

THE BATTALION

Vol. 71 No. 131
8 Pages

Friday, April 7, 1978
College Station, Texas

News Dept. 845-2611
Business Dept. 845-2611

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Battalion photo by Diana Van Cleave

Fightin' Texas Aggie swingers?

Who says B.Q.'s aren't swingers? Charles L. Phipps, agricultural economics major, and Richard M. Pleasant, recreation and parks major, are entertaining themselves on the swings in Thomas Park in College Station. Both are juniors and members of the Fightin' Texas Aggie Band.

College Station officials mystified by high bills

By FLAVIA KRONE

High utility bills continue to mystify College Station city officials and anger residents who are unhappy with the city's explanation for those high bills.

Complaints about the high cost of electricity are coming from the residents of the Durango, Sevilla, Southwest Village and Willowick apartments, all of which are located within a mile of each other near the intersection of Anderson Street and Holleman Drive. City Manager North Bardell says that no complaints have been received from residents of single family dwellings or from other apartments in College Station.

The residents, most of whom are Texas A&M University students, are questioning the higher than average bills they received for the billing period from Dec. 12 to Jan. 19. Residents say they were absent from their apartments during the billing period which coincided with the Texas A&M fall semester break. They insist that they shut off their electric power during that time.

At a March 23 city council meeting, Walter Kahanek, representing residents of the Durango Apartments in the 1600 block of Anderson Street, said all but two of the complex's 84 units were vacant during the billing period yet, utility bills there ranged from one-third to two-thirds higher than average.

Stan Caplan, another Durango resident who says he has four years experience in the air-conditioning business, says that the type of electric strip-heaters used in the complex can short out, drawing electricity even when the thermostat is turned off. A strip-heater consists of an electric coil mounted inside an air duct that heats air flowing through the duct.

"Because I knew that these heaters can short out, I disconnected the wires before I left for vacation," Caplan says. "Then I unplugged everything, including the hot-water heater, refrigerator, clocks and appliances. Yet, my bill says we consumed 1036 kwh in the five days that we were here, costing us \$19 more than average."

Another Durango resident, Kay Peabody, says she received a bill that is \$60 higher than her average utility bill. "We had \$900 kwh on our meter when we returned from vacation and that is for the seven months that we have lived here," Peabody says. "Our bill says we consumed 2824 kwh while we were gone, or about one-third of the total amount of energy we've used since we've lived here."

Complaints are not confined to the Durango Apartment residents.

Lynette Warthen, a Willowick Apartment tenant, says her bill for the period was \$104.46, about \$69 higher than average. Lynette says that while the air-

conditioned in her two-bedroom apartment has not worked properly since she moved in last August, her apartment was vacant and the heat shut off at the thermostat during the billing period.

Ron Wilkins, a Sevilla apartment resident, says that he was gone all but one week of the billing period but received a bill two-thirds higher than average with a kilowatt-hour consumption double that of normal. "I just can't understand how I could consume that much," Wilkins said.

All of the residents say that their meters agree with the city utility records.

City Manager North Bardell offers several explanations for the high bills. "First, the billing period in question was about one week longer than our normal billing period," Bardell says. "Second, January was one of the coldest months in Brazos County history."

January was a cold month. According to Wayne Hamberger of the office of the Texas State Climatologist at Texas A&M University, the temperature dropped below freezing 12 times between Jan. 1 and Jan. 19, during the billing period.

Frisbee tournament to be held Saturday at main drill field

The Disc Association of Texas A&M (DAAM) is throwing a frisbee festival and tournament this weekend at the drill field, north of the Memorial Student Center. Participation is open to anyone who wants to enter, regardless of ability.

The tournament will have participants from all over Texas and from as far away as Louisiana.

Professional frisbee experts Danny McInnis and John Hatfield will also be participating in the tournament. The two experts gave frisbee demonstrations on campus Thursday.

Registration begins at 8:30 a.m. Saturday. A fee of \$2 per person is being charged.

Saturday's events include frisbee golf, Double Disc Court (DDC) and maximum time aloft. Frisbee golf is similar to a round of golf, but incorporates throwing a frisbee to targets such as posts or trees.

DDC is a two-person team sport similar to tennis. Players try to throw the frisbee into the opposite court without having the opponent catch it. This weekend's festival is the first time DDC has been a featured event in a Texas frisbee tournament.

Sunday's play includes another round of frisbee golf, freestyle preliminaries and finals in freestyle and DDC. Trophies will be awarded at the end of Sunday's events.

