding the track bleeds onto an asphalt surface that isn't felt the rubber of race car tires in more than two years. Billboards facing Highway 6 advertise Willie Nelson's Fourth of July picnic of 1974, the last event held at the speedway.

Since that time, the only activity in the

void.)

Dallas and Houston businessmen had tried to influence LoPatin to choose their respective areas for the site of the speedway, but LoPatin took the advice of Dennis Goehring, president of the Bank of A&M, and selected Bryan-College Station.

Goehring, who was soon to be head of the Brazos County Industrial Foundation, had flown to Detroit earlier that year to talk to LoPatin.

This area has certain advantages, according to local businessmen. It is close, but not too close, to the state's big cities.

The Navasota River bottomland is not as costly to purchase as land near an urban center. The track is within 200 miles of Houston, Dallas-Fort Worth, Austin, San Antonio and Beaumont-Port Arthur. Boyett said that LoPatin had hoped to draw race fans from those areas.

American Raceways Inc. owned race tracks in California, Georgia and Michigan and was building another in New Jersey.

The company's newly created subcorporation, Texas International Speedway Inc., began selling \$1.1 million in stock and \$3.3 million in 15-year loans to help finance the

\$6.25 million facility.

From Highway 6, looking past the speedway's billboards, acres of grassland (the parking lot) give way to what resembles the back of an earthen dam. On the other side of that mound, aluminum stands seating 26,000 face a two-mile elliptical track known for its steep banks, which allow cars to reach speeds in excess of 200 miles an hour.

Including the infield, the speedway could hold 56,000 spectators.

The press box stands above the seating area and is the only part of the speedway

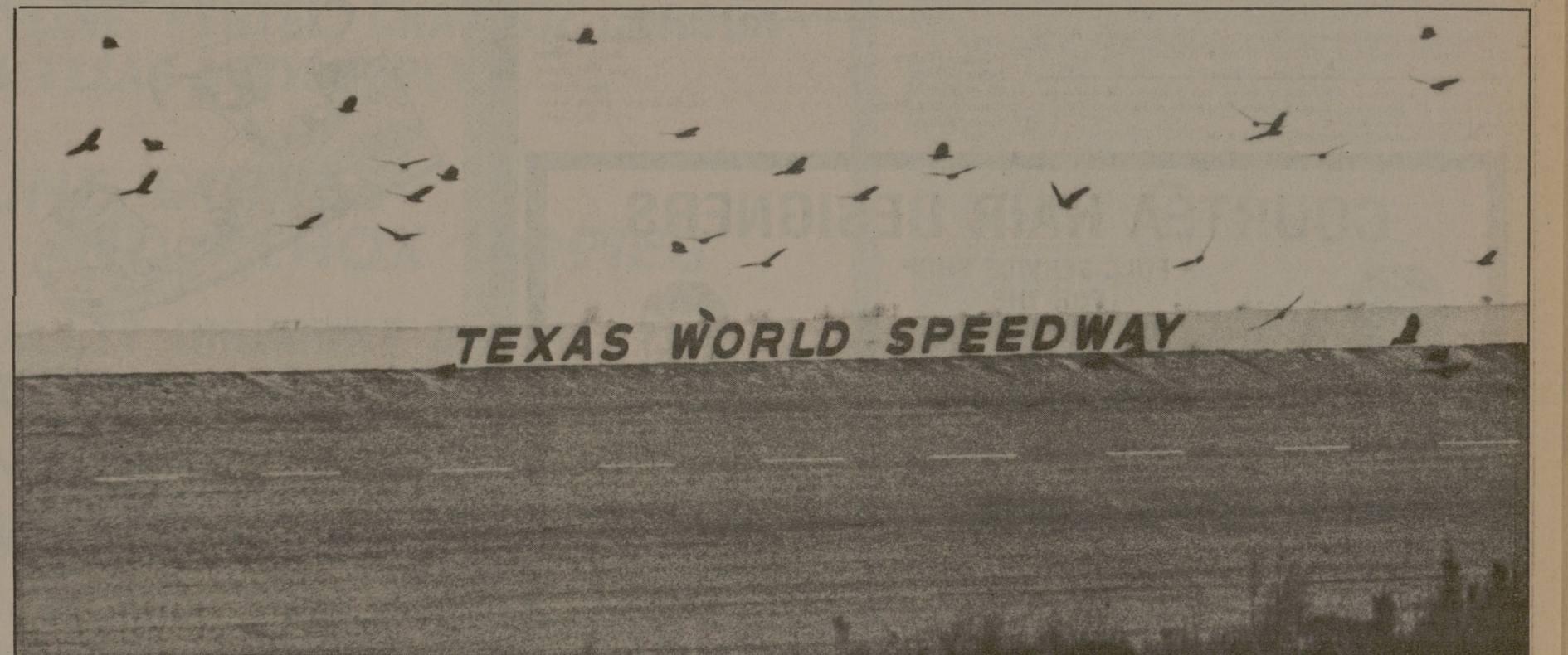
bowl visible from the highway. The track has its own hospital, restrooms, cafeteria, sewage system and garages. One former general manager, Bill Marvel, called it "a small city."

In addition to the main two-mile oval track, the facility includes a 2.75-mile Grand Prix road racing course.

Speedway contractors began construction in April 1969 and worked around the clock to meet racing commitments for the Fall.

The track opened Nov. 9, 1969, with the

See Speedway, p. 7



Buzzards scatter from the north chute where they sun themselves on the deserted banked track.

Photo by Steve Gold