

Local

Taking shortcuts through the grass a headache for maintenance workers

By JOHN BRASHER
Battalion Reporter

With over 30 acres of sidewalks that allow students access from one building to another, some students make their own pathways through the grass, creating problems for grounds maintenance workers.

"I really don't understand it. For years I've pondered the question why students don't use the sidewalks, and I can't come up with an answer," said Eugene Ray, director of the department of grounds maintenance at Texas A&M.

Ray said that over a one-year period, he has noticed new paths around the library, Harrington, between the Rudder Fountain and the Memorial Student Center, and around the Academic Building.

One reason for the new paths, Ray said, is the enormous amount of construction on the campus, plus the large increase in student population. "We have a problem where we have more and more people and less space because the new buildings are taking away space," Ray said.

Ray said he feels that the students are pressed for time and in a hurry to get to class and don't care whether or not they cut across the flower beds and ivy grass areas.

Ray said the paths cause a bad attitude problem with the maintenance crews.

"Our work crews have a lot of pride in their work and they get the attitude of 'why should we make the landscape look nice if someone is going to come along and tear it up.'"

The major problem created by the paths is the cost it takes to repair these areas. According to Ray, the maintenance department spends between \$900,000 and \$1 million a year on ground maintenance. He said much of that money is used to repair paths.

Plus, the workers could be spending that time doing other things besides re-seeding and repairing the paths.

The department has come up with various possible solutions for the

problem, Ray said, but whether they work or not is another question.

"A lot of people," he said, "tell us to pave the paths. We don't want to do this because the campus will be nothing but concrete. Texas A&M is one of the few campuses in the United States that still has a lot of grassy areas and we want to preserve this."

Ray said he also feels that peer pressure might help correct the problem.

"It all evolves around the student. If students will ask people who cut across the flower and ivy beds to use the sidewalks, then maybe it will catch on and spread across the campus," he said.

Ray also suggested an educational program to make the people aware of the problem.

"We could orientate new students that we take pride in our campus and that as Aggies, we don't cut corners and walk through the ivy and flower beds."

Ray said, however, that he's not saying the turf can't be used, but rather a person can use it without abusing it.

Other solutions, he said, that might possibly be used is placing square stepping stones around the ivy beds between Rudder Fountain and the MSC to keep students from cutting corners.

He also said the maintenance department might experiment with a grass paver across the lawn areas. This is a perforated plastic block which allows pedestrian traffic to walk on it and at the same time, grass grows through it.

The campus has also suffered irrigation damage.

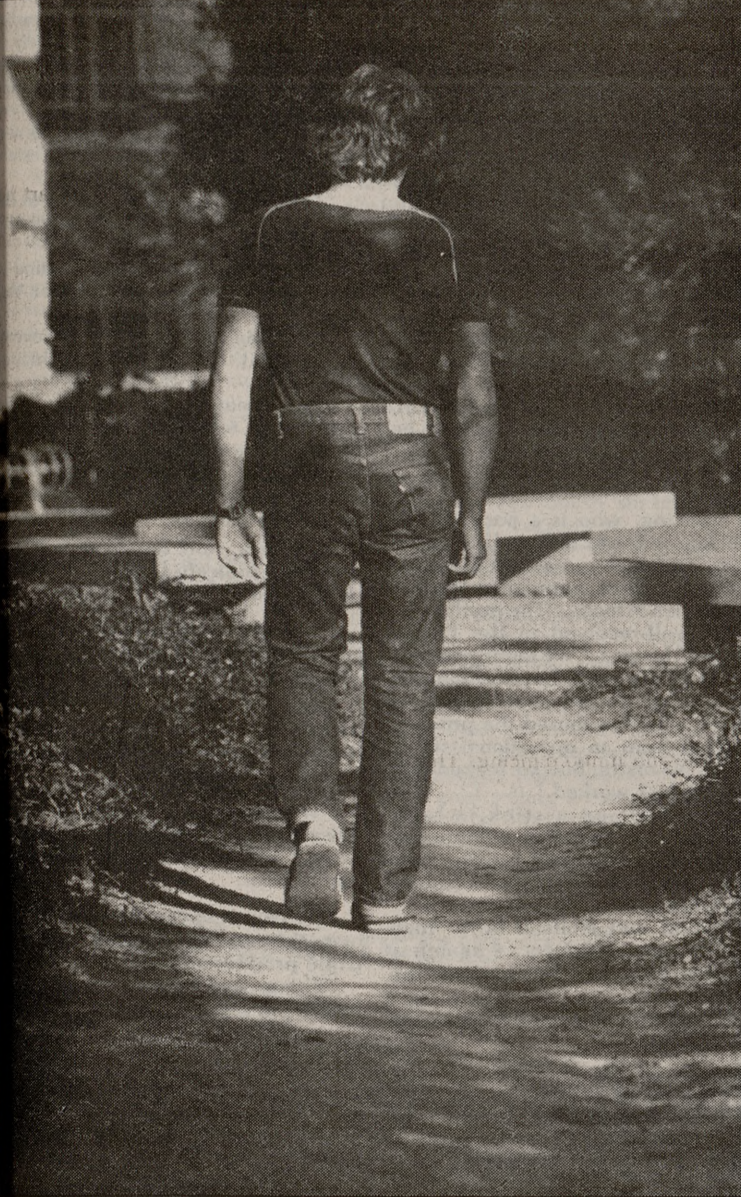
"We probably spend around \$15,000-\$18,000 a year on irrigation repairs," Ray said. "A lot of the damage is caused from wear and tear, but the bulk of the repairs is due to physical damage caused by various types of vehicles running over the sprinklers."