However, Hamberger says that December was not abnormally cold. The temperature dropped below freezing only four times during the entire month.

(See HIGH, page 5)

Physically, which comes in bad and worse degrees, makes us what we are and molds the individual, said Dr. Stanley Hauerwas. But modern medicine threatens to reduce suffering to a biological and therapeutic level that makes us wonder if the physical pain and suffering are even part of "us."

"This is the most complex issue I have ever tried to deal with and medicine is clearly in the middle," said Hauerwas, a Pleasant Grove native.

He said he believes that modern ways of sustaining life and the increasing shelter-

ing of young children from death increases the living's own inability to cope with death.

"Often, we keep people alive because we are not able to deal with what their death will bring — guilt, for example. Death scares the hell outta me. I'm going out fighting and angry. And I think that all this stuff you hear about Christians passively accepting their death is a lot of crap," he added.

Ironically, the purposelessness of suffering makes existential dogma as attractive as Christian beliefs, Hauerwas said.

"At least there's someone else saying, 'This is absurd. It makes no sense.' Medicine should seek to morally bind the suffering and the non-suffering people of the community together, to make them realize that suffering is part of life.

"There shouldn't be anything ignominy about suffering," he said. "Poverty will screw you up as much as money. Suffering is seldom a school for character, but is rather a test of character."

By making us think of suffering as physical pain which can be cured on the biological level, medicine threatens to rob of us our autonomy and the individual identity suffering gives us, Hauerwas explained.

"Physical pain is mental, but pain is not always suffering," he said.

"The question is not whether we should suffer, but how much and for what. Any morality that does not require my death at any given moment is a false morality."

The demands of morality, he claimed, can't be satisfied if we aren't asked to meet hardships and limits set by the morality itself.

Delays, closed polls cause election extension

By ANDY WILLIAMS
Battalion Staff

Delays caused by the use of voting machines and the failure of many polling places to open on time led to the extension of the general campus election until 1 p.m. today, said student body president Mike Humphrey.

Only about 1,200 people voted Wednesday, said Mike Gerst, a member of the Texas A&M University election commission. Humphrey added that about 4,000 votes are usually cast on the first day of a campus election.

Humphrey said this was the first large campus election in which voting machines have been used.

The election was extended through an executive motion made by Humphrey at Wednesday night's student

senate meeting. The senate unanimously approved the motion.

Humphrey noted that although a senate bill forbids the passing of legislation on an election within 14 days of that election, the bill says nothing about executive action.

Mike Barry, head of the election commission, said that he now agrees with Humphrey's action, although he had considered it to be unconstitutional at first.

Humphrey said that the use of voting machines had proved to be slower than the former method of voting with paper ballots.

He said that students now have to wait in two lines to use the machines, whereas they used to be able to pick up a paper ballot, mark it and return it.

Barry said that the computerized forms make tabula-

tion of the ballots much easier and faster. Next year, he said, he hopes to have forms which students can mark with a pencil and which can be read by computer.

These forms will be similar to those used in achievement tests.

Barry said that polls opened late Wednesday largely because people didn't show up to man them.

"Getting the polls manned should be no significant problem," Humphrey said of Friday voting. He said he planned to ask the Corps of Cadets to help.

Polls will close at 1 p.m. so that the forms may be taken to San Marcos and tabulated on a computer there.

The Texas A&M University computer cannot read the forms.

P&Z hears sorority house debate

By FLAVIA KRONE

A College Station Planning and Zoning Commission hearing on the construction of a sorority house project and the rezoning of a one-and-a-half acre tract of land drew an overflowing crowd to city hall Thursday night.

The commission heard animated debate on the question of granting a conditional use permit to Marcal, Inc. for the construction of a sorority house project to be located between Munson Avenue, Dominik Drive and University Oaks Drive.

There are currently nine sororities at Texas A&M, all of which occupy the Sausalito Apartments at 1001 Harvey Rd. Three of those sororities, including Zeta Tau Alpha, Chi Omega and Kappa Alpha Theta, plan to build sorority houses.

However, Don Martell, representing Marcal, Inc., said he had received applications for three additional sorority houses to be built. He said that Marcal, Inc. was planning to eventually accommodate all nine sororities on the 17.5-acre tract of land in question.

The area is zoned for high-density apartments which allow for as many as 40 units per acre. Martell said the ten-bedroom sorority houses, which would occupy about one and a half acres apiece,

would each house about 18 people.

