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Local doctors differ over tanning salons

By BECKY SWANSON
City Staff

Recent Food and Drug Administration reports warning against the hazards of exposure to ultraviolet light — primarily in tanning salons — has led to some controversy in the Bryan-College Station area.

Two Bryan dermatologists have differing views on the use of ultraviolet light for cosmetic and medical purposes.

"I'm very much against them (tanning salons) because of the large amount of ultraviolet rays people are exposed to," Dr. Terry Jones, a Bryan dermatologist, said.

Dr. Clyde Caperton, another Bryan dermatologist, said, "A normal, healthy person will not be adversely affected by controlled exposure to ultraviolet rays."

Caperton said the only people who would be adversely affected by ultraviolet rays are those who are sensitive or allergic to sunlight.

Jones said overexposure to ultraviolet rays is not healthy.

"I'm not much of a sun fan," Jones said, "In spite of what the American public thinks, tanning is not a healthy reaction."

Jones said exposure to ultraviolet rays can lead to skin cancer, premature aging and wrinkling, and keratosis — sores that can become malignant.

Jones said that although he does not use ultraviolet lights in his practice, they are used by some dermatologists for the treatment of certain skin disorders, such as acne and psoriasis (a hereditary skin disorder characterized by redness and flaking).

"Dermatologists do use ultraviolet light for certain skin problems," Jones said. "They are used in specific, selected treatment for short periods of time."

"I do not recommend it for any of my patients," Jones said. "I discourage them from even getting in the sun, much less exposing their whole body to massive amounts of ultraviolet rays."

Dr. Caperton said, "Most dermatologists don't feel tanning salons are real dangerous because the type of lights used requires a lot of exposure to damage the skin."

"Our concern is not for the average, ordinary client. Our concern is that there are people who are sensitive, almost allergic to sunlight and may not even know it,"

Caperton said.

Fair-skinned people, especially those with red hair and blue eyes, are often sensitive to sunlight, Caperton said.

"Ultraviolet light is damaging if you expose yourself to it long enough for a long enough period of time," Caperton said. "It takes years of repeated overexposure to ultraviolet rays to cause cancer."

"It's like overeating," Caperton said, "overdoing anything isn't good."

Caperton said tanning salons have benefits. They allow people a chance to build up a resistance to sunlight before going on a vacation or starting an outdoor job so they will not get a sunburn on their first day, he said.

Caperton said people with skin disorders such as acne or psoriasis are instructed to get a certain amount of sunlight to help their condition, and tanning salons can serve as a substitute when it is cold or raining.

The FDA warns that persons taking high blood pressure medicine or diuretics, oral contraceptives containing estrogen, the anti-diabetes pill and some antibiotics may become sun-sensitive.

Both dermatologists warn against exposure to ultraviolet light — sunlight or sunlamps — while taking certain medications.

A person taking prescription medication should check with their doctor to find out if it causes sun sensitivity, both doctors said.

Caperton said he felt the established, reputable tanning salons were safe for average, healthy people, but said that often the fly-by-night commercial operations do not screen clients to make sure they are not sun-sensitive.

Charles Ray, manager of the Bryan Tantrific Sun franchise, said his company screens all clients for medical problems, medications and sun-sensitivity before they begin tanning sessions.

"A girl came in the other day and said she was allergic to the sun and I wouldn't put her through the program," Ray said.

Tantrific, a national franchise of tanning salons, requires clients to fill out a questionnaire with such questions as:

— Are you taking any drugs which would cause sensitivity to sunlight?

— Are you in any way allergic to sun-

light?

— Natural hair color — do you color your hair?

— Do you tan easily?

— Do you have oily or dry skin?

— Do you tend to freckle?

— How much exposure to sunlight do you get per week?

— Are you active in outdoor activities?

— Do you presently use a lotion or moisturizer?

The answers to questions are run through a computer. A visit and exposure time schedule are arranged if the applicant meets the requirements.

Ray said the Tantrific program is designed to build a slow tan to prevent overexposure and burning.

Exposure time is slowly increased to gradually build resistance to ultraviolet rays, Ray said. If a person shows any sensitivity or redness, the exposure time is decreased. If the sensitivity is severe enough, the program is discontinued.

