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Enrollment may level off; housing shortage cited

By DEBBIE LIGHTFOOT

Enrollment at Texas A&M University, the fastest growing university in the nation since 1972, may finally be leveling off, A&M's dean of admissions and records said Wednesday.

Dean Edwin Cooper said that for two consecutive weeks this month the total number of new students accepted for the fall semester has been at least 100 fewer than for the same time period last year. As of the first week in April, 8,316 new students have been accepted, compared to 8,473 at the same time last year.

Although the difference is only 157 students, this marks the first time in several years that there has been any leveling of enrollment, Cooper said.

"The biggest single factor (for the de-

cline) is housing," Cooper said. Although there will be adequate off-campus housing to accommodate all students being accepted, the shortage of on-campus space deters some eligible students from enrolling, he said.

"We hear people saying all the time that housing is definitely a factor in deciding whether they will attend," he said. Most new freshmen and their parents want on-campus housing because of the convenience and lower cost, he said.

A&M's enrollment increased by at least 2,300 each year from 1972 to 1976, reaching a record 28,035 last fall.

Cooper predicted there will be about 29,000 here this fall, despite the slightly lower acceptance figures, because of A&M's high retention rate for freshmen.

The rapid growth has meant larger classes, longer class days and some financial problems, but there has been no attempt to limit enrollment by raising admissions standards, Cooper said.

"We have solid admissions requirements that correlate with the academic challenge here," he said. "We admit only those students who are able to survive academically."

"As long as we have the facilities and the faculty, we admit all who are qualified. So far, we have been able to do that without undue harm to the students or the University."

As many as 13,000 Aggies are in class at any one time during the day. To accommodate this number, the registrar's office

has had to increase the size of classes and to schedule classes at 5 p.m. when it would prefer not to, Cooper said.

The rapid enrollment increase of past years has also created a "jet lag" in financial support from the state, Cooper said. Appropriations are based on past enrollment and made for a two-year period. Enrollment at A&M has grown much more rapidly than appropriations and other sources, including alumni gifts and other state funds, must be used to make up the difference, he said.

Despite A&M's rapid growth, students usually have little trouble getting the classes they want. About 70 per cent of the requests made during preregistration for particular times and professors are honored, Cooper said.



Battalion photo by Jim Hendrickson

New president pinned

Leadership of the Federation of Texas A&M University Mothers Clubs passed Saturday to a new slate of officers led by Mrs. H. O. Pipkin Jr. (right) of Woodsboro. She received the president's gavel from Mrs. Don G. Kaspar of Shiner, 1976-77 president. Representatives of statewide A&M Mothers Clubs met on the campus in conjunction with Parents Weekend. (See related story, Page 5.)

Aston Hall wants to leave RHA

By RAY DANIELS

The Aston Hall Dorm Council last night voted to secede from the Residence Hall Association (RHA), "until such a time as its RHA's archaic and discriminatory means of representation is remedied."

Included was a stipulation that the support of Aston residents be pursued through a written petition before presenting the bill to RHA as an actual secession.

According to Marc Young, sponsor of the bill, Aston wants RHA representation based on the number of residents, rather than the current one vote per dorm.

Joe Nixon, newly elected RHA president, said RHA changed its representation last month. At that time, representation by number of residents was defeated. Instead, it was decided to add one representative for a total of two from each dorm.

The number of residents in each dorm varies from 60 for Hotard to more than 500 for Mosher. Each dorm has an equal number of votes in RHA meetings.

Nixon said he had supported the representation by number of residents, not for the representative aspect, but for the potential of expanding RHA and its resources.

"The idea behind RHA is not so much to represent groups of people, but to get things done for the campus as a whole," said Nixon. He stressed that nothing is

ever done to stifle accomplishments and that no dorm or group is ever discriminated against.

"At the (RHA) meetings, I feel like I'm at a Ku Klux Klan meeting and I'm black," said Young, an Aston resident. He said this is because Aston is one of five south-side dorms out of 21 dorms on campus. The population of the south five is 33 per cent of the total on campus. They represent 24 per cent of RHA.

Kevin Brady, Aston president elect, said Aston doesn't really want to leave the RHA, but they're willing to do it to get the representation worked out.