Lane Stephenson, 1202 Dominik, pointed out to the commission that the sorority house density per acre of land would be lower than the density for a single family dwelling. Stephenson said the sororities would make "good neighbors" and that he would prefer a sorority house over an apartment complex in the neighborhood.

However, some are residents here circulated a petition opposing the project.

Reznek Darnell, 900 Gilchrist, said that he favored sororities but was concerned that they might become the center of "high jinks" in the neighborhood. The audience broke into laughter when Darnell told commissioners of his experience with sororities during his younger days.

"When I was a student we would visit these sorority ladies and seranated them and all sorts of things," Darnell said. "Since I was one of the ringleaders, that's one of the reasons I'm concerned."

Mary Evelyn White, Chi Omega chapter adviser, assured commissioners that national Panhellenic regulations prohibit alcohol or drugs in the houses.

Commissioner Wayne Etter also expressed concern that there might not be sufficient parking for sorority members and their guests during parties or other peak traffic periods.

The commission finally approved a conditional use permit for the project after stipulating that the developer reserve a four-acre tract on University Oaks Drive to handle overflow traffic should the need

arise.

The commission also tabled a motion to rezone a one and a half acre tract located at the southwest corner of the intersection of Holleman Drive and Anderson Street.

Developer J.W. Wood wanted the land rezoned from single-family residential to a townhome district to accommodate a ten-unit townhome project that he plans to build there.

Antone Court residents, whose homes would border the proposed project, said that the two-story townhomes would decrease their privacy and create traffic and noise problems.

Commission members tabled the rezoning question, advising Woods and area residents to work out a compromise agreement.

Pain makes Christianity likable, Notre Dame theologian claims

Physical pain and the suffering it brings make the Christian doctrine attractive, for it's much better to suffer because of something we did than to suffer for no reason at all, a Notre Dame theologian claimed at Texas A&M University Thursday.

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Poverty

Most elderly Brazos County residents are afflicted

By PHYLIS WEST

Try eating, paying rent, buying medicine and other necessities on an income of about \$3,000 a year.

Many people 60 and over not only try, but must survive below the poverty level in Brazos County, says Barbara Bowerman, director of the Area Agency on Aging.

Most elderly residents live only on their Social Security, and the checks average \$200 monthly, says Holly Rees, supervisor of the Social Security Administration.

"Eighty percent receive insignificant income," says Rees.

David Edwards, professor of government at the University of Texas,

says that persons over 65 are much poorer than the average population across the country. Edwards wrote this in an article which appeared in Intellect magazine.

"The dream was that Social Security would take care of their needs, but it doesn't nearly do this," Rees says. "The theory is Social Security as the foundation of economic support. But the need for supplementary income proves this theory wrong."

Supplemental Security Income, a federalized welfare program created in 1974 for people over 65, adds to Social Security benefits. A pamphlet entitled "SSI for the Aged, Blind

and Disabled," says an individual's maximum benefit is \$177.80 a month.

But Rees says the average SSI payment is \$100 per person in the U.S. However, only one person out of five qualifies.

"A person must have limited resources and income to qualify," Rees says.

Limited resources include up to \$1,500 in savings, a reasonable home worth up to \$25,000, and a car used for obtaining food, shelter and medical supplies. Personal items, such as jewelry, are deducted, Rees says.

Limited income is supplemented

to bring the elderly up to the minimum level that Congress has set.

"For most purposes, the SSI level is below poverty level," continued Rees. Most states, except Texas and Southern states, supplement assistance benefits.

According to social security pamphlets benefits from teacher's retirement, veteran's and worker's compensation, pensions, annuities, gifts and other income are deducted. But other non-deductable ways to supplement income include food assistance programs, weatherization programs, Medicare and Medicaid.

Besides food stamps, which are set individually according to need, the Brazos Valley Community Action Agency offer "Years for Profit" and "Meals on Wheels," which are senior citizen nutritional programs, as reported in an agency fact sheet.

Years for Profit has the most participants, said Melba Johnson, secretary for the two food programs.

"Initially, there was a long waiting list, and we were real choosy," she said. But now people are encouraged to participate in the program, she added.

The program serves 668 meals daily, five days a week, in all seven Brazos County programs. In the 12 centers, 30 to 80 people are served three meals a day. Eligibility is determined by financial and emotional need.

The cost involved in preparing the meals this year is \$2.74. Previously the cost was only a dollar, Johnson explained. People over 65 are not asked to pay.

"The meal menu is prepared by a nutritional council," said Johnson. A sample menu for a week shows meals similar to those served in high school cafeterias.

(See MANY, page 6)