In order to protect the client's eyes from ultraviolet rays, special goggles are used, Ray said.

Tantrific, Inc. officials announced in December that the equipment used in their franchised salons "meets or exceeds (the FDA) standards" for eye protection, timer control, minimum use distance and certain construction, mechanical and electrical requirements.

Ray said the program is safe and beneficial for both medical and cosmetic purposes.

"If someone is concerned or has questions, I tell them to talk to their doctor about it," Ray said.

Many joggers and athletes come to the salon, he said.

Dr. Caperton said anyone thinking about going to a tanning salon should follow a few simple rules:

— check with your doctor about any medications being taken to find out if they cause sun-sensitivity.

— follow all directions and rules of the salon.

— only stay in the booth for the time allotted and don't overdo it.



Charles Ray, manager of the Tantrific Sun Tanning salon in Bryan, shows one of the booths in which customers are exposed to ultraviolet light to hasten skin tanning.

Staff photo by Lee Roy Leschper Jr.

Bus routes remain unchanged

By RICHARD OLIVER
Staff Writer

Although the death of Texas A&M University student Steve Sikora has touched off a few questions about the safety of shuttlebus routes off-campus, no routes will be changed this spring.

Gene Oates, chairman of the Shuttlebus Operations Committee, said Monday the group met last week to discuss whether changes should be made, but decided nothing would be done this semester.

"At the end of the spring, all the routes are re-evaluated," he said. "Any changes which need to be made will become effective in the fall."

Sikora, a freshman transfer student, was killed Jan. 28 when a car went out of control at the intersection of Krenek Tap Road and Texas Ave. The car hit another car, seriously injuring the driver, then struck Sikora, who was waiting for a shuttlebus on the side of the road.

The Battalion received a letter from several A&M students saying the shuttlebus stop at the intersection was dangerous because students have to stand in a ditch close to the highway.

Linda Northcutt, manager of Oak Forest Mobile Home Park on Krenek Tap Road, said she talked to Oates Monday about the dangerous situation at the intersection, but he told her the route would not be changed any time soon.

"It doesn't look like it's going to be rerouted," she said. "The main reason he gave me is changing the route would add more time to the route. It would take five to seven minutes to reroute the bus another part of the highway."

"I was just disheartened. I think my problem lies with the (Shuttlebus) committee. It (the bus stop) is very dangerous."

Northcutt said she will attend the next meeting of the Shuttlebus Operations Committee in April, and present her objections again.

Oates said he believed the shuttlebus stop was not the cause of the accident.

"That same accident could happen anywhere, anytime," he said. "It could happen on any other bus route."

Bryan puts clamp on local wreckers

By LAURA RUTHERFORD
City Reporter

After Monday, when a car is towed away in Bryan, the owner won't need to search city-wide for the company that towed it, or mortgage his house to pay the towing charge.

The Bryan City Council made the following changes Monday in the present city ordinance about the towing of unauthorized vehicles.

— The wrecker company must report the removal of any unauthorized vehicle to the police department within one hour after towing.

— The wrecker company must report the time, date and location of the removal to the police department.

— The wrecker company must provide the physical description and license plate number of the vehicle to the police.

— The wrecker company must provide the location where the vehicle is stored to the police.

— The wrecker company must provide a telephone number the company can be reached at on a 24-hour basis for the release of impounded vehicles to the owner.

— The wrecker company is now limited to a maximum \$25 charge for towing unauthorized vehicles.

An unauthorized vehicle is any car towed without the owner's permission.

The city council decided (4-3) to get the public's opinion of a city mass transportation system before applying for grant money. Bryan residents will vote on the issue during the municipal elections, April 5.

The mass transit system would cost an initial \$165,000, for buses and other capital investments. The annual operating cost would be \$227,000. The yearly cost would be greater than the initial cost because the high price of fuel.

Councilman Henry Seale said this system would increase property taxes by 13 cents.

The tax, which was raised 13 cents in early August, is a 60 cent tax per \$100 of the assessed value of the property. If this tax was raised by 13 cents, the owner of a \$40,000 house, now paying \$240, would pay a tax of \$292, an increase of \$52.

Council members disagreed on the feasibility of the system.