Nixon said the move would not prompt him to seek changes in the representative system, largely since a change is currently taking place.

"What will the proposed change accomplish?" Nixon asked. "What goals do they hope to achieve?"



Flingin' in the rain

This just goes to show that the postal service isn't the only thing not stopped by rain, sleet and dark of night. This is one of a trio of hearty souls at Texas A&M University who didn't let this weekend's monsoons affect their Frisbee flinging.

Preregistration starts Monday at G. Rollie

Preregistration for the Fall 1977 semester will be held April 25-29. This year, students will report with card packets to G. Rollie White Coliseum instead of the registration center, said Registrar Robert A. Lacey.

Lacey said that the bulletin of fall course offerings erroneously instructs students to proceed to the registration center. The center will be undergoing renovation.

Preregistration will begin at 8 a.m. April 25 and end at 5 p.m. April 29. Only students currently enrolled for the Spring 1977 semester are permitted to preregister.

Lacey explained that students should begin by obtaining card packets at the office of their major department. When the student's course request card has been approved, he should report to the main floor of White Coliseum to complete preregistration.

No fees will be collected at that time. A statement will be mailed to the student at his permanent mailing address around July 15. Fees must be paid by Aug. 12.

After remittance of all fees, the student's class schedule and fee receipt will be mailed to him, Lacey said.

Gas allocation to ease shortage unconstitutional, Briscoe says

United Press International

AUSTIN — In his speech to the nation yesterday President Carter called on Americans to sacrifice in light of the country's critical energy shortage. Gov. Dolph Briscoe doesn't want those sacrifices to fall too heavily on Texas or other energy producing areas.

Briscoe said natural gas allocation, one of the suggestions that has been made to ease shortages in energy-poor areas of the country, would be unconstitutional.

"I think it would be unconstitutional for them to do it," he said yesterday at a news conference. "It would have a serious effect on our economy. The allocation of intrastate gas would close Texas businesses and put Texans out of work."

The governor said he plans to return to

Washington to lobby the Carter administration against energy policies he said would harm Texas and other petroleum producing states.

While in Washington, Briscoe said, he would meet with Bert Lance, director of the Office of Management and Budget, other administration officials and members of the Texas delegation.

Briscoe met with Carter and other administration officials Thursday, arguing against gas allocation and for price deregulation. He sharply criticized proposals for allocation of intrastate gas from petroleum-producing states to interstate consumers.

Briscoe said he was unhappy with many proposals presented to the President by his energy staff.

"The proposals go toward greater government control of the energy industry and higher taxes on products where they are already too high," he said.

"It's a bureaucrats' dream of bureaucracy."

Briscoe indicated he hopes to influence the administration and Congress against some of the proposals.

"The President has not accepted a number of the recommendations," he said. "I am encouraged by the fact that there are some changes being made in the recommendations that are under consideration," he said.

Briscoe said he is confident Carter will not change his stand in favor of natural gas deregulation.

Blaze kills unconfirmed number

Galveston fire levels city block

United Press International

GALVESTON — A fire that killed an unconfirmed 10 to 12 persons and leveled a downtown hotel and a furniture store was brought under control today, according to the Galveston County Sheriff's Office.

A dispatcher for the sheriff's office said the fire was under control about 6 a.m., but firemen remained at the scene because it was still "smoldering."

The Central Hotel erupted in flames about 2 a.m. and Star Furniture Co. next door also caught fire.

"The hotel and the furniture store are no more," the dispatcher said. "Both of them just collapsed."

A spokesman for John Sealy Hospital

said 16 persons had been treated there for burns and smoke inhalation, including two firemen. The hospital official said several of those treated were injured when they jumped from the building.

The spokesman for the sheriff's office said although 47 persons were known to be living in the hotel, it was not known how many escaped.

"We don't know how many got out but we know some of them did," the spokesman said.

"It's an old, old building. At least 60 years old."

"There is a hotel on that corner, a drug store and furniture store. Actually the hotel is more of a flophouse."

Officials called for help from fire de-

partments from six surrounding cities to fight the blaze.

The spokesman said the hotel was a five-story, red-brick structure. The area was described as a rundown, older district of the central city.

Silver Taps tonight

Silver Taps ceremonies will be conducted tonight at 10:30 for Texas A&M University graduate student Oral B. Crawford III, 29.

