

The Battalion

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MSC Council elects leader

By PHYLLIS CARVER

Lynn Gibson was elected last night by the MSC Council to be president of the 1977-1978 Memorial Student Center Council and Directorate.

Gibson was the only applicant but had the support of the nominating committee, said John Oeffinger, president of the MSC.

Gibson, a senior English major from Corpus Christi, is the representative to the Council, chairman of the Political Forum committee, and Speaker in the Student Senate. He also has had past experiences and studies in accounting and administration.

"A&M is providing more committees than most of the other student unions in our region," Gibson said. "But a lot of the students are unaware of the special things we offer. We will try to reach more people."

Gibson said the evaluation of the MSC operations that Oeffinger is heading will affect his role as president. The outcome of that investigation should show what areas of the MSC need work, he said.

Gibson said he does not want duplication of effort but hopes to efficiently provide as much as he can for the students.

In other council action, the budget of the Recreation Committee was increased

by \$623 to help finance the cost of the Associations of College Unions International Campus/Regional Games Tournament on Feb. 11 and 12.

An amount of \$923 is actually required to finance the trip for the 31 people participating, Committee Chairman Doug Branch said the committee was able to pay \$300, but that it will leave their finances dangerously low.

Two awards were also approved. The Distinguished Service Award for a Special Project will honor an outstanding leader of a large scale project and need not be given each year.

The other award will be presented to a

Directorate member who is consistently dedicated to promoting and helping in MSC projects. No officers, faculty or committee chairmen are eligible, so the award will be given to one who might otherwise be overlooked, Carolyn Johnsen, chairman of the Awards System Study, said.

Each award will be presented at the annual awards banquet on April 2 when the officers for the next year will officially take over.

Oeffinger noted that Feb. 4 is the deadline for applications for officers and Feb. 18 is the deadline for applications for chairmen of the 20 committees.

U.S.S.R. could survive war

United Press International

WASHINGTON — The Soviet Union seeks military superiority over the United States, and its present programs could allow most of its urban population to survive a nuclear exchange, according to the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

The leaders of the military services offered a rare public view of their assessment of Soviet intentions in a nine-page statement given Sen. William Proxmire, D-Wis.

The document and other recent disclosures in the debate over U.S. vs. U.S.S.R. capabilities were expected to figure in testimony today by Defense Secretary Harold

Brown and the JCS chairman, Gen. George S. Brown, in a Senate appropriations defense subcommittee hearing.

The panel scheduled a vote on whether the two officials would be questioned entirely in secret session. A dispute among members yesterday over whether a public session should be held first resulted in postponement of the questioning until today.

Secretary Brown told subcommittee members in prepared testimony he hoped to at least equal the defense capability of the Ford administration "at a somewhat lower cost." General Brown said the nation depends on readiness of strategic

forces to deter nuclear attack and "readiness costs money."

The unclassified JCS statement and additional classified answers were provided Proxmire in response to a request for comment on allegations by the recently retired head of Air Force intelligence, Maj. Gen. George J. Keegan Jr., that the United States has fallen behind Russia in military power.

While the service chiefs disagreed with Keegan's conclusion General Brown said many of the intelligence judgments involved "are essentially correct and address areas which deserve increasing attention."

"The available evidence suggests the U.S.S.R. is engaged in a program designed to achieve (military) superiority,

but that they have not achieved this goal," the chiefs said.

Given enough warning of nuclear attack for civil defense measures to be effective, the chiefs said, the Russians could probably "assure survival of a large percentage of the leadership necessary to maintain control, reduce prompt casualties among the urban population to a small percentage, and give the Soviets a good chance of being able to distribute at least a subsistence level of supplies to the surviving population."

The chiefs said while Russia wants to avoid war, its military doctrine "is premised on the notion that war is an instrument of policy and that success in war, even nuclear war, is attainable."

Fuel goes to four cities

By DARRELL LANFORD

A lignite-fueled power plant that will generate \$65 million of electricity per year will be operating in Grimes County by 1981, Texas Municipal Power Agency officials said in a press conference in Bryan Friday.

