

The Battalion

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Camping out — again!

Battalion photo by Michael Fred

Aggies take to camping out in front of G. Rollie White Coliseum again. These students are awaiting tickets for the Texas A&M-Texas Tech football

game that will be played Saturday, Sept. 24 in Lubbock. The line started forming Saturday, Sept. 17 at 4 p.m.

Activities increasing

Lighting for sports complex 'in-the-waiting'

By LARRY PARKER

Five years have passed since the first proposal to light the Texas A&M sports complex, located across the railroad tracks to the new baseball fields. And use of facilities by intramural participants continues to increase.

Last year, sports activities on the campus amounted to about 150,000 participations, said Dennis Corrington, director of intramurals, in an interview last week. Football in 1977 had 307 teams with 1,017 games on the docket. Softball in 1976 had 320 teams. In 1977 there were 430 teams and in 1978 the number may exceed 500.

Because games must be played before dawn, sports schedules are often extended so that all teams can use the fields. "It's bad all right," said Bill Baine, a

softball player. "It causes the season to be drug out and we end up studying for or taking finals and trying to finish softball."

"We may have a week or more in between games," said Rick Thompson, a softball player. "Then end up playing on a weekend."

In 1971, plans for the complex originally called for lights and a storage structure, Corrington said. The cost estimate by the Physical Plant was \$500,000 however, it was turned down by the Board of Regents.

Student Government pushed the proposal for the complex through but had to settle for a no-lighting no-structure estimate, said Corrington. The proposed cost was \$400,000 but the approved bid was \$220,000. Construction began in 1974.

Howard Vestal, vice president for business affairs, said that the estimate couldn't have been off that far.

"The estimate must have included lights and then they were cut out," he said.

But Corrington said the proposal did not include lights.

Corrington said he submitted lighting proposals several times to Dr. Carl Landiss, head of the physical education department. Proposals must go through the Physical Education department after leaving the intramural office.

"Money is the problem," said Landiss, "and everyone is in a facility crunch."

When asked if 150,000 participation last year should warrant any attention, he said that it should. He also said that power lines installed across the tracks should help keep down the costs. He said he was optimistic about the situation because of the power addition.

Some students have complained that construction of the new baseball field

Policy change may cost Health Center \$90,000

By GLENNA WHITLEY
Battalion Staff

A policy change being considered by the personnel department of the Texas A&M University system could cost the Beutel Health Center approximately \$90,000 in revenue per year.

The center presently receives \$15 per physical examination from the personnel department. The physicals are performed for prospective employees within the system as required by an act passed by the Texas state legislature in 1948. The act established Texas A&M's own insurance program for workmen's compensation.

But the state legislature recently passed legislation giving the Texas A&M Board of Regents the power to change the requirements in the compensation program. Because of the high cost of the physicals each year, they may be discontinued.

The purpose of physicals was originally to protect individuals, and employees they work with, and to protect the compensation program against fraud.

"It (the physical) is principally to detect any pre-existing physical problems with an individual. They may not even know they have them. Then again they may," Pat Lackey, administrative assistant for Beutel, said.

John Honea, associate director of personnel, said the physicals had uncovered some medical problems people didn't know they had.

But sometimes employees are hired when they know about an injury, then claim to have been injured on the job in order to collect medical benefits. These instances, however, are very rare. "It's awful hard to prove," Honea said.

The possibility of discontinuing the physical examinations brings mixed reactions from officials at the Health Center.

"It's a mixed blessing. Obviously a loss of that much money would hurt. Without some additional sources of revenue to offset that, we would naturally prefer to put up with the inconvenience and loss of time," Lackey said.

"If we weren't doing workmen's compensation physicals we could see more students faster," he said.

The physicals do take up the time of nurses, lab technicians and doctors. Each person is given a hearing and vision test, a blood test, an urinalysis, a blood pressure and pulse check, a tuberculosis test, a check for hernias and similar problems.

In 1976-77, the Health Center received \$86,355 from the personnel department

for physicals performed. The total budget for that year was \$840,491.

Other revenue came from military and private physicals, and the sale of items such as splints and bandages.

This year's budget is \$1.2 million. Approximately \$90,000 of that is expected to come from workmen's compensation physicals. If the physicals are stopped, where will the money come from?

"It's hard to say," said Lackey. "We're still studying that. We're exploring all the possibilities."

One possibility is the increase of student health fees. Presently, each student pays a compulsory \$14 per semester for use of the Health Center. The state legislature has set a maximum possible fee of \$15, so this one-dollar increase at Texas A&M is present enrollment would only net an additional \$30,000.

