

Local

New rules proposed

Bike licensing sought

By TIM McALAVY
Battalion Reporter

With student registration swelling to more than 33,000 this year, and with more than 15,500 bicycles operating on campus a day, cyclists at Texas A&M University can expect strict new bicycle regulations as early as the fall semester of 1981, says Texas A&M Traffic Panel.

Some of the new regulations include:
— Mandatory licensing of all bicycles operated on campus instead of the optional registration policy now in effect.

— Impoundment of bicycles operating on campus without a valid Texas A&M bicycle permit, and impoundment of any bicycle locked or parked anywhere outside of a bicycle rack.

— Mandatory licensing of a bicycle released after impoundment.

— Citations for violations of the Texas Motor Vehicle Law and University speed limits and an increase in fines from \$2 to \$4 for parking violations and from \$4 to \$8 for moving violations.

Presently, Texas A&M regulations pertaining to bicycles on campus are derived from the Operation of Bicycles and Play Vehicles law passed by the Texas Legislature in 1971. These policies leave bicycle registration up to the discretion of the student, allow cyclists to ride on any sidewalk, thoroughfare, or street, and contains no impoundment policies whatever.

Thomas Parsons, director of security at Texas A&M, said the new regulations will necessitate more University Police manpower to enforce the many violations that go unnoticed on campus every day.

"Using police officers to chase offending cyclists is simply a Keystone Kops situation," Parsons said. Also, with more and more people and bicycles on campus each day, it is easy for violators to disappear into a

crowd or simply speed away and avoid citation altogether.

To combat the crowded sidewalk scene and an increasing bicycle-pedestrian accident rate, the university traffic panel authorized Dr. Charles Powell, assistant to the vice president for student services, to study traffic regulation on the bicycle-laden campuses of the universities of California at Davis and Santa Barbara, and Arizona State University.

Dan Parker, last year's chairman of the Texas A&M Traffic panel, said that the new regulations derived from Powell's study were carefully studied before being approved by the panel. Parker stated that the new regulations would stratify the traffic flow on campus in favor of the person who walks to class.

"After all, protecting the pedestrian is what it's all about," Parker said, "and bicycles simply are not pedestrians."

Although the traffic panel has the power to research, submit, and approve the new regulations, the decision to apply them here at Texas A&M will come from the University Board of Regents.

When will the regents decide on the new regulations? Not even the members of the Traffic Panel know for sure, because projected cost and manpower planning remains incomplete at this point.

Ralph J. Adams, this year's chairman of the traffic panel, said that one of the panel's first goals for the fall of 1980 is to complete the unfinished planning. Although Adams said that the first fall meeting of the panel on Oct. 3 would be strictly organizational, the criticisms and comments from students and faculty would be welcomed at any one of later meetings.

Until a decision is made, cyclists and pedestrians are encouraged to politely share the existing sidewalks and thoroughfares, and to yield the right of way to the handicapped in all situations.



Staff photo by Jeff Kerber

A chain reaction

John Debrow, a senior from Houston, performs some quick repairs on his bicycle on his way to class Wednesday afternoon.

Aggie program trains policemen

By MARGARITA JAIME
Battalion Reporter

If you're considering becoming a police officer and want to know what law enforcement is all about, don't start by watching "CHiPs." "Forget television," Chief Ira E. Scott, head of the Law Enforcement and Security Training Division of the Texas A&M University System said. "So many law enforcement programs on TV are so misleading."

He said that many young people come to the training school with that idea in mind.

Before a person can be a law enforcement officer, he must be recommended to the training school by a police chief or sheriff stating that he will be hired once he completes the program.

A person must be 18 years old with a high school diploma, he must not have been convicted of a felony, and must have not been cited for drunk driving within the last five years.

"Generally, they must be law abiding citizens," Scott said. Once they've completed these prerequisites, they must take 320 hours of basic training courses. The division offers 80 separate courses and on-campus housing for students.

"We have people from all over the state enrolled in our basic training program," Scott said, "and most of those people are (recent) high school graduates."

The program lasts eight weeks, and the courses involved range from criminal law to accident investigation.

The training division also offers refresher courses to present law enforcement officers who want further training.

These specialized programs include courses such as polygraphy school, advanced accident investigation, and evidence technology. "These advanced refresher courses are essential," Scott said, "because law enforcement technology is constantly changing. As new crimes develop, training has to change."

Women are involved in the law enforcement world. "Out of a class of 25 trainees, we'll have three to five women," Scott said. The number of women is small, but it's growing.

The women are treated like any male law enforcement officer. Their training is not limited to the classroom, everyone goes out to the firing range and learns gun control and handling. "I've seen some women fire a gun as well if not better than any man out there," Scott said.

There are three training divisions located in Texas: in Arlington, Houston, and the headquarters at the Texas A&M Research and Extension Service.

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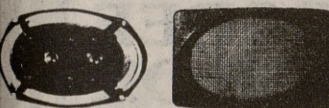
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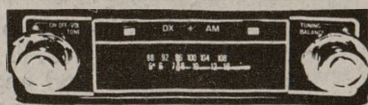
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