

Students run natural science museum

By FRANK K. VASOVSKI
A handful of unpaid but dedicated students and alumni of Texas A&M University has kept the Brazos Valley Museum of Natural Science functioning while its board of trustees has labored with the problem of nominating a new director.

With the September resignation of its last director and no immediate replacement, the museum, located on 204 W. Villa Maria, Bryan, faced a prospect of prolonged "hibernation."

Sally Shelton, a Texas A&M University wildlife and fisheries science senior, lectures on fossils for six young pupils on the floor of the veranda leading to the museum. There is no other place to accommodate them.

"It would be nice to have an adequate indoor space but we have to improvise as best as we can until we move, hopefully soon, to the new facility," Shelton said.

She said she would like older pupils, including high school students and interested adults, to attend her lectures. However, the museum has no suitable facility to conduct such programs.

A small cubbyhole crammed with stuffed animals barely allows Scott Nelson, a Texas A&M University zoology senior, to show exhibits to students in his mammals class. He, like Shelton, has no chair to sit on; instead, he uses a small open part of the floor to conduct his lessons.

Ronald White, a parks and recreation senior, and Wayne Bryan, a biology senior, volunteered their services as instructors in the Fall 1977 nature classes offered by the museum. Both are instructors for bird recognition classes.

Linda Schmid of Cache Cove De-



Zoology senior Scott Nelson, an instructor at the Brazos Valley Museum of Natural Science, can use only a small part of the floor to conduct

lessons. Scarce space is the problem. The student being shown the raccoon is Gina Pickerel.

Battalion photo by Frank Vasovski

William Grimes, wildlife and fisheries science senior from Bryan, devoted more than 18 months of time to the voluntary service to the museum.

Grimes, a curator-collector at the museum, considers the lack of space to be the biggest detriment to the development of the museum.

"This museum has a very fine collection of shells, fossils and other specimens," Grimes said. "Unfortunately, we have to keep them boxed because there is no space to properly display them."

Grimes said movement of the museum to a building yet to be constructed would bring more visitors. The Brazos County Commissioners Court had allocated \$600,000 for that building, to be built near the east bypass in the area of the county park.

Grimes said the proposed site allocation for the museum in the county park would allow expansion of all current programs, making the museum a self-supporting institution.

Andrew Wood, another wildlife and fisheries science junior, shares museum management with Grimes pending appointment of the new director.

Wood said initial investment of county and federal funds to relocate and expand the museum will make it self-supporting.

"Past experience indicates the museum is needed by the cities to supplement the existing school programs with the exhibits available at the museum," Wood said.

Soldier started run

United Press International
According to legend, a Greek soldier in 490 B.C. ran from Marathon to Athens to bring news of his country's victory in a battle of the Greco-Persian War. The soldier ran 22 miles and 470 yards. The distance of modern marathons varies from 24 miles and 1,500 yards to the first modern Olympics in 1896. Athens to 26 miles and 990 yards. The 1920 games in Antwerp, Belgium. The current distance is 26 miles and 385 yards was accepted as standard in 1924.

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development in Bryan decided to accompany her 9-year-old daughter, Vanderlyn, to one of the bird recognition tours along the shores of the Municipal Lake in Bryan.

Schmid, who recently moved from the West Coast, said she likes being close to nature and having space to move around.

Vanderlyn shares her mother's sentiments.

"In San Francisco I raised quails and other birds at home, but I had to stop it because there was not

enough space to make the birds feel well."

Vanderlyn and her 7-year-old classmate, Doug Veitch Jr., of Bryan, eagerly absorbed all recognition tips offered by the instructors.

Doug has a definite goal to achieve while attending the bird recognition classes, having collected and identified 113 bird feathers. He intends to use his collection for a special project required of second grade pupils at Johnson Elementary School in Bryan.

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