Crawford, who died March 27 in his hometown of Springfield, Mo., was a Ph.D. student in economics and a research assistant.

He was the son of Dr. Oral B. Crawford Jr. of Springfield.

Easterwood reports few air mishaps

By DAVE TEWES

Battalion Staff

Facilities and personnel for regulating air-traffic safety at Easterwood Airport may not be faultless, but accidents there are limited.

Several pilots and air-traffic controllers

who frequent Easterwood say general safety at the airport is at least average.

"I think it could be rated alongside most airports," said Kenneth D. Antley, air-traffic control specialist at Easterwood. "We are probably the smallest community in the state with a (control) tower, with the exception of Plainview."

Truett Smith, Easterwood Airport manager, said there was only one accident last year and one so far this year involving aircraft. He said there were no injuries or deaths in either mishap.

Bobby Clay, chief of the tower, said that there were two or three accidents last year among the 92,000 total airport operations.

The biggest concern involving aircraft safety is spotting and accurately locating an aircraft, said Robert Cotte, air-traffic control specialist. Air-traffic controllers must rely on the pilot to provide an accurate position report because Easterwood has no radar.

Absence of radar frequently pose problems for pilots familiar with Easterwood. Some pilots mistake Texas World Speedway or a nearby abandoned airport for Easterwood.

Controllers may not even see an aircraft until it has almost landed if the weather is bad, said Ricky O. Warren, air-traffic control specialist at the airport. There is no way of knowing where an aircraft is if the pilot miscalculates his position, he added.

J.M. Lewallen, a pilot for 11 years, said having a radar would be convenient but not practical.

"Having a radar would certainly be safer, but it's just not cost-effective," Lewallen said. "If they had to give a radar to every airport the size of Easterwood, we'd be taxed out of our homes."

Responsibility for keeping aircraft safely separated rests with the pilot in most cases, Cotte said.

"He (the pilot) is the final person who is

responsible for the separation of his aircraft under visual flight rule (VFR) conditions," Cotte said. "When the aircraft is flying instrument flight rule (IFR), air-traffic control provides separation from other aircraft."

Pilots should be alert for other aircraft even when flying IFR, Cotte said. This is called the "see and be seen" rule, he said.

Another safety concern involves the controller giving pilots precisely worded instructions. Misuse of words may have caused the crash of two Boeing 747 jets killing 579 persons in the Canary Islands.

"If he (a pilot) calls and is ready for take-off and we cannot issue clearance at that time, we tell him to hold short," Antley said. "We try never to use 'hold clear of runway' or 'advise when clear of runway'."

This prevents the pilot from thinking the runway is clear when it isn't.

Although student controllers practice at

Easterwood, there is always a qualified controller present.

Susan Stroud, a flight instructor for Brazos Aviation, said the student controllers talk on the radio too much. She said they try to present too much unnecessary information to the pilot. The student controllers agree that they may make occasional errors.

"They will carry on an extended conversation trying to get you to realize the position of another aircraft," Stroud said. "That aircraft isn't really in close enough proximity to cause a problem."

This is common at many airports and is a basic fault of most controllers, she said. Easterwood controllers make no more mistakes than other controllers with the same level of experience, Stroud added.

Keeping words to a minimum is something that comes with experience, Warren said. A controller tries not to talk anymore

than he must because that air time may be needed later.

"The more you work with civilian traffic, the more you cut down on your phraseology," Warren said. "In slack time when you don't have much traffic, you use more phraseology."

When air traffic is minimal, the controller has more time to provide assistance to the pilot, he said. Warren emphasized that controllers must reduce conversation when there is considerable traffic.

Howard Chamberlain, Texas A&M University Flying Club director, said another key aspect related to safety is the pilot's competency.

"The biggest problem relative to safety is the individual pilot operating in and out of Easterwood," he said.

If a pilot isn't familiar with standard procedure, he may upset the flow of traffic, Chamberlain said.

Weather

Partly cloudy and mild this afternoon and evening with a 10 per cent chance of isolated thunder-showers. High today in the low 80s. Low tonight in the upper 60s. High tomorrow in the upper 70s. Continued cloudy and mild tomorrow with a precipitation probability of 40 per cent.