Dr. Claude Goswick, director of the Health Center, suggests a user fee which would be paid by those who use certain facilities.

"It's long over-due. We're about the only school that doesn't do it this way he said. X-rays, medications, lab work, and non-emergency after-hours care could be charged to the user. Currently, these services are performed free of charge.

Amoco drills deepest well near here

By MARVIN ISAACKS

Amoco Production Company, searching for oil and gas reserves that may be buried under a Texas A&M research farm, is now drilling what will be the deepest well in the part of Texas.

The well, located about eight miles northwest of College Station, will be 500 feet deep when completed. It is an exploration well, drilled to test the possibilities of finding petroleum deposits in previously unexplored deep formations.

With all the sophisticated equipment available today, there is still only one way to determine where deposits of oil and gas actually are: that is to drill a well," said Amoco public affairs adviser Wayne Tiller.

"After this well passes 13,000 feet, it will be a 'rank wildcat.' That is, nobody knows what is down there," said Walter Miller, Amoco drilling foreman.

Amoco Production Company is drilling this exploratory well known "Texas A&M A 1." The \$5 million project is being partially funded by Getty Oil Company. The rig, which belongs to Sharp Drilling Company of Midland, was designed to drill gas wells as deep as 30,000 feet.

"Any time a well is drilled to this depth precautions are taken in the event sour gas (hydrogen sulfide) is encountered," said Miller. "We do not anticipate it, but it is impossible to tell," he said.

Because of the danger in dealing with

hydrogen sulfide, extensive safety measures were taken to protect personnel and equipment. Miller explained that \$300,000 to \$500,000 has already been spent at this point for safety equipment alone.

A contingency plan has been prepared and submitted to ruling government authorities and necessary law enforcement agencies. All people living and working within a 3,000-foot radius of the rig have been notified of the possibilities of sour gas. A guard is stationed at the entrance of the rig area 24 hours a day. This makes it possible to account for everyone in the vicinity in case of evacuation.

All parameters of the rig are monitored

by two machines; one unmanned and another manned 24 hours a day. A computer system is used to keep a constant check on all phases of drilling activity. This system is capable of making predictions concerning drilling situations.

The proximity of the drilling location to Texas A&M's experimental orchards caused Amoco to take extra care in building mud reserve pits for the project. The pits, which hold drill cuttings, excess drilling fluids and water, were lined with heavy-duty neoprene plastic and sealed water-tight. This was done to keep the fluid from traveling underground to the orchards, although studies by a soil research team found that it would take the fluid two and a half years to reach the orchards.

"There is nothing in these pits to damage the orchards, but these fluids could affect the growth rate of the trees," said Miller. "Because of the critical research A&M is doing, what we are actually protecting against is increasing the growth rate and productivity of these trees," he said. Amoco is considering using the pits as fish tanks after the well has been completed, Miller added.

Besides the safeguards for the orchards, other measures were taken to protect the environment. A three and a half-foot ring levee was built around the seven-acre location to prevent spills from getting away. Casing (pipe to seal off the wall of the hole) was set more than 5,800 feet deep. One reason for this is to prevent drilling fluids from entering water formations if pressure is encountered in the drilling process.

Unstable soil conditions at the location of the Brazos River drilling site caused site preparation costs to exceed \$500,000 before the \$4 million rig was moved onto the location.

While there is less than a ten per cent chance of the well paying for itself, cost of operation for the drilling project exceeds \$10,000 daily. However, even if the well is not productive economically, there will be a quality of useful information obtained for future drilling operations, Miller said.

"All the information gathered from drilling this well is stored in Amoco's computer bank in Tulsa, Okla.

Drilling is expected to be completed in nine months to one year.



Battalion photo by Ken Herrera

Bike-A-Thon cyclists earn \$1,000 for MS

By CLAY COCKRILL

A few hours of bicycling around the Bryan-College Station countryside Saturday morning earned \$1,000 for cyclists participating in the Multiple Sclerosis Bike-A-Thon. Three of the seven bikers completed the entire 30-mile trip.

The trip was organized by Circle K, a Texas A&M service organization, in order to raise money for the Multiple Sclerosis National Society. Multiple Sclerosis is disease of the nervous system which results in a gradual degeneration of body functions such as speech and mobility.

"We wanted more riders," said Craig Clark, president of the club. "but there is a safety problem when you get too many people on a road with a lot of traffic." Clark is a junior in mechanical engineering.

