

Local

A&M conferences attract many

By BECKY MATTHEWS
Campus Reporter

Approximately 30,000 people flock to Texas A&M University each year to attend conferences and conventions hosted in the University Center complex.

According to John Richards, manager of the University Center scheduling office, over 100 conferences

are scheduled in the complex each year. Of these, about 60 of them have been held at Texas A&M more than once.

Richards says he estimates that several million dollars go into the Bryan-College Station economy annually as a result of the conferences. Individuals who attend the

conferences typically spend money on hotel rooms, eating out and buying souvenirs in local stores.

A substantial amount of this income is channelled into the University Center economy because of the MSC Guest Rooms, the Food Services operation in the MSC and Rudder and the MSC Bookstore.

There are several reasons why so many conferences are held at Texas A&M, Richards said.

"One of the tremendous advantages we have over most universities is the fact that the student center and the conference center are adjoining each other," he said. Facilities available for conferences in the University Center complex include a built-in hotel (MSC Guest Rooms), food facilities, audio-visual equipment, meeting rooms of various sizes and parking.

According to Richards, the University Center charges a minimal amount for room cleaning and for audio-visual equipment use. Also the MSC Guest Rooms charge \$19 to \$22 per room depending on room type and the number of occupants. Richards says the low cost is "part of the charm of having conferences here."

He also says that the University benefits from hosting the conferences because it "advertises and promotes the University all over the country." He also says that a lot of people are very impressed with the University Center facilities and the impression of the University they

gain from the conference helps to get rid of people's preconceived notions of Texas A&M.

"We try to make everyone think that there is one exceptional conference each year and that conference is yours," he states. He tries to implement this philosophy in his day-to-day operation. He has an inch-thick file labeled "Nice Letters" from individuals who have attended conferences at Texas A&M.

Conferences range in size from 15-person NASA workshops to the Municipal Fire Training School, which has 3,000 people. They also range in subject from conferences on agricultural products to teaching.

According to Bill Hensel, the manager of the University Center complex, the budget for the scheduling office is about \$70,000 a year. This figure includes salaries and wages, office supplies and equipment and Data Processing Center costs.

Richards estimates that approximately one-half of scheduling's budget goes toward conference support. The other half goes toward the regular scheduling duties since his office is responsible for scheduling almost all of the facilities in the MSC and Rudder.

To be eligible to host a conference in the University Center facilities, an organization must be a recognized student organization or affiliated with the University in a direct way. State or federal agencies are also able to use the facilities.

CS council OK's improvement bids

By BECKY SWANSON
City Staff

Bids for electrical improvements and insulation for the Lincoln Community Center were approved at a special meeting of the College Station City Council Thursday. The council also discussed alternatives for improving Nimitz Street.

A \$9,500 contract was given to the T&T Electric Co. to upgrade wiring in the center's gymnasium installation of a basketball scoreboard and lighted exit signs.

City Manager North Bardell said the new wiring was necessary to handle increased lighting needs.

A \$2,957 contract was given to the Therna Foam Co. for insulation of the gymnasium.

Nimitz Street was moved up on the priority list of streets to be improved because, Bardell said,

"We're patching the patches." The council decided to have the city engineer study two possible ways of resurfacing Nimitz. One alternative is to level and seal-coat the street, the other is to curb and gutter it and pave it with hot-mix asphalt and concrete.

Bardell said the "ultimate goal" of the city is to curb and gutter Nimitz Street, but conflicts over property boundaries will cause a delay in such permanent construction.

Leveling and seal coating will take less time, Bardell said, and this can be done "as soon as the weather breaks" since it will not depend on settling the boundary conflicts.

The results of the city engineer's study and a formal recommendation from the city staff will be presented to the Council at the next regular meeting on Feb. 14.

Thanks to you, I still have a home.



For over 30 years, Smokey has been asking you to be careful with fire. During that time, you've helped cut the number of careless fires in half. So from Smokey Bear and all of us who live in the forest, thanks for listening. And keep up the good work.

APRIL 26 GRE

Call Days Evenings & Weekends

Stanley H. KAPLAN
Educational Center

TEST PREPARATION SPECIALISTS SINCE 1938

For Information About Other Centers In More Than 80 US Cities & Abroad

Outside NY State
CALL TOLL FREE: 800-223-1782
In Dallas: 1167 N. Central Exp.

CLASSES START FEBRUARY 2
707 Texas Ave.
Suite 301C
College Station
696-3196

Camping in Europe was never like this

Contiki are out on their own in Europe. No-one - but no-one - can offer such a fantastic range of holidays for the 18-35's. Contiki's unique Concept Tours include a fabulous blend of camping in the Contiki Villages of pre-erected frame tents and Contiki's exclusive Special Stopovers in some of the most beautiful and exciting places in Europe. Get your hands on the Contiki brochure and put Europe at your feet.

★NO SURCHARGE GUARANTEE★

121 Walton at Texas Ave., South College Station, Texas 77840
713/696-1748

EXECUTIVE TRAVEL, INC.

SPECIAL FILM SHOWING
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 4 - 7:30 P.M.
MEMORIAL STUDENT CENTER

13th Century Villa in Florence, Italy, one of the Contiki Special Stopovers.

CONTIKI
An altogether different experience for the 18-35's

696-1748

AMERICAN EXPRESS
Travel Service Representative

These people are winners

Wes McDonald and Laura Chamberlain won the free spring trip to Mazatlan, Mexico sponsored by **SHEAR CLASS**

SHEAR CLASS wishes them a fantastic vacation and thanks everyone who came by to register.

SHEAR CLASS

209 E. University 846-4771

Batt Classifieds 845-2611

MUSIC EXPRESS & MERCURY RECORDS

"GRAND OPENING" "STOREWIDE"

RECORD & TAPE SALE

\$4.00 OFF MFG. LIST

SORRY NO WHOLESALES OR DEALERS ALLOWED!

MUSIC EXPRESS

725-B UNIVERSITY DRIVE
OPEN 10-10 "Behind Skaggs & McDonalds" 846-1741