Power from the TMPA facilities is shared by the cities of Bryan, Denton, Garland and Greenville. The public agency was created by joint agreement between the cities after the Texas Legislature passed legislation allowing the joint formation of such agencies.

"We're all aware of the very serious problem we have with regard to energy," said TMPA president Charles E. Duckworth. "Where we always thought

we had an abundance of fossil fuels. Natural gas is a thing of the past."

The lignite needed for the proposed Gibbons Creek Steam Electric Station north of Carlos will be mined from an estimated 20,000 acres leased or bought from landowners, said Duckworth.

"The acreage for the plant site itself and the cooling pond will be 6,000 to 8,000 acres," he said. He added that this land will be bought, not leased.

"We do have eminent domain rights under the law like school districts or water districts," he said. He added that there had been no condemnation proceedings, although there could be circumstances where the agency would condemn land.

The total cost of the plant, cooling pond, mine and equipment is an estimated \$460 million. He said 500 people will be involved in construction, with 300 people working in the mines and the plant.

"There will be many Grimes and Brazos County residents that will be employed by the agency in construction and in the facility," Duckworth said. He said that Grimes County will be enhanced and that its economy will benefit.

Robert Whitten, publisher of the Navasota Examiner, voiced concern over the agency's tax exempt status, which will decrease total tax revenue.

"We have to have every fiscal advantage we can," Duckworth said. "The lignite is not too good."

Grimes County to get lignite power plant

While expensive to mine, by 1985 lignite will cost \$1.25 per million BTUs, while natural gas will cost \$4 per million BTUs, said Paul R. Cunningham, TMPA general manager.

"All those who use natural gas in this state are under order of the Texas Railroad Commission to begin in 1980 to com-

pletely phase out the use of natural gas, to be out, for all practical purposes, by 1985," Duckworth said.

"At that time, if this particular agency is not overwhelmed by financial escalation and other problems, we can produce economical power," he said.

Executive gives yacht to A&M marine school

The Aggie navy became larger this month with the addition of the 53-foot yacht "Lady Emma," a gift from Houston engineering executive Bernard Johnson.

Johnson, a 1937 graduate of Texas A&M University, presented the \$320,000 ship to Provost William H. Clayton of the Moody College of Galveston for use as one of their research vessels.

Johnson founded Bernard Johnson Inc., one of the largest architectural-engi-

neering firms in the Southwest. He was named a Distinguished Alumnus of A&M in 1974 during ceremonies attended by then Vice President Gerald Ford.

The re-engineered, Hatteras-built yacht is equipped with kitchen and television. Its two 480-hp Detroit diesels have a range of 1,000 miles. Launched in 1973, it cruises at 17 knots and will be used for research charters in coastal waters and the Gulf of Mexico.



Beautifying the environment

Mrs. F. L. Reasonover (right), helps Mrs. R. Bossler, a 50 year member of the La Vallita Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, plant a flowering magnolia Friday. The planting of the trees in Bee Creek Park was sponsored by DAR, Phi Sigma Alpha and the Brazos County Arboretum Assn.

Battalion photo by Paula Geyer

House leaders unimpressed by Briscoe plea for road funds

United Press International

AUSTIN, Tex. — Gov. Dolph Briscoe said additional funding for state highway construction is an emergency matter, but his message apparently did not impress House leaders.

Briscoe yesterday sent the House and Senate a message declaring the \$561 million guaranteed funding bill an emergency, and asking immediate action on the bill which has been approved in committee and is awaiting debate by the full House.

"I'm in no hurry to hear it," said Rep. Roy Blake, D-Nacogdoches, chairman of the Calendars Committee that determines when the bill will be set for House consideration.

"Even the governor's emergency message doesn't mean we have to put it on the calendar immediately."

The bill would guarantee the highway department three-fourths of the revenue from sales taxes on auto parts, tires and accessories, amounting to an estimated \$561 million in the next biennium and at least \$318 million each year thereafter.

Another of Briscoe's emergency measures, a bill creating 23 new district courts, easily passed the Senate 29-1 yesterday, and now goes to the House for consideration.

The Senate also approved an emergency appropriation of \$188,974 for the Gas Utilities Division of the Texas Railroad Commission, despite protests the agency does not protect consumers.

