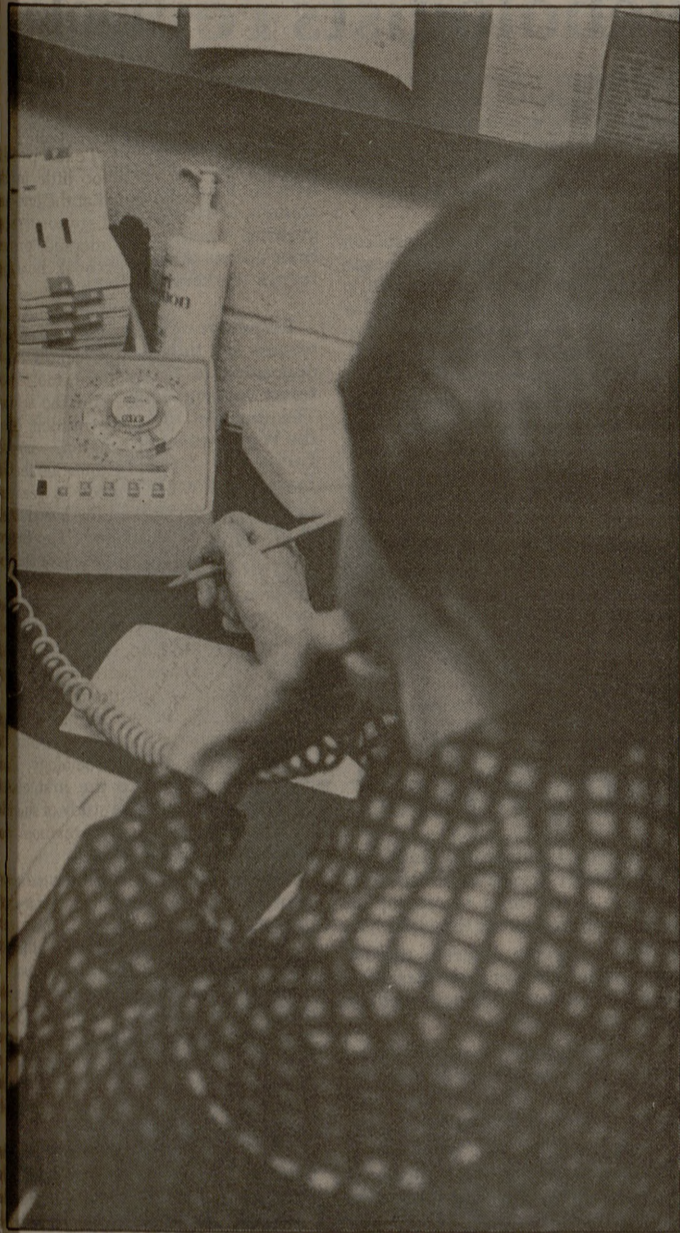


Local



Staff photo by Pat O'Malley

Dorothy Todd, a secretary for student publications, uses one of the rotary-style telephones that will be replaced in the campus-wide conversion to touch-tone telephones beginning next spring.

'1917 design' on the way out

A&M to get new telephones

By WILEY GILMORE
Battalion Reporter

When one is asked to describe the changes at Texas A&M University over the years, it is tempting to point to the buildings. They are things that can be seen easily and quickly. It is hard not to notice Rudder Tower and Kyle Field's new third decks.

But some changes, while less apparent, are no less significant.

Texas A&M's pending new telephone system is a case in point. Within the next year, a computerized electronic digital communications system will be installed on the main campus and at the Research and Extension Center (formerly Bryan Air Force Base). It will replace equipment which was installed here in 1968.

"It was a 1968 installation, but more like a 1917 design," said Robert M. Sather, Texas A&M communications manager.

Sather, 50, came to Texas A&M in June to oversee the changeover to the new system. The equipment is being produced and installed by General Telephone and Electronics. The old system, also a GTE product, was consistent with the state of the art in 1968, Sather said. "It's still a good system, but it's currently overloaded 50 percent beyond its designed capacity."

