

Local



Staff photo by Jeff Kerber

Bicycles, bicycles everywhere ... this "Do not park" sign on the Sterling C. Evans Library seems to go unread. Library officials say that

the bicycles cause traffic and safety hazards when parked by the entrance to the building instead of the bicycle racks.

Library-going bike riders not parking as they should

By NANCY ANDERSEN
Battalion Staff
People using the Sterling C. Evans Library generally go there to read — whether it's the magazines they can't afford to buy, research for a special term paper or just for pleasure.

But it seems these same people don't read before they enter the building. Many students and staff ignore the sign that reads "Do Not Park Bikes on Concourse," said Emma Perry, head of the circulation division.

These bikes clutter the concourse area and often block the doorway, Perry said.

"This is a serious problem," Perry said, "and we'd like to encourage

people not to park on the concourse. "When we evacuate the building it's very difficult to get people out and the firemen in."

Some bicyclists have even run into Perry's glass office wall, she said, and often a row of bikes will fall and crash into the glass walls.

There are bicycle racks on all sides of the library, Perry said, but they are not being used.

Enforcing the no parking policy is hard since many of the bikes are not registered, said Morris Maddox, University Police assistant chief.

University police could hand out tickets and impound bikes, but Maddox said they "don't want to go into the trucking business."

Issuing tickets would be "a bunch

of paperwork for nothing" if the bike is not registered with the police, he said. "It is not compulsory to register bikes," Maddox explained. "Most students who register do it in case of theft."

Maddox said the police are working on a master plan that would make bicycle registration mandatory and those not registered would be impounded. But he added, "They better build a big building when they do that."

An immediate solution for the library could be to station a police officer in the concourse area for awhile, and word would get around that he is there, Maddox said. But the plan's flaw, he added, is that as soon as the officer left, the bikes would be back.

Research seeks possible use for lignite coal fuel in engines

By BERNIE FETTE
Battalion Reporter
In an effort to use an existing energy source in a new way, Texas A&M University mechanical engineers are researching the possible use of lignite coal in internal-combustion engines.

"We haven't really started experimenting yet," said Dr. Gerald Caton of the University's mechanical engineering department. "We're researching."

He said the research at this time is mainly concerned with what's already been done with lignite as an internal combustion fuel.

The lignite could be ground into dust or powder form and injected into the engine's intake system but, Caton said, "mixing the dust with a liquid, prob-

ably water, looks like the most practical method at this time," Caton said.

An advantage of using lignite instead of gasoline is that the lignite can be used in a raw state. "There is less energy lost from processing the fuel," Caton said. "The only cost involved in preparing the lignite is the cost of grinding it."

Also, in the case of an emergency when gasoline supplies are short, the lignite fuel could be a feasible replacement, Caton said.

But one disadvantage experienced by the researchers is that so far processing the fuel has not been as inexpensive compared to using gasoline as they had expected.

"So far, it's not a great saving," Caton said.

The potential problem of the coal dust clogging the intake system and fouling the engine must also be considered, he said.

For Texas, the use of the lignite fuel could be a big advantage because of the state's considerably large underground coal deposits, estimated at more than 10 billion tons.

The research, which is funded by the Center for Energy and Mineral Resources at Texas A&M, began in September.

Actual experimentation will begin in February or March, Caton said. But he said at this point there is no way of telling when the use of lignite in internal-combustion engines will be fully developed.

Texas university plans studied

Seventeen recommendations for higher education in the upcoming legislative session will be considered by the Texas College and University System Coordinating Board when it meets Thursday in Houston.

The meeting is scheduled for 9:30 a.m. at the Host International Hotel in Houston Intercontinental Airport.

The recommendations to the Legislature are incorporated in a long-range plan for Texas colleges and universities in the eighties, which

will be proposed for adoption by the board in January.

The board is expected to hear testimony on the recommendations and other aspects of the plan from several representatives of the state's public junior and senior colleges, as well as special interest groups.

If adequate revenue for higher education is not available in the future, the draft plan proposes several alternatives for spending cuts in specific areas as a means of preventing

dilution of quality across the board.

For example, lower funding rates for off-campus courses or merger of nearby institutions are suggested as preferable options.

Other recommendations include initiation of high school competency tests for graduation as a means of reducing state costs for remedial education, possible reduction of medical school enrollments and opposition to the establishment of any additional public senior colleges and universities.

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