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Battalion photo by Pat O'Malley

The Hardy Boys go West?

No, actually Darrel Probst (left) and Charlie Fairchild are participating in this week's annual State 4-H Roundup. Both are high school sophomores from Brady. For more on the 4-H Roundup, see page 3.

Leak not danger but still problem

By CARY WELCH
Battalion City Editor

A persistent gasoline leak at the intersection of Nagle Street and University Drive is "past the danger point" College Station Fire Marshal Harry Davis said Wednesday, but it is still giving the telephone company a few problems.

The leak was discovered May 2 when workers at the GTE building on Nagle reported smelling gasoline fumes. College Station firemen and policemen evacuated homes and businesses on University Drive at the time, while firemen pumped water into underground telephone conduits to try to dilute the leaking gas.

The source of the leak has not been found, but speculations on the cause have ranged from faulty gas station storage tanks to long-term underground buildups from small spills at the two gas stations located at the intersection.

"It's not an explosive situation," Davis said. Some gas is still present, he said, but the level has dropped off considerably since the leak was first reported.

Davis said he has been using an explosives meter which measures the gas level in parts per million (ppm). When the leak was first noticed and the evacuation took place, he said the readings were between 90 and 100 ppm. However, the readings have fallen now to between 10 and 20 ppm, he said.

"But it's still giving the phone company fits," Davis said. He said he thought GTE was having a problem with a telephone cable near the intersection and would

possibly check into the leak when they dig down to the cable.

If GTE decides to check into the leak, Davis said, the fire department will stay in close contact in case a gas pocket is found.

But Harold Hogard, service facilities supervisor for GTE, said there are no immediate plans to work on a cable. He said workers are watching the underground conduits closely for any more leaks, and will notify him if any serious situation arises.

"There have been no complaints recently," Hogard said. "If there was an emergency situation I would have been told about it."

He said he feels the fumes are coming from an underground pocket which will dissipate soon.

Davis said both gas stations at the intersection have been checked thoroughly for leaks and the results have been negative.

"We are at the point right now where we are still trying to figure out where it's coming from," he said. If the telephone company does not find the cause, he added, the fire department may take a sample to determine exactly what kind of gas it is.

Davis said there have been no recent reports from anyone smelling gas in the area.

A phone company crew was pumping water from the manholes in front of the GTE building on Nagle, a GTE worker employed in the building said.

"I can smell a little odor in the air," he said, "but I don't know if it's coming from the gas stations or what."

Guards use tear gas to end prison fracas

United Press International

HUNTSVILLE — An official of the Texas Department of Corrections says guards used tear gas to quell a disturbance involving several hundred youthful inmates at a minimum security unit during the weekend.

Ron Taylor, administrative aide to TDC Director W. J. Estelle Jr., said no one was injured during the nearly four-hour disturbance Sunday night. He said the situation was now normal at the Ferguson Unit, about 20 miles north of town.

The disturbance involved a protest over the quality of prison food. It was not immediately clear whether guards or inmates triggered the outbreak.

Ferguson warden Frank McCarty refused comment on the incident.

"We learned Tuesday (May 30) that a letter was being circulated among the inmates which complained about the food," Taylor said. He said the tone of the letter indicated a disturbance might occur.

Ferguson has an inmate population of about 2,000 first-time offenders ranging in age from 16 to 21.

Taylor said that about 10:30 p.m. Sunday inmates in Ferguson's cellblock one began to shout and several threw objects through their cell bars. Shortly afterwards about 60 prisoners were taken to a nearby gymnasium.

When the rest of the inmates in the building continued to protest and created "minor damage," guards moved into the unit and tear-gassed five cell blocks holding several hundred inmates.

Available Fund money could go to KAMU-FM

By FLAVIA KRONE
Battalion Campus Editor

Money from the Available Fund could be used to keep KAMU-FM, the Texas A&M University radio station, on the air, but this use would be hard to justify to the state legislature, University President Jarvis Miller said Monday.

The radio station is scheduled to shut down by Aug. 31, the end of this fiscal year, because no departmental operating funds, which support the station, have been budgeted for the station for next year.

Miller said it would be difficult to justify to the state legislature the Available Fund expenditure which could save the station. "We could do it," Miller said. "Whether we could make a convincing defense in Austin is my worry."

