

# Brazos County's runaways

## Their reasons may vary, but 'sometimes it has to be done'

By JEANNE LOPEZ

Brazos County is not immune to the problem of runaway children. Police brought 109 runaways last year to the Brazos county juvenile authorities, an increase of 10 over to 1976.

The Health, Education, and Welfare Department estimated that between two and six million children run away from their homes every year.

Their reasons for leaving included: pressures from the family's economic situation, divorce between the parents, drug problems,

school problems and pregnancy. "Some don't get along with their parents for some reason," said Ernest Montoya, juvenile detective for the Bryan Police Department. "Their parents are too strict, or they may think that their parents are too strict. Sometimes the child just wants more freedom," he said.

The average runaway is 14 years of age and female, seventy-nine of the 109 reported Brazos County runaways were girls. No one seems to offer an explanation for this.

"I would guess that there is much more open conflict during the teen-

age years between the mother and daughter than the father and son," said John Godfrey, chief county probation officer. He said that he had never read a study listing specific reasons for children running away.

"Some run to escape an undesirable family life. "My father sometimes drank too much at first," said a young man who ran away from home as a teenager. "His drinking got worse and when it finally hit him hard, that's when he'd start putting me down. Everything I did was never enough for him. He'd chew me out, but only when he drank. We were good friends before he drank a lot, but after that, I had to split."

"The cops would pick me up, my father would come to take me home and swear it wouldn't happen again, but it always did," he said.

Authorities estimate about half of the kids who do run from home are going for the adventure of it. "They want to find out what it's like to be out on their own," said a local police department juvenile officer.

Many leave only to return to their families. "I tried being 'out in the world' but decided to come back to my family," said a 16-year-old girl. "I managed OK for a while, but I knew my parents would feel better if I showed up again. Besides, things were easier at home. Mainly I learned a lot about myself, limits. What I could really do... or not do," she said. She has recently returned home after a two and a half month absence.

Once a police report is out on a runaway in the Brazos area and he is picked up by police, the parent or guardian may arrive at the station to bring him home. Otherwise the runaway may be placed in the detention ward at the county jail or he may be taken to Bridge House.

Bridge House, located at 1506 S. College Avenue in Bryan, is a federal and county funded non-secure foster group home. There are no fences surrounding the two-story brick house nor are there bars on the windows. Bridge House was established primarily for Children in Need of Supervision (CHINS) and



runaways fall into that category. The foster home can accommodate a maximum of 10 children, ages 10-17, for stays up to 90 days. "Some may stay for only 24 hours or several weeks, depending on their situation. Some of the runaways stay until they can resolve problems at home," said John David. David and his wife Jerri are the live-in house parents at Bridge House. "Our main objective is to establish a hassle-free family environment and to make the child aware of his situation now and in the future," he said.

Whatever the reasons, teenagers are continuing to run from their homes. Some come from stable environments, others do not. According to one teenager, "My parents went through hell living for me, but sometimes it's just that just has to be done."

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invites you to view the prints from Salon '78. They will be in the MSC Gallery through March 25.

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Thursday, March 30

Applications Available March 9-10 and March 20-22 at the Student Programs Office

Apply Early if Possible

**Hotline gives peace of mind**

based in Chicago, Illinois.

"We receive between 4,000 and 5,000 calls from runaways a month and relay about 300 or 400 calls to parents per month," said Marilyn Davidson, unit coordinator for the Peace of Mind project in Houston. "There are some parents who call and ask if any messages have been left for them by their runaway child," she said.

Most of the runaways (65 percent) who call the hotline are female. "We were surprised. We had stereotyped a runaway as male," said Roy May, the program's project director.

There are only two paid staff members, Davidson and her assistant, Peggy McGrath. The remaining 65 staff members are volunteers. Before answering the calls during the usual four-hour shifts, the volunteers are put through an orientation which lasts between two and three hours. After observing an experienced worker for four hours, then working two shifts with the Operation Peace of Mind, the volunteer is ready for the switchboard.

Operation Peace of Mind was established by Texas Governor Dolph Briscoe in September 1973 after the bodies of 27 young boys were buried in the Houston area that August. All the boys were reported runaways.

The project is funded by a grant of \$149,000 from the Criminal Justice Division of the state office. The grant covers all expenses related to the operation, including personnel salaries, WATS lines, rent to the motel.

Television and radio time and newspaper space are donated to provide public service to the Operation Peace of Mind.

# McDONALD'S INTRAMURAL HIGHLIGHTS

DRIVE-THRU WINDOW | BREAKFAST EVERY MORNING

**Teeing on the green**

Double your skill, double your fun with golf doubles. Entries open today, March 20 and will close March 28. Entry forms are available in the IM Office in DeWare Fieldhouse. The qualifying round will be held Sunday morning, April 9. Rainout date is April 16.

Each team will consist of two people, a men's, women's, or co-rec team and will play a qualifying round of 18 holes. Scoring will be medalist (stroke) system. The top 8 to 16 teams in each class (A, B, or C) will go into the 9-hole playoff rounds. The single elimination tournament rounds may be played on the TAMU or city golf courses.

Green fees will be \$2 on weekdays and \$2.50 on weekends for students. Faculty and staff will pay \$2.50 for weekdays and \$3.50 for weekends. All TAMU students, faculty, and staff are eligible to enter if they meet the requirements set in the IM Handbook.