Sather said such an overload produces problems like having to wait for a dial tone, difficulty in transferring calls and not having sufficient lines to carry the telephone traffic.

Sather described his job as "assisting the user in getting the most system for the least money."

He said Texas A&M currently pays GTE about \$5,000 monthly for lease of "common equipment," the basic switching complex. He estimated that the charges for the new switch will be about the same.

Extra charges will be made for any special equipment and capabilities that a department requires, Sather said. The cost of the special items will be budgeted and paid for by the departments using them, he said.

Identifying each department's needs is still in progress, Sather explained, and the net monthly cost to Texas A&M is not yet known.

While the communications network will not be as visible as Sbis Hall, for example, it will affect every person who lives and works at Texas A&M.

The most noticeable from the old system will be the type of instruments. All of them will be of the touch-call type; buttons instead of the old rotary dials.

The new instruments will be in all of the dormitory rooms as well as in the offices, Sather said. Dormitory phones will all be of the same style, color and mounting.

Long distance service will still be at the resident's option and will require a cash deposit.

Sather said the basic monthly telephone cost to a dormitory resident has remained constant at about \$5 since the present system was installed. He said a monthly charge of \$7.92 would be proposed to the

Texas Public Utilities Commission. The current cost for the least expensive residential touch-call service in Bryan is \$11.40 per month, according to GTE's Bryan business office.

Sather added that, for the first time, Hotard Hall will have telephones in the rooms. Hotard has had only hall phones in the past.

"We'll start installation of the switch in the first quarter of 1981," Sather said, adding that the dormitory phones should be ready for use when the 1981 fall term begins.

Sather estimated that 14,000 new telephone instruments would eventually be tied to the switching complex.

Persons who work in offices at Texas A&M will discover that, depending on where they work, their phones may have some unique features.

Sather said these features will vary with the special needs of each department and even with the functions within a department.

A long distance call can be routed automatically through the most economical of the available telephone networks: leased lines, the state government network or commercial service.

If there are no lines available at all, the system will complete the call as soon as a line is free.

Another time-consuming irritant, the "busy" signal, will meet its match in the new system. While the caller returns to other work, the telephone system's computer will monitor the called number and then complete the call when the line is no longer busy.

If a particular number is busy, a call can be diverted automatically to a central number within the same office.

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Christian activist to talk next week

By MARCY BOYCE
Battalion Staff

"Josh is coming," said the teasers scrawled in corners of chalk boards and flyers across campus the last few weeks. And he is.

Josh McDowell, a Christian activist of the Campus Crusade for Christ ministry and author of three best-selling books, is at last bringing his lecture series to Texas A&M University next week.

Beginning Sunday, Nov. 9, McDowell will speak on "The Resurrection Hoax," followed by "The Future Tellers" Monday and "Maximum Sex" Tuesday. All lectures will take place at Rudder Auditorium at 8 p.m. Admission is free.

The three appearances next week will mark the end of a year-long group effort by several religious organizations on campus and in the community to bring the much-sought-after speaker to the University. Among them are Campus Crusade for Christ, Aldersgate United Methodist Church, the Baptist Student Union, Inter-Varsity, the Navigators, Oasis and Young Life.

When he was a student, McDowell said he set out to refute Christianity and to prove the Resurrection of Jesus Christ a farce, but he couldn't. That experience became the basis for his best-selling books *Evidence That Demands a Verdict*, *More Evidence That De-*

mands a Verdict and *More Than a Carpenter*.

In addition, the evangelist has taken his message personally to more than 5 million students in 53 countries during the last 10 years.

Depression is the mood of universities today, McDowell said, following nationwide research studies he and his staff conducted. Students are suffering an identity crisis and asking question like, "Who am I?" "Where am I going?" and "Will I ever be loved for myself?" he said.

One area he said he feels people today are especially bankrupt in is that of sex, love and marriage. The lecture series next week will advocate an alternative, such as the type of relationship he and his wife share — one based on an unconditional love, he said.

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