Available Funds traditionally have been allocated for university building additions and improvements. The fund is part of the Permanent University Fund which is pro-

teected by the state constitution.

Miller said Available Fund expenditures are being scrutinized closely by the legislature because of a recently-filed suit charging that the fund is unconstitutional.

Miller said the University has \$4 million left in the Available Fund this year. The money will be carried forward for use in the 1978-79 fiscal year.

The proposed 1978-79 university budget, which is slated for approval by the Texas A&M University System Board of Regents on June 9, carries no funding provisions for the radio station, according to Lane Stephenson, assistant to the chancellor for public information.

The Regents could vote to use the Available Fund to save the radio station. If they do not, the station will close as scheduled.

Most of the University departments are facing a lean 1978-79 fiscal year, Miller said. The state legislature provided a net increase over last year of \$43,635 for the

\$80 million budget.

The formula system used by the state legislature to allocate funds to the University has contributed to the budget squeeze, Miller said.

Under the formula system, university appropriations are based on student enrollment figures. Because the legislature meets bi-annually the enrollment figures must be projected two years in advance.

The projected enrollment figures used to compute the 1978-79 budget appropriations fell short of actual student body increases, Miller said. The miscalculation decreased the funds available for faculty salaries, departmental operating funds and research.

Miller said faculty and staff salaries received first priority in the tight proportioning of budget funds.

The legislature provided for a 3.3 percent increase in faculty salaries and a 3.4 percent increase in salaries for employees

making less than \$12,000 a year. Miller said the proposed budget recommends a percent salary increase for faculty and a 5 percent increase for staff by requesting supplementation from the Available Fund.

"With inflation the way it is," Miller said, "we have to budget more if we're going to keep our faculty and staff."

Departmental operating funds received second priority in the proposed budget, Miller said, with research ranking third on the list.

Funds for organized research are down by 50 percent, Miller said, from \$1,267,649 in 1978 to \$633,824 in 1979.

Miller said the decrease in research funding "may be our own doing" because of the higher priority placed on faculty salaries and departmental operating funds in the proposed budget. He added that academic institutions need to present stronger arguments to the state legislature emphasizing the value of organized research.

Proposition 13 aftershock should reach other states

United Press International

SAN FRANCISCO — Californians have told politicians in no uncertain terms that property taxes and government spending must be reduced.

The aftershock of this particular California earthquake — Proposition 13 — likely will be felt in other states as tax-weary homeowners join the revolt.

President Carter and congressional leaders discussed the victory at a Wednesday breakfast meeting at the White House, House Speaker Thomas O'Neill told reporters afterwards. No one can assess the immediate impact, O'Neill said. "We're speculating."

But House voting on multi-billion dollar appropriations bills for federal agencies may be colored by the California results, O'Neill said.

Rep. John Brademas, D-Ind., assistant House Democratic leader, said the California result "only reinforced the desire of President Carter and a number of others of us in Congress that we must have a major tax revision bill this year."

By a nearly 2-1 margin, Californians voted Tuesday to approve the Jarvis-Gann tax limitation initiative that promised 60 percent property tax reductions.

Passage of the measure, which attracted nationwide attention, was a setback for Gov. Edmund G. Brown Jr. and the political and business establishment of the state.

The battle over the measure now almost certainly moves from the polling places to the court dockets, as legal challenges are mounted.

With almost two-thirds the vote counted, Proposition 13 was winning 63-37 percent.

Proposition 8, which would have triggered a more modest tax relief measure supported by Brown and the Legislature, trailed 53-47 percent.

"The people have spoken very clearly," said Brown, who won the Democratic nomination for a second term. "There will be no new state taxes and we must put a lid on government spending."

Howard Jarvis, 75, co-author of the measure, declared: "I thought it would be a landslide all the time."

He characterized the state as divided into two groups, motivated by fear.

"The public officials who have lush jobs fear they will lose them," Jarvis said. "The other fear is that of the homeowners who feared they would lose their homes to taxes."

The vote ended a wild campaign in which opponents predicted widespread layoffs of teachers, firefighters, police, and closing of schools, libraries and parks and even snuffing street lights.

"Don't let the politicians scare you," countered the pro-Jarvis forces in their broadcast ads.

