

The Battalion

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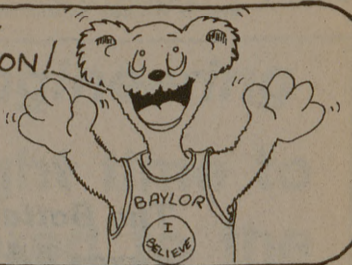
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HOORAY
WE WON!



Police arrest 40 farmers for blockading in Laredo

United Press International
LAREDO—Sheriff's deputies and police Tuesday arrested 40 striking farmers who refused to lift a tractor blockade of a cold storage plant near the Texas-Mexico border.

The strikers were booked at the Webb County Jail on misdemeanor charges of blocking a public roadway and blocking access to a business. All were released on their personal recognizance before nightfall.

District Attorney Charles Borchers said the farmers were given every opportunity to disband from the plant and were shown the law against blockades, but still refused to leave voluntarily.

"We gave them every opportunity in the world," Borchers said. "They just wanted national attention. We tried to avoid all that, but we couldn't."

The South Texas farmers parked tractors in two entrances to the Laredo Cold Storage Co. Monday morning and refused to move them despite a temporary restraining order issued by District Judge James Kazen. They were arrested after they ignored a 45-minute ultimatum issued by Police Chief W.V. Weeks.

Weeks and Sheriff Mario Santos ordered the arrests and the farmers offered no resistance.

When a large crane arrived to drag off a big tractor continuing to block the plant's main entrance, a farmer mounted the tractor and drove it away voluntarily to avoid damage to the vehicle.

"We're back to normal," said Danny Barrera, manager of the plant. "We didn't want to resort to this action but they (farmers) just didn't want to cooperate."

The farmers blockaded the plant to protest imports of frozen beef carcasses, strawberries and other commodities from Mexico. They said imports of Mexican beef alone cost American farmers \$67 million a year.

The same group of farmers on Monday also blockaded the import area at the busiest U.S.-Mexico border crossing and turned back several truckloads of meat and other produce. Police and U.S. Customs officials said the farmers did not renew the border blockade Tuesday.

As many as 100 farmers brought 20 tractors and numerous other vehicles to Laredo on Sunday in the first major strike

activity in South Texas.

In East Texas, between 35 and 40 tractors temporarily blocked entrances to the Campbell Soup company in Paris, Texas. The farmers allowed small vehicles to enter the plant but stopped transport trucks at the main gate.

A small group of farmers met with company officials shortly after the blockade began and within two and one-half hours the tractors were withdrawn.

In the Texas Panhandle Tuesday, about

60 farmers filed application for food stamps with the State Department of Human Resources in Morton, 40 miles West of Lubbock. They said they would apply also for free school lunches for their children.

In Lamesa, about 300 tractors rolled through the two 60 miles south of Lubbock and many farm related businesses shut down in support of the farmers. Meetings were planned in Olton and Muleshoe as members of the American Agriculture Movement were angered by statements

from Secretary Bob Bergland that their demands for 100 percent parity would lead to a Soviet-style bureaucracy.

Representatives of the South Texas strikers were among a delegation of seven farmers that went to Austin Tuesday to meet with Gov. Dolph Briscoe and insist upon a special session of the Legislature. Craig Bryant of Elgin said the farmers would seek the Legislature's endorsement of the strike and for legislation lowering tax appraisals of agricultural land.

No special session to be called

Briscoe endorses farmers

United Press International
AUSTIN—Gov. Dolph Briscoe Tuesday rejected striking farmers' requests for a special legislative session, but endorsed their movement for break-even prices for farm products.

Briscoe said the present farm system was unworkable and immediate federal action was needed to remedy it.

Briscoe and House Speaker Bill Clayton met with eight representatives of the American Agriculture movement who had asked for a special session to consider a constitutional amendment giving tax breaks to farmers. The farmers discussed their problems with state officials after a lamb dinner at the governor's mansion.

