

Local

Biomed co-op expanding, offering new experiences

By KATHLEEN WAKEFIELD
Battalion Reporter
Texas A&M University students have been working with mice, dogs and patients in cancer research as part of a biomedical science cooperative education program. Cancer research is one of the co-op opportunities biomedical science students have participated in recently. The study was a part of the Stehlin Foundation for Cancer Research in Houston, said Dr. Archie Flowers, professor of veterinary public health at Texas A&M.

laboratory surroundings. A patient's cancer is introduced into the mouse's system, and anti-cancer solutions are injected into the mouse. Since all cancer is different, scientists can learn exactly which solutions affect that particular person's cancer. Another co-op program last summer involved four Texas A&M students who worked for the Texas Department of Health in zoonosis control, Flowers said. Zoonosis is any disease transmitted from animal to man. This program was a one-time opportunity, but Texas A&M is planning a full-time co-op program with the department to provide students with on-the-job experience. "It allows the student to apply what he learns in the classroom to an actual job, which reinforces his learning," Flowers said. The program allows the students to look more closely at their chosen career and to work with employers in

the field. Flowers said it also gives the employers a chance to look at co-op students and select possible job candidates following graduation. The biomedical co-op program at Texas A&M is considered by other universities as an honors program, but Flowers said it is not. A student must have at least a 2.5 grade point ratio, and depending on the major, may begin co-op after the freshman or sophomore year. Biomedical co-op primarily serves students interested in biomedical research, but it also provides an alternative for students who are not accepted into veterinary school. A co-op student trains under a veterinarian and works as an assistant. After graduation the student is able to perform many of the veterinarian's tasks, and work for a vet as a full-time employee. The average salary for co-op students is \$700 a month.

Bygone seeds elicit worry

Breeders improving plants

By TRACY L. FENTON
Battalion Reporter
Although we may not be growing the same types of tomatoes or snap beans that grandmother grew, thanks to seed and plant breeders, the ones we are growing are bigger and better. Dr. Samuel D. Cotner, horticulturist with the Texas Agricultural Extension Service, Texas A&M University System, said people blame seed and plant breeders because some of the older varieties of seeds are dropped each year in favor of newer hybrids. "I think people are too worried about losing some of the old varieties when we've got better varieties available today," he said. Cotner said people are also concerned about the shrinking of the gene pool. "He said people think the hybrids will be more susceptible to disease and insects because the gene pool, or base for variability, is narrowed. Many plants began wild and thus had more variation in their gene pool. Cotner said seed breeders today are removing some of that variability to get a more uniform plant. "As we improve it (the plant), it becomes less variable," Cotner said. "The genetic pool is smaller." It is possible, he said, that narrowing the gene pool will make the plant more vulnerable to disease.

"There are varieties that are more susceptible to certain diseases than others," he said. Cotner said the plants are more prone to illness because as plants change, the diseases change. "As we develop new varieties, the disease, in order to exist, will mutate in order to survive on whatever characteristics this plant has," he said. "They (diseases) can mutate and change just like plants do. Nevertheless, Cotner said the gene pool is not being destroyed. The National Seed Storage Laboratory in Fort Collins, Colo., maintains a gene pool of all plants and varieties. Cotner said plant breeders are encouraged to put their seeds and genetic material in the laboratory, which has ideal conditions for long-term livability. "Then if this genetic material is ever needed, the seed can be increased and made available to plant breeders all over the world," he said. Though some people think seed and plant breeders are leading us down a thorny path, Cotner disagrees. "We've got as many fruits and vegetables to eat as we've ever had before," he said. "We've got fewer farmers feeding more people, so somebody's doing right somewhere with regard to agriculture. And certainly the plant breeders have an important part in this."

Attorney charges Schwartz

United Press International
GALVESTON — An attorney for Shearn Moody, a Galveston financier embroiled in a suit with state Sen. A.R. "Babe" Schwartz, filed a police report Monday alleging the state official struck him. Briscoe Swan of Houston filed the complaint with police, alleging Schwartz was angered over a continuance granted in a suit filed by Moody against Schwartz. Moody claimed Schwartz, who represents the 17th state senatorial district, owes him money. Schwartz, an attorney, claims the money was collected as fees while Schwartz was Moody's attorney. Schwartz was in Texas City following the report and could not be reached for comment. Robert Collins, also a Houston attorney representing Moody, reported to police Schwartz had struck him with a briefcase outside Judge Ed Harris' 10th district court. Police said the complaint would be investigated.

CS schools purchase three buses, table handicap matter

By VENTIA McCELLON
Battalion Reporter
The College Station Independent School District approved the purchase of three buses for the district Monday night, while voting to table a proposal by the administration for a special bus for handicapped students.

estimated \$24,000 each. The purchase was approved by a 6-0 vote. Bus transportation use in the district increased over 48 percent, said Donald P. Ney, assistant superintendent. "Approximately six percent of this increase is attributable to the fact that we have an increased population," he said. The biggest increase in bus usage was at A&M Consolidated High School, where the number of students transported by the district increased 116.8 percent. Ney attributed this rise to the de-

creased number of student-driven cars because of energy conservation. Ney estimated that the buses will arrive sometime in July or August of 1981. The board tabled a proposal for the purchase of a bus for students requiring wheel chairs until the administration could look into alternatives, which might include conversion of buses already owned by the district or a revision in the routes. The board also heard reports on the progress of the Learner Based Accountability System, which is being implemented in the district.

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RHA to hear Parsons talk on parking

Col. Thomas Parsons, Director of Security and Traffic, will discuss the parking situation and security on campus at the Residence Hall Association meeting tonight in room 204 of the Harrington Classroom Center. A revision in the phone system on campus from dialing to extension numbers will also be discussed, RHA President Sherrie Balcar said. An RHA committee will report on their investigations into the weekend crowding at Northgate area bars, Balcar said.

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