"It's a serious mistake to give them another penny," said Sen. Lloyd Doggett, D-Austin. "The railroad commission has only served the needs of the gas utilities in this state. Why waste \$200,000 more on a commission that is not doing the job and not interested in doing the job?"

The House yesterday sent back to committee a bill by Rep. Charles Evans, D-Fort Worth, in denying Attorney General John Hill the right to seek damages on

behalf of consumers in antitrust cases.

The bill had been quickly approved last week by the Judicial Affairs Committee chaired by Evans, and was the first bill of the session scheduled for House action. Hill and consumer groups criticized the speedy handling and lobbied for defeat of the bill.

Evans, apparently concerned his bill would be defeated, yesterday asked the House to return it to committee for further hearings.

Current regulation questioned

Rules panel reviews attendance

By WANDA WEATHERLY

A proposal to reinstate nonmandatory class attendance at Texas A&M University was drafted Thursday night by the Rules and Regulations Committee.

Current policy, as stated in the 1976-1977 Rules and Regulations handbook, says that class attendance is an individual responsibility, and instructors may include attendance in determining students' grades.

The 1976-1977 policy comes after a change last spring in the previous year's policy, which stated class attendance was

an individual responsibility but could not be used in grading.

Susan Rudd, chairman of the Rules and Regulations Committee, said she was optimistic that the nonmandatory class attendance policy will be reinstated.

"If the council approved it once, we shouldn't have too much trouble getting them to approve it again," Rudd said.

The proposal will go before the Student Senate tomorrow and will be voted on Feb. 9. If approved by the senate, the proposal goes to University Rules and Regulations

Committee and then to the Academic Council.

If the students realize their obligations, then the choice of whether or not to attend class should be theirs, Rudd said.

"We hope the students won't abuse the privilege," she added.

The committee also made a proposal to eliminate mid-term grades.

Rudd said most teachers have only given one test by mid-term, so the grades aren't an accurate account of the student's work.

The committee thinks the thousands of dollars spent on processing the grades could be put to better use, she said.

TIA flights offer 'peanut fares'

United Press International

WASHINGTON — Texas International Airlines has been given permission to cut prices 50 per cent today on selected flights that will serve only peanuts and soft drinks.

The "peanut" fares will apply to certain TIA flights between Albuquerque, N.M. and Los Angeles; Denver and Salt Lake City; Houston and New Orleans, Dallas and Austin, and Dallas and Midland, Tex.

The Civil Aeronautics Board (CAB) gave its permission for the flights yesterday. A CAB spokesman said the lower fares will be in effect for one year as an experiment so the board can judge whether consumers take advantage of them and utilize what are now lightly patronized flights.

A TIA spokesman said the airline hoped to increase its passenger load by 130,000

and generate \$1.6 million during the 12-month experiment.

The new price schedule will make air travel between Albuquerque and Los Angeles, at \$37, cheaper than the bus, at \$52.85.

Under the order the price of a ticket from Austin to Dallas would be \$17, compared to \$34 at present. That bus trip costs \$11.10.

Other routes and the reduced fares: Dallas-Fort Worth to Midland-Odessa, \$24; Denver to Salt Lake City, \$26, and Houston to New Orleans, \$23.

The CAB's willingness to experiment with the Texas International fares could indicate the way it will rule on similar pending cases.