We strongly encourage the golf couples to come out to compete. Three skill classifications for A — highly skilled, B — moderately skilled, and C — casual skill level are available in all divisions. IM t-shirts are awarded to all-University champs in men's, women's, and co-rec.

The TAMU rules and the IM rules will apply. A copy is available in the Intramural Office. Schedules will be posted on Thursday, March 30. To practice, teams must arrive at least 15 minutes ahead of the scheduled tee off time. Teams will forfeit their match if not prepared to tee off at their assigned time.

**IM Picks**

Well, at last the weather has lightened up and flickerball has now reached the playoff stage. Playoffs will begin Tuesday, March 21. Our wise man of sports has decided to try his luck at predictions even though there are many teams he hasn't seen play. So, here it is — our IM picks:

- CLASS A — MEN'S The Infinity Machine F-1 Utag Longnecks
- CLASS B — MEN'S F-1 Sigma Chi The Scrubs

Basketball is now into the playoffs. Shown here is a member of Young Life going up in a crowd to make a shot. Young Life and their opponents Baseline Bums, are both Co-Rec teams in class B competition.

**Rated MM\***

Over the hill after 35? Pshaw — anyone knows that's not true. Want to prove it? IM is sponsoring the Master's Mile in its annual track events. The Master's Mile is for individuals over 35 years old, men and women. So come on out and show your prowess. Entries will remain open until Friday, March 31.

**Sport Shorts**

**CALLING ALL BRIDGE PLAYERS!**

Check by the Intramural Office today for the bridge tournament schedules. Play will begin this week and will be Swiss team play in a round robin tournament. Don't forget — this may be your chance for an IM t-shirt.

**WET REMINDER**

Water Polo and Innertube Water Polo are starting play tomorrow, March 21. Play will be on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays at 6:00. Both the indoor and outdoor pools will be used. Check your schedules and come out swimming.

**Acknowledgments**

This ad is sponsored by McDonald's on University Drive and Manor East Mall and under the direction of the IM Office with stories by Michelle Wolstein and photos by Corey Gaskill.

**NOTICE TO ALL TRACKSTERS**

Hear ye, hear ye — all track persons take heed and notice. All field events will begin at 5:00 p.m. on the day scheduled.

Field events for men's and women's dorms and men's and women's independent entrants will be Monday, April 3. Corps and fish will participate in field events on April 4. The Co-Rec relay events will accept entries until March 31.

**FOR THE RINGERS**

Today is semifinals day for horse-shoe doubles at 5:00 in the horse-shoe pits. Finals will be March 23, Wednesday, at 5:00. Last year's All-University Champs were Ronny Stevens and Jim Calle.

**THE END IS NEAR**

Guess what today is handball players? The handball semifinals at DeWare Fieldhouse handball courts at 6:00. The finals will be held Wednesday, March 22. Last year's All-University Champs were Jeff Brownson and Don Johnson.

**FOR THE DOUBLE SWINGERS**

That time is here for all you tennis doubles swingers. Check your schedules because March 23 is the day playoffs begin. There were 362 tennis doubles entries this year with many returning faces paired with new partners. For the record, last year's all-University champs were Mike Green and Steve Ponder men's champs; Kim Bellamy and Chironne Tebo women's champs; Eddie Janek and Susan Ingram co-rec champs. Good luck and don't forget your match time.

**Netting for three**

What's more exciting than a court full of volleyball players' court with only six volleyball players, of course. Three-man volleyball entries open today, March 20, and close March 28. Play will begin April 3.

In three-man volleyball a regular size volleyball court is covered by three team members. There are no front or back row player designations and all members of spike or block. Play will be in Rollie White. Games are played 15 points.

Teams will be men's, women's and co-rec. A co-rec team must have at least one female member. Play options are class A powerball which goes by strict USVBA rules and class B jungleball which excludes overhead serves. One member of the Aggie Volleyball team may play on a team.

So, come spike and block with your two most favorite bumps partners. It's a wild and crazy game.

**"I SPY'S" PARTICIPANT OF THE WEEK**

Dan Jordan warms up with his handball partner, Phil Tibbs, in preparation for their doubles game. They represent Crocker Dorm in class B. Dan should come by the IM Office to pick up his "Be Our Guest" card to be redeemed for free food at your local McDonald's Restaurants.

**DON'T FORGET! (Can You Canoe?)**

Entries Open

Golf Doubles — March 20-March 28

3-Man Volleyball March 20 - March 28

Meetings

Sports Club: Wednesday, March 22, room 231, G. Rollie White, at 6:30 p.m.

Unit Team Manager's Meeting Monday, March 20, 5:15 p.m.; room to be announced.

Tie a string around your finger so that you don't forget the canoe race this Saturday, March 25. The five-mile race will be held on the Brazos River, ending at the Highway 60 bridge. Aluminum and fiberglass canoes may be used. The tournament will begin at 8:30 a.m. Men's and women's races will be at 10:00 a.m.; the co-rec race will be at 2:00 p.m. See you there!

**Our apologies (IM Free Play)**

Sorry for inconveniencing anyone who came for IM free play over the spring break.

Free play will begin operations this weekend. Friday from 6:00 p.m. - 12:00 midnight badminton and volleyball can be played. Saturdays times have been changed from that stated in previous issues. Table tennis will be played Saturdays from 6:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m. Free play is subject to cancellation if G. Rollie White must close. To make sure free play will be held, watch the signs in DeWare or G. Rollie White or call the IM Office at 845-7826. Come recreate, bring date — it's great!