Seale said he didn't think people would want the system once they understood the cost.

Councilman Joe Hanover, a member of the Urban Transportation Committee, said the city would need the transit system in a few years.

Mayor Richard Smith said, "I believe we're a long way from people riding it."

Councilman Ples Turner said he thought people would be interested in the system if the price of gasoline rose to \$2 a gallon.

Since Bryan residents will vote on a revenue bond at the municipal election, Seale said he didn't want the mass transit system issue to be on the ballot. He said he didn't want any negative controversy associated with the election.

Smith said he doesn't care if the public votes on the system at the election or not as long as they understand that the vote is just a measurement of public support for the system to see if the council should pursue a grant.

The council bought 11 new vehicles for the police department at a cost of \$66,498. City manager Ernest Clark said the cars would be delivered in about 90 days.

In other action, the council commended KAMU-TV, channel 15, for public service to local residents an made Feb. 15 "KAMU Public Television Day."

Trash explosion injures 2

By ANGELIQUE COPELAND
Campus Staff

Chemicals from a park dumpster at the corner of Montclair and Luther in College Station exploded in the back of a city garbage truck injuring two men Monday.

Chief Landua of the College Station Fire Department, said the workers had just emptied the dumpster when there was a small explosion and smoke started coming from the back of the truck.

The men then backed the truck up to a garden hose in the yard of the house across the street. When the water hit the chemi-

als, Landua said there was another explosion that "shook the windows in houses down the street."

The explosion also threw garbage and glass into the trees near the house.

The men, Johnny Ray Williams and Hulon Young were taken to the city physician and treated for hand and facial burns.

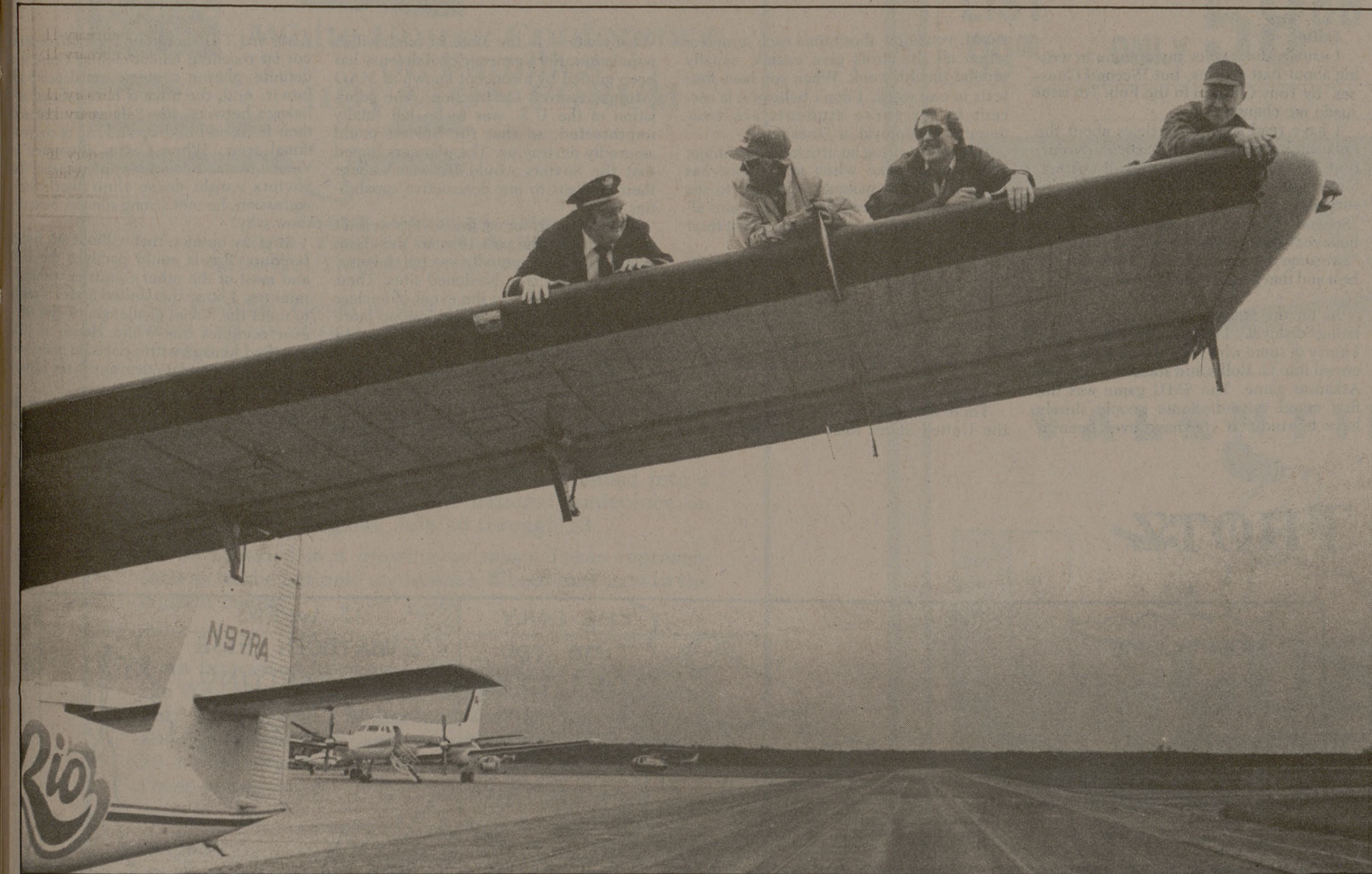
Landua said the truck was not damaged. "We took the truck and emptied it in a separate, remote area of the city's dumping ground," Landua said.