It was that broad anti-government sen-

timent that Jarvis and realtor Paul Gann translated into votes for their ballot initiative, an initiative that had been tried in other forms, including one backed by former Gov. Ronald Reagan.

The measure, if upheld in the courts, will roll back property tax assessments to 1975 levels, limit taxes to 1 percent of market value and impose a 2 percent limit on increases in assessments.

This will cut annual local government revenue from \$12 billion to \$5 billion, with no certain way to make up the difference.

"The people have spoken very clearly," Brown conceded. "We are facing a legal and financial challenge such as the state has never seen."

(For more on Proposition 13's impact in California, see page 5. For reactions and possible consequences in Texas, see page 6.)

TMPA requests okay for bond sale

United Press International

AUSTIN — Lawyers for the Texas Municipal Power Agency Wednesday urged the Attorney General's Office to reverse an order barring the controversial consortium from issuing bonds for \$150 million to build a power plant.

Hearings examiners for Attorney General John Hill said they will prepare recommendations on the case for him to consider by Friday and anticipate a decision next week.

Without an okay from Hill the consortium cannot issue the bonds needed to construct a \$700 million lignite-fueled generator and pay for lignite leases.

The attorney general's bonds division has refused to approve the bond issue because of a lawsuit against TMPA by the Grimes County Taxpayers Association.

"The litigation filed in Grimes County is without merit," TMPA lawyer Roy L. Barrett of Waco argued.

Barrett said the taxpayer group lost in district court and a court of civil appeals. Although the taxpayers are appealing to the State Supreme Court, Barrett said TMPA is seeking to have the petition dismissed.

The taxpayer suit, Barrett said, is being handled by the Grimes County attorney on behalf of the state.

"A county attorney is not authorized by the Constitution to file a suit or to represent the State of Texas in a case before the Supreme Court," Barrett said.

The attorney general's office should approve the bonds because at this time there is no challenge to the existence of TMPA," Barrett said.

James Riggs, chief of Hill's bonds division, said the attorney general since 1928 has followed a policy of refusing to approve bonds when there is a lawsuit challenging the validity of those.

"The attorney general cannot be impressed by the fact that the Texas Municipal Power Authority has prevailed (so far in the court suit)," Riggs said.

The cities of Garland, Greenville, Bryan and Denton banded together in a consortium in 1975 to finance a lignite-fueled generating plant.

TMPA has encountered increasing opposition from landowners in areas such as Grimes County where farmers fought efforts to condemn their land to mine lignite.

Flash flood wall of water kills Big Bend camper

United Press International

BIG BEND NATIONAL PARK — Hikers in the back country of Big Bend National Park reported Wednesday the discovery of a camper's body, apparently the victim of a flash flood that crushed his tent.

Park officials said Tommie Tookes, 24, of Galveston, entered the park last week with a back-country hiking pass for use from May 29 to May 31. Officials said on those two days there were heavy rains in

the park.

Officials said Tookes had set his tent up in a dry wash apparently without knowing it.

They said rains falling in higher country may have formed a rapid moving tongue of water that would have swept down the dry river bed during the night, spilling over the tent and crushing it.

Tookes' body was taken to an Alpine funeral home.



Battalion photo by Pat O'Malley

Trees were made for climbing

Dana Hawkins tries out one of the 'just right for climbing' oak trees next to Texas A&M's Academic Building. Dana will be a fourth grader at College Hills Elementary this fall.

Farm leader warns against beef imports

United Press International

HEREFORD — A leader in the American Agriculture Movement said Wednesday an anticipated increase of 200 million additional pounds of imported beef into the United States would cost the nation billions of dollars.

Gerald McCathern said the Carter administration is expected to announce the increased quota on the imported beef today.

"This action will result in further depletion of U.S. cattle herds, causing the American consumer to become more and more dependent on foreign nations to supply our beef needs and in the long run will cost the nation's economy billions of dollars," he said.

McCathern, who has helped organize the maverick farm movement, said for five years American cattlemen have suffered their greatest financial loss in the history of the industry.

The loss brought about by low prices was "instigated by government action five years ago and the present governmental action is designed to have the same result," he said.

"The Texas AAM strongly opposes this manipulative action, which is being perpetrated by those who promised the agriculture voters in 1976 parity prices. It was governmental action such as this which caused the farm revolt in 1977 and can only result in renewed unrest in 1978," he said.