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Council to consider budget

Presentation of preliminary budget figures for the 1979-80 fiscal year will be the main topic of discussion at Thursday night's College Station City Council meeting. Other items on the agenda include appointment of personnel to various

city boards, a discussion of the College Station Little League's request for funding to pay for umpiring, and discussion of possible action over a rate increase request by Lone Star Gas.

Inflation may improve in fall

United Press International
WASHINGTON — Treasury Secretary W. Michael Blumenthal told Congress Tuesday he expects several more months of severe inflation, but an improvement starting by the fall.

He said this probably will produce an overall inflation rate for the year (measured fourth quarter to fourth quarter) of 8 to 8.5 percent, perhaps a bit more "but hopefully not much more."

That would be a significant increase over the estimate of 7.4 percent inflation in 1979 which the administration made at the beginning of the year.

But it would be a big improvement over the 13 percent annual rate of inflation during the first three months of this year. Administration officials have been say-

ing for some time their inflation estimate for 1979 would have to be revised upward. This was the first time the administration has offered a revised figure.

"The president is right when he says we can look forward to bad inflation figures for several more months," Blumenthal told a Senate appropriations subcommittee.

"I think that in all probability it will be summer or early fall before we can begin to see real improvement in the situation," he said.

But he said that if the pace of the economy slows down — and he believes that it is — then he looks for a slowing of inflation by the fall.

He tempered this with the caution that economic predictions always are uncertain.

Labs checked for unstable acid

By ANDY WILLIAMS
Battalion Staff

Texas A&M University is trying to rid laboratories of unstable picric acid, an explosive substance.

Harry Stiteler, the school's safety and health officer, said today that a memo concerning the chemical is being printed and will be sent to various offices on campus. Stiteler said the memo will give workers until May 18 to check their labs for the substance and notify the safety and health office.

Picric acid ordinarily comes in a crystalline form and has a 5 percent moisture content, Stiteler said.

"As long as you keep it moist, it will be stable. But if somebody has it among some old chemicals, they may need to dispose of it," Stiteler said.

Picric acid is used as a dye to prepare microscopic slides. It was used as an explosive in World War II, but was replaced by TNT when it caused several unplanned explosions.

A pint of picric acid is about as powerful as a pound of TNT.

A container of picric acid was removed from Bryan High School in late April after school officials were told of a warning issued by the Associated Press. It was not known if that sample was unstable.

A small amount of the acid was diluted and washed down the drain at St. Joseph Hospital in the first week of May.

Stiteler said he thinks the danger of the chemical has been exaggerated.

"The stuff can be dangerous, but not if you take care of it and handle it properly," he said.

He said his office has had seven or eight calls from campus labs that have the chemical.

Asked about disposal of any unstable acid that is found, Stiteler said, "I'm almost sure we'll take care of it ourselves." He said evacuation of buildings will not be necessary.

Class funds scholarship

The class of '79 has given \$25,000 to Texas A&M University as an endowment for a President's Scholarship. President Travis Miller announced Saturday during commencement ceremonies. The interest on that money will be used to pay the year-year, \$1,500-a-year scholarship. The scholarships are awarded to students with exceptional scholastic, civic and leadership abilities. This is the first time one of the scholarships has been presented by a radiating class, said Ronnie Lastovica, the class president.

Senate group wants gas ration plan killed

United Press International
WASHINGTON — The Senate Energy Committee Tuesday reversed its narrow approval of President Carter's emergency gasoline rationing plan and recommended that it be killed on the Senate floor.

The Energy Committee voted 10-8 to withdraw its earlier approval, and voted 15-3 to report to the Senate that the plan should be killed. The same committee had voted 9-8 April 26 to recommend Senate approval.

The committee's change of heart came after Carter had amended his plan to try to get more congressional support.

Instead, he lost a key vote in committee: Sen. J. Bennett Johnston, D-La., who said

the White House had not lived up to its promises to make the plan acceptable.

Johnston said Carter's energy advisers had promised to "substantially alleviate or eliminate" the inequities a rationing program would bring to states with heavy dependence or heavy past consumption of gasoline. The Carter changes "neither substantially alleviated nor eliminated the problem," Johnston said. "They went halfway."