"There's no precedent for this," the

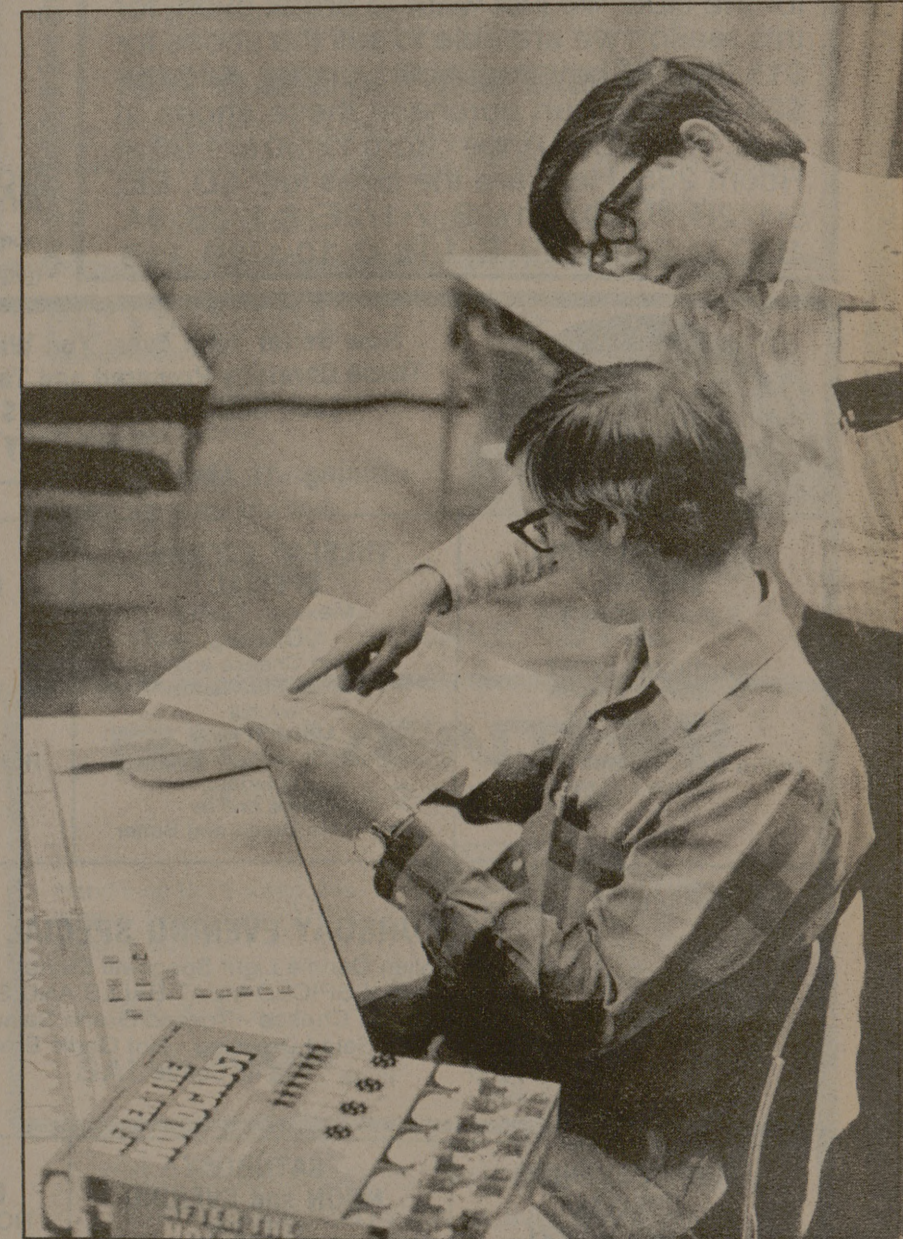
spokesman said. "The board wanted to see what would happen."

Three other airlines — Frontier, TWA and Continental — have filed for permission to match Texas International on the "peanuts" flights.

The board has before it other proposed ticket price reductions cases, most notably a proposed World Airways coast-to-coast flight that would cost one-half what coach seats now cost, and a request from some airlines to offer cheaper flights out of Chicago's rarely used Midway Airport.

The Texas International "peanuts" fares apply only to standard class tickets and then only on certain flights, two a day in most cases.

"There are no strings on our peanuts fares," said a TIA spokesman in Houston.



They went that way

Allan King (seated) gets some assistance from another person attending the WarCon III State Wargames Convention this past weekend at the MSC. This was King's second year to attend the event which is sponsored by the Grommets, a student organization at Texas A&M University.

Battalion photo by Frank Mullins

weather

Mostly cloudy and mild today with a high in the low 50s. Wind gusts 8-12 mph with a 10 per cent chance of precipitation today. Continuing cloudiness tomorrow with a warming trend. Low tonight in the low 40s and high tomorrow in the low 60s. No precipitation in sight for tomorrow.