"We don't know if it was one chemical or a mixture that caused the explosion, but it

was the combination with water that made them explode," he said. "When we were watering down the yard there would be occasional flash-ups."

Landua said they were not sure who had put the chemicals in the dumpster that is supposed to be used only by the park, but that they had a "pretty good idea" that someone in the neighborhood had put them there.

Landua said that a combination of household chemicals could not have caused the explosion. "These are the kind of chemicals you find in all the labs on campus," Landua said.



Hanging around

Rio Airlines workers were "out on a wing" at Easterwood Airport trying to right a company plane which lost a wheel while taxiing before a scheduled take-off on Thursday. None of the plane's 12 passengers or crew members

were reported as injured. But, as co-pilot Fred Arbuckle (far left) said, "It's a good thing it was an easy landing coming in."

Staff photo by Lee Roy Leschper Jr.

Gang also takes van

By JAN EVANS
Campus Reporter

When robbers took a safe from the Student Publications Office over the weekend, they also took a university van to transport it.

The safe was reported missing first, but police later learned that a van had been stolen also.

Both the van and the safe were found Monday. The safe still contained some cash and a tape recorder.

University Police Chief Russ McDonald said police spotted the van abandoned off the East Bypass. They searched the area and found the safe about 150 yards from the road.

McDonald said the safe had been opened with a cutting torch. It is not known whether any of the money known to be in the safe had been taken. Police will first have to check the safe for fingerprints. But McDonald said it looks like about \$100 is missing.

The safe was stolen from the Student Publications Office on the second floor of the Reed McDonald Building sometime between midnight Saturday and noon Sunday.

A desk drawer had been pried open in the communications department on the third floor, but nothing was missing. Police have not determined whether the incidents are related.

Prison may make room for an inn

United Press International

OKLAHOMA CITY — Saying it would be just like stopping at a motel, a state senator has proposed that prisoners be permitted conjugal visits with their spouses in special quarters inside prison walls.

"Conjugal privileges among married prisoners," said Sen. Melvin Porter, D-Oklahoma City, "would reduce tensions within the prison, offer responsibility and hope and would demonstrate a beneficial effect upon discipline."

Porter introduced a resolution Monday urging the state Corrections Department to set up the system. In urging passage he told the Senate his resolution was "merely to permit conjugal visitation rights."

Porter proposed that prisoners be permitted to construct their own quarters within the walls for such visits and that several prisoners share the same facility on a visit reservation basis.

"It would be just as if you were traveling and stopped at a motel," Porter said.

The Senate voted to refer the resolution to the Rules Committee after Sen. John Young, D-Sapulpa, suggested the proposal could "give rise to debate."

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