Similar to a plan used in World War II to reduce driving and save rubber, Carter proposed the coupon rationing plan to hand out a certain number of coupons every few months to vehicle owners, to be redeemed for gasoline.

Corps discrimination: suit possible this week

By DIANE BLAKE
Battalion Staff

The Brazos Civil Liberties Union is expected to file a sex discrimination lawsuit against the Corps of Cadets at Texas A&M University "probably Thursday or Friday," a source close to the union said Tuesday.

Dr. Merrill Whitburn, head of the organization and associate professor of English at Texas A&M, would not say if a lawsuit will be filed. "The BCLU sought to reach an agreement with the University, but negotiations have broken down," he said. "We expect to release a statement on Thursday."

If filed, the suit is expected to charge that some Corps organizations have been discriminating against women. The source said some groups which may be named are the Ross Volunteers, the Fightin' Texas Aggie Band, Parsons' Mounted Cavalry, the Fish Drill Team, and possibly Corps Staff.

The suit would be filed in the federal district court, southern division in Houston, on behalf of the women in the

Corps of Cadets.

It will probably request three things: a declaratory judgment, an injunction and an assessment of monetary damages.

A declaratory judgment is a statement by the judge that some practices and customs of the Corps are discriminatory against women. An injunction is an order to prohibit the Corps from continuing such practices. Money damages could be awarded to each member of the class named in the suit.

The court could also retain continuing jurisdiction over the case — that is, monitor the Corps' activities until the court is satisfied that all the changes ordered by the court have been made.

The source said the BCLU is expected to request that the judge certify the case as a class action suit. Each person in the class has the option of being named in the suit.

A judge makes that decision on the basis of evidence gathered by the plaintiff. If he designates it as class action, then provisions must be made to notify



Man in uniform . . . irresistible

Lt. Kevin P. Adams doesn't lack for admirers eager to pin on his newly acquired bars. Adams received them at his formal commission into the U.S. Marines Saturday. Commissioning was one of three

major happenings at Texas A&M this weekend. Pictures of graduation and Final Review, the other two, are on pages 5 and 10, respectively.

Battalion photo by Keith Taylor

Brown-Rudder, Doherty awards given to three top A&M graduates

Texas A&M University's most prominent student awards were presented Friday and Saturday to Michelle S. Marti of Cleburne, Thomas W. Paterson of Silver City, N. M., and Robert J. Kamensky of San Angelo.

They received the Brown Foundation—Earl Rudder and Doherty awards.

Given each year at spring commencement, the Brown Foundation—Rudder awards consist of a plaque and \$5,000 each. The Doherty Award to Kamensky included \$3,000. The recipients came from among 2,633 baccalaureate degree recipients.

The Brown Foundation endowed the award honoring the late Texas A&M president, Earl Rudder. It goes to two students who exemplify the qualities and traits of the decorated Army general, commissioner of the general land office and chief administrator of Texas A&M.

Marti graduated summa cum laude in economics last December and received her second bachelor's degree, in mathematics, this commencement. She is a National Merit Scholar and has been active in

Student Government, 11 honor and professional societies and numerous other student activities. She worked as a student counselor and had a near perfect 3.96 grade point ratio.

Paterson graduated first in his academic class with a perfect 4.0 grade point average. He served as Student Government executive vice president, was a Cathright Award recipient as outstanding senior scholar in the College of Agriculture and won five separate scholarships to Texas A&M. Paterson completed his degree work in three years plus one summer session.

The Doherty Award was endowed by a Houston couple in honor of his parents, Mr. and Mrs. William Doherty. The award is given to an outstanding graduat-

ing senior who earned a reserve officer commission.

Kamensky has served during 1978-79 as the top-ranked cadet officer in the Corps of Cadets. The nuclear engineering major has been accepted into the U.S. Navy's nuclear propulsion program, for which a personal interview with Adm. Hyman Rickover is required.