The number of bikers wasn't too important, since the money was raised through sponsors who promised to donate so much per mile of the trip completed. A single biker

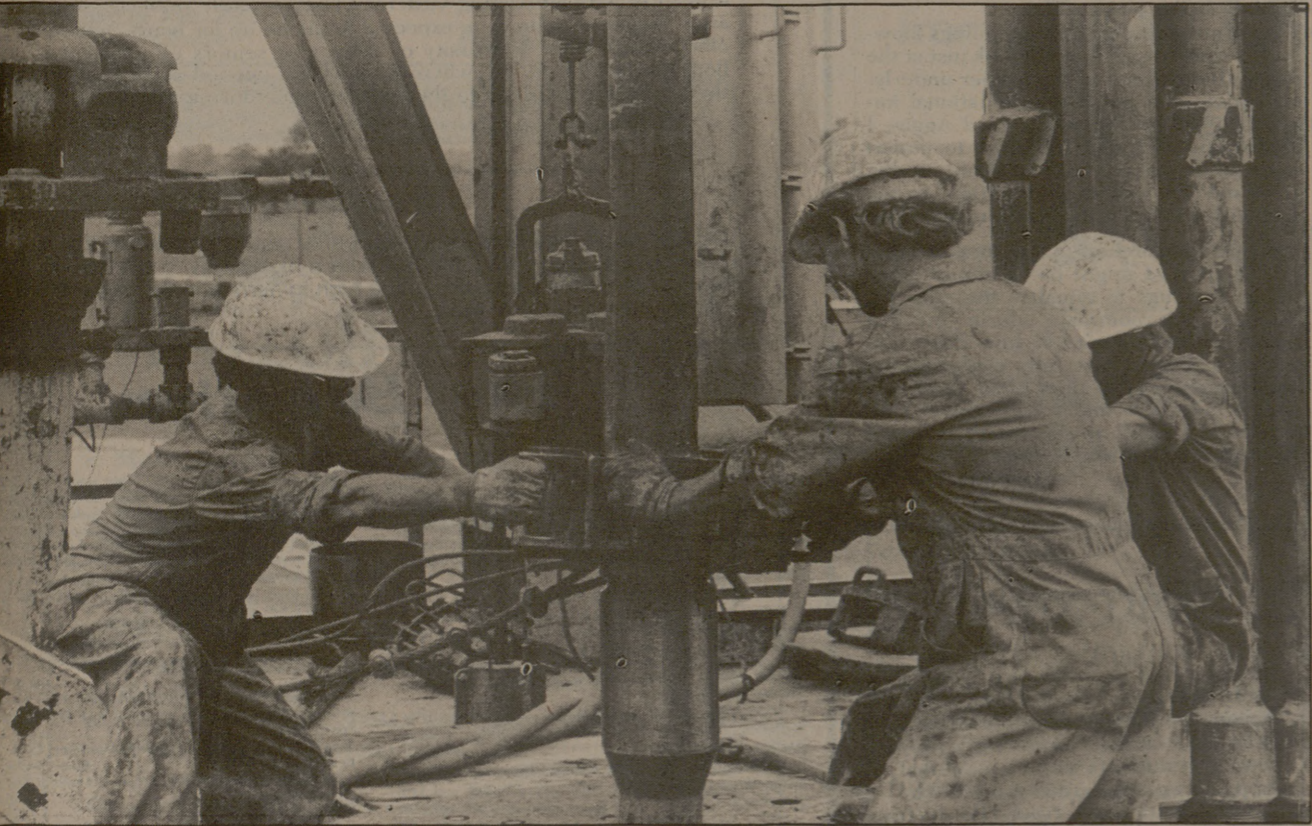
could represent any number of sponsors, and sponsors could also make a flat donation.

A big inspiration for the project came when Dr. Carlton Stolle, the club's sponsor, said he would match from his own pocket every dollar the members collected. Stolle limited himself to a \$500 donation, which was the amount the members were able to collect.

The seven bikers were Clark, Mike Dragutsky, Tommy Smith, Davey Miner, Donna Hagler, Craig Gargotta, and Harlan Harris.

At about 9:40 a.m., the bikers headed south on Highway 6 from Briarcrest, and then north on F.M. 2818 until it crossed Hwy. 6 on the north side of Bryan. They returned to their starting point, Bryan High School, about 1 p.m.

The bikers looked surprisingly well at the finish, although they offered a few complaints about aches in the posterior. And Harris, who was just getting over a virus, finished an hour ahead of the rest.



Drill we must!

Battalion photo by Jim Crawley

Roughnecks work on the floor of Rig, No. 60 as the pipe is being brought out of the hole. Tongs are

used to break lose drill pipe connections. The rig is located on an A&M research farm.