Texas Agriculture commissioner Reagan Brown said earlier Tuesday that the tax break could wait until the next regular session in January 1979.

"At the present time, I do not anticipate a special session," Briscoe said. "It will be useless to call such a session unless we are assured we could pass such a constitutional amendment."

Attorney General John Hill ruled last year that a bill taxing agricultural land on productivity, rather than market value was unconstitutional. Hill said such a measure would have to take the form of a constitutional amendment to be considered by voters.

Briscoe said he and Clayton would issue a statement Wednesday urging immediate action by Congress and the Carter administration in support of 100 percent parity and better market prices for farm goods.

The governor said he will poll House and Senate members to gather support for farmers.

"I think the important thing to stress is the urgency of the situation," Briscoe said. "I have started to make appointments for them in Washington to meet with congressmen and administration officials."

Gerald McCathern, a Hereford, Texas, farmer and strike spokesman, said the group felt the meeting was successful and was encouraged by Briscoe's support of the movement for 100 percent parity.

"We feel the governor understands the problem and will help us achieve our goals," McCathern said. "What we were concerned with was getting a commitment from the government of the state of Texas to get their understanding and support."

The farmers said they would conduct a tractorcade demonstration to the state capitol Wednesday morning before they attend a meeting of the Senate Subcommittee on Agriculture which invited their testimony.



Battalion photo by Jamie Aitken

An empty nest

A campus resident through the Christmas break casts an eye over increasing activity near the University library as vacationing students return this week in preparation for the spring semester.

Flu epidemic a certainty, health center staff waiting

By JAMIE AITKEN
Battalion Editor

When some 29,000 students return for spring classes Monday, they will bring along with them enough influenza to start an epidemic that is expected to last until mid-March. And the staff at the University's A.P. Beutel Health Center is waiting.

The influenza strains currently sweeping the nation - A-Texas and A-Victoria that have been discovered in 25 states in January alone - will be so concentrated on the Texas A&M University campus next week that a community-wide epidemic is certain, says Health Center Director Dr. Claude Goswick.

Goswick says flu patients will begin filling the health center waiting room the second week of the semester.

"It will take a week or so for it to get around," Goswick says. "Most students are at home now healthy. But with the weather we have, we're not getting the sun's ultraviolet waves' sterilizing effect,

and students will be coming back into these crowded conditions.

"It will last until spring break, and that saves us."

Although the epidemic is certain, Goswick says it is also predictable.

He estimates that by mid-March half the Texas A&M population may be treated for the flu a caseload he says is no worse than last year at this time.

Hospital rounds were made twice daily last year to discharge patients as quickly as possible to make room for a waiting list of incoming patients. The health center's 44 beds were full the entire eight weeks before the spring break dispersed students and illnesses.

To cope with the expected flu patients at the center this year, Goswick says an express clinic will be set up at various hours of the day to lessen waiting time. The "one item or less" clinic, as Goswick refers to it, will be used to treat patients complaining of symptoms that can be diagnosed with a minimum of time and effort, such as sore throats, rashes and ear aches.

However, patients taking their flu to the health center will find little more for what ails them than can be received at home. For that overall achiness, congestion and fever, Goswick recommends flu sufferers take aspirin for the pain, drink plenty of liquids and get lots of rest. As a personal

New hours for the A.P. Beutel Health Center have been put into effect beginning with the spring semester 1978.

Monday - Friday: 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Saturday: 8 a.m. to 12 noon
Emergency treatment: 24 hours, 845-1511

preference, Goswick also recommends drinking Jello, for the taste and nourishment.

Otherwise, he says, the health center may dispense some additional antibiotics, but only to combat secondary infections. Goswick says antibiotics do nothing to cure the flu.

"The flu is going to run its course," Goswick says. "We assume a student's not going to get the flu more than once (in the next two months), and it should only take two or three days to get over it in most cases."