The new Navy ensign was in the American Nuclear Society, the Ross Volunteers honor military unit and has remained active in scouting as a member of the National Eagle Scout Association. He was born in Frankfurt, West Germany, and graduated at San Angelo Central High School. His parents reside in Vienna, Austria, where his father works for the U.S. Department of State.

Rate may increase to 12%

House OKs interest bill

United Press International
AUSTIN — Legislation raising the state's interest ceiling on home mortgage loans has tentatively passed the House, but an opponent of the bill contends the proposal may make it more difficult, not easier, for the average Texan to purchase a new home.

The bill faces a final vote today, and its sponsor, Rep. Jerry Donaldson, D-Gatesville, said the current 10 percent interest ceiling's negative impact on the home-building industry could continue through the summer unless he can muster the two-thirds vote necessary on final passage to put the bill into immediate effect.

Otherwise, the bill will go into effect 90 days after the session ends. The bill would establish a new floating interest ceiling 2 percent above the monthly rate on 10-year

U.S. Treasury Bonds, up to a maximum of 12 percent, and would expire after a two-year trial period unless legislators voted in 1981 to extend it.

Donaldson and the state's lending institutions pushed for approval of the measure, arguing rapidly rising interest rates throughout the nation had exceeded Texas' 10 percent ceiling, making it virtually impossible for home buyers to find financing for new home purchases.

But Rep. John Wilson, D-La Grange, argued the higher interest rates will make the price of home ownership so high few Texans can afford it.

"Most of us here can't pay a 12 percent note on a house that's worth having, and we know it," Wilson said, contending the bill adds to the futility of attempting to raise a family and buy a home in Texas

under current economic conditions." Sen. Bill Meier, D-Eules, the Senate sponsor of the interest rate bill, said it will likely be next week before the Senate considers the issue.

Donaldson was able to turn back most attempts Tuesday to amend his bill, but House members attached three amendments that have major effects on the proposal's impact.

Gov. Bill Clements initially had vowed to veto any increase in the state's 10 percent interest ceiling, but reversed his position after the Federal National Mortgage Association announced it would sharply curtail its purchase of FHA and VA loans in the state, virtually drying up the only remaining source of home financing for most buyers.

Courts question radar use

United Press International
MIAMI — Radar has been found guilty of inaccuracy and banned as sole evidence in speeding cases by one Dade County judge — a ruling that could set a precedent across the nation.

Chief Administrative Judge Alfred Nesbitt issued his ruling Monday following three weeks of hearings on the use and accuracy of radar, the most extensive review of radar since its use was upheld in a 1955 U.S. Supreme Court decision.

But that high-court ruling related to the old bulky stationary units and Nesbitt's ruling applies to the cheaper hand-held portable devices or those mounted in police cars.

Nesbitt pointed out justice must take precedence over consideration of lost revenues from fewer speeding convictions.

"If the errors alleged by the opponents of radar exist, then one must wonder: what percentage of these millions of dollars has been collected from erroneously convicted defendants?"

Although the ruling applies only in Nesbitt's court and the 80 cases he dismissed Monday, other judges in Dade County and throughout the state may adopt his stand.

"Very likely the ramifications will be felt elsewhere in Florida and the nation," Dade County Public Defender Bennett Brummer said.

About 4,000 speeders nabbed by radar had their cases delayed pending the judge's ruling.

"There are going to be a lot of people who will get away with speeding," Dade County Public Safety Officer John Riley said. "This is going to cut down on the number of speeding tickets by a great deal."

The Florida Highway Patrol, which has equipped nearly every car with radar, said there would be no policy change, even in Dade County.

Witnesses testified during the hearing one of the main problems with radar was interference from outside factors, such as a car's air conditioner and CB radios. Another problem was clear identification of the "target" vehicle. Since radar reads the largest target, the speed of a passing truck could be mistaken for that of a car being clocked.

"There has been an apparent belief throughout this hearing these devices can and should be improved to the extent that they are accurate and identification of the target vehicles can be readily made, under any conditions," Nesbitt said.

The National Bureau of Standards is halfway through a three-year project studying all speed detection devices, but expects to publish standards for radar equipment within 90 days, said Ed Riley, spokesman for the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.