Texas A&M has around 130 acres of irrigation and between 17,000 and 18,000 sprinkler heads. It costs the University from \$3-\$150 to replace one of these sprinkler heads when it gets damaged.

One way the maintenance department has found to cut the cost of

irrigation repairs is to replace the old rigid riser type, which stand up from the ground and are easy to break off, with the new high pops which stay flush with the ground until the water pressure is turned on. Once the water is on, the high pops rise 12 inches above the ground. The sprinkler head goes back down when the water pressure is turned off.

"The high pops are a more expensive type of sprinkler, but when you don't have to continuously repair them, you come out better in the long run," Ray said.



Staff photo by Pat O'Malley

Most students who use the corner-cutting paths across grass- or ivy-covered areas are late for class, but this one just seems to

be taking the shortest way home. He's not carrying any books, and he certainly doesn't seem to be in any hurry.

CAMPUS THEATRE
210 Un. 846-6512
Now Showing:
John Travolta
in
URBAN COWBOY

TEXAS STATE OPTICAL
Prescriptions Filled
Glasses Repaired
216 N. MAIN
BRYAN 822-6105
Mon.-Fri. 8 a.m.-5 p.m.
Sat. 8 a.m.-1 p.m.

AIRBORNE
"THE DIFFICULT WE DO IMMEDIATELY, THE IMPOSSIBLE TAKES A LITTLE LONGER"
AGENT
AERO AIR FREIGHT SERVICES
WE DO MORE THAN DELIVER YOUR PACKAGE OVERNIGHT
WE GUARANTEE IT!
150 CITIES
\$22.11 UP TO 2 LBS.
THE FREIGHT PROBLEM SOLVERS
PH: 713-779-FAST
P.O. BOX 3862
BRYAN, TX. 77801

CAMPUS THEATRE
210 University Dr. 846-6512
Coming Saturday Oct. 4
Midnight to Dawn Film Festival
A TRIBUTE TO THE MAN
JOHN WAYNE
3 of his best movies for \$3.00
— COMING SOON —

SKYWAY TWIN
2000 E. 29th 822-3300
EAST 8:15
CHEECH AND CHONGS NEXT MOVIE
AT 10:05
ANIMAL HOUSE
WEST 8:15
CLINT EASTWOOD IN
BRONCO BILLY
ALSO
AT 10:25
EVERY WHICH WAY BUT LOOSE

CINEMA I&II
Call 846-6714 for correct times!
Adult \$2.00 for first 30 minutes from opening. Times & Discounts for today only! Open 5:30
A STORY OF NATURAL LOVE!
THE BLUE LAGOON
Brooke Shields
Christopher Atkins
5:55, 7:55, 9:55
BORDERLINE
STARRING Charles Bronson
5:45, 7:45, 9:45

MANOR EAST 3
WELCOME BACK AGGIES. THIS YEAR FOR THE THIRD STRAIGHT YEAR, THE MANOR EAST 3 WILL GIVE YOU A DOLLAR OFF THE REGULAR ADMISSION PRICE WITH PRESENTATION OF CURRENT TAMU STUDENT I.D. WE HOPE YOU WILL TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THIS DISCOUNT TO VISIT THE ONLY THEATRE IN BRYAN-COLLEGE STATION WITH DOLBY STEREO. GOOD THRU SEPT. 30, 1980.
SOME PEOPLE JUST DON'T BELONG.
505 945
Caddyshack
The Bandit, Frog and Justice are at it again in the all new adventures of...
SMOKEY BANDIT
PG
A UNIVERSAL PICTURE
5:10 7:30 9:30
BATTLE BEHIND THE STARS

Good news for all A&M Faculty and Staff

How would you like an ORP-TDA that lets you shift past and future contributions free of charge among nine investment options? Now there's a way.

ASK DON REISER
Financial Disciplines, Inc.
111 University Center
846-4352

IS YOURS AN energy efficient home?

MSC AGGIE CINEMA

"Remember When..."

Posters, stills and other cinema memorabilia from your favorite films

On Sale Monday — Wednesday in the MSC.

9 a.m. - 6 p.m.

Sponsored by MSC Aggie Cinema

All in One Call.

A&M Travel Service, Inc. gives you hometown service with computerized speed.

A&M Travel Service became the largest travel consultants in Brazos County by giving the best service. Now we offer our clients SABRE, a space age computerized service which provides instant availabilities on 495 domestic and foreign airlines and instant space reservations.

SABRE can confirm every detail of your trip. And has instant recall of your favorite departure times, seat preference, etc.

There's no need to call back or wait for a call to confirm your reservations.

A&M Travel confirms your reservations as you request them. With the use of our computer terminal, you can get custom travel service every step of the way.

A&M Travel has more travel consultants and more travel experience than any other agent in the area. We deliver tickets to the campus (or elsewhere in the community) and we follow through on the details.

For your next trip, call A&M Travel. We'll book your reservations and confirm them. All in one call.

Owned by Keith Langford '39 (Houston) and Diane Stribling (President and Agency Manager)
111 University Drive (in the Bank of A&M Building)
College Station — 846-8881

We support the Aggies with an annual donation for a 12th Man Scholarship

Our Hours Fit Your Hours.

Because we understand how busy you are, we're now open until 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday.

That Place Across from A&M 696-6933
That Place In Culpepper Plaza 693-0607