Battalion photo by Jamie Aitken

Road weary

You meet a lot of friendly people but there's also a lot of cold, windy waits hitch-hiking this time of year, confessed Cathy Edwards, 21, on her way

out of College Station Tuesday. Her sidekick, Brandy, seemed to agree to the latter as he looked for a more promising way out of town.

Two routes available

Buses start Monday

Trial intra-campus bus service linking the main and west campuses of Texas A&M begins Jan. 16 at 7:05 a.m.

Two routes, known as Green and Red, begin each morning at the corner of Lubbock and Bizzell streets on all regularly scheduled class and exam days during the spring semester.

Buses will be at each stop about every 10 minutes until 5 p.m.

The service is free, but riders may be

requested to show a student, staff or faculty identification card.

Green Route moves north to parking lot 50, west to the College of Veterinary Medicine and south to the new College of Agriculture buildings. It serves lots 56 and 61 before returning to campus and stopping near Rudder Tower. The bus then returns to its point of origin.

Red Route proceeds to Rudder Tower, south to Jersey Street and across the railroad to lots 56 and 61 and the agriculture

class buildings. It then enters Wellborn Road and travels to the College of Veterinary Medicine. Returning on University Drive to the main campus, Red Route stops at Milner Hall and goes back to its starting place.

Both routes make one off-campus stop on University Drive.

The free trial intra-campus buses will be in addition to regular off-campus shuttle service for which there is a charge.

Cold spell may affect supply, cost of fuel

By GLENNA WHITLEY
Battalion Staff

Although this winter has been milder than last winter, the recent cold weather in Brazos Valley could affect the supply of gas and electrical power.

If it stays severely cold for a period of time, it does affect the supply because people use more," said John West, credit accounting supervisor of Lone Star Gas Company. Lone Star Gas provides gas to residents and area power plants.

"People will be using it faster than you pump it to them" West said. "You may get the supply but you can't get it to them enough."

The weather does get severely cold for extended periods of time. Lone Star Gas reduces its supplies to large industrial plants producing electricity for the area and College Station will be curbed, and the plants will have to burn expensive fuel oil to produce the electricity needed.

The higher cost of the fuel oil is represented in fuel adjustment charges that users sometimes receive.

"Texas is lucky because it doesn't have very cold weather over a long period of time," West said. "And this year's winter is much milder than last year's. Several days last year we set records in gas used." He added that the gas supply to area public schools had to be curtailed last winter.

Interstate gas prices are regulated by the federal government, but prices in Texas are based on supply and demand. West said prices have been escalating rapidly since 1971, so price increases due to the increased consumption during cold weather are hard to predict.

"It's hard to tell if it's (increased consumption) is due to the cold weather or the energy crisis," West said.

But there is some good news. The more gas you use to heat your home in the winter, the less you pay per cubic foot. Gas prices are based on a sliding scale, West said. "You pay more per cubic foot in summer because you use less."

Court award woman \$15,000 in Michigan alimony ruling

United Press International
LANSING, Mich. — The Michigan Court of Appeals has ruled a woman who puts her husband through school deserves a financial reward if the marriage goes bad — even if he has not yet started to earn big money.

The court's decision, announced Tuesday, came in the case of a couple divorced after seven years.

"This case presents the not uncommon situation of a wife who, having worked so

that her husband could obtain a professional education, finds herself left by the roadside before the fruits of that education can be harvested," the appeals court said.

The wife, Susan J. Moss, worked as a guidance counselor while her husband, Lee, was in medical school. The court said Moss currently is a surgical resident in Maryland.

Although the couple acquired no substantial assets during the marriage — partly because of the husband's education

costs — a trial court judge awarded the wife \$15,000, to be paid in three installments beginning six months after the judgment was entered.

Both parties appealed that ruling. The wife said the sum was not enough — that she should get \$60,000 — and the husband said she shouldn't get any alimony since she currently is earning more than he is.

The appeals court upheld the alimony award.