

# Local

## A&M's false alarm total high; not always pranks

By SHEILA FRAZIER  
Battalion Reporter

Since last semester, 172 of the 220 fire alarms recorded by Texas A&M University Police were false alarms.

What set off the alarms? The answer could be anything from carpet glue fumes to ants crawling into a detector head. Some of the false alarms were accidents, and some were mechanical malfunctions, but some were pranks.

John Dockery, foreman of the electrical shop which maintains and resets fire and burglar alarms, said his staff often can't immediately find any reason for an alarm to have gone off.

"We do have malfunctions, but they are less common than pranks," Dockery said. If an alarm has gone off because of a malfunction, it will usually go off again within one to six hours, he said.

The University uses four main

types of fire alarms:

- ✓ The ionization detector can be activated whenever anything combustible reaches its sensors. Items such as hair spray, carpet glue, and paint thinner can easily set off the alarms, Dockery said.
- ✓ The photo-electric cell operates by measuring the density of air in a test chamber. The density can be raised by sawdust, steam or cigarette smoke, Dockery said.
- ✓ Rate-of-rise alarms are activated when the temperature in a room goes above a designated 135 degrees to 210 degrees Fahrenheit. These alarms are used mainly in shop and kitchen areas and do not create problems, Dockery said.
- ✓ Manual pull stations are most often abused by pranksters, but the detector heads are abused also, Dockery said. On two different occasions, his crew has found a cigarette and a burning piece of

paper taped to detector heads.

Most alarms occur in the Corps dorms, Dockery said. He said women's dorms have the least amount of false alarms.

Dockery said that he thought many pranksters would be discouraged if they knew of the possible penalties involved. Intentionally setting off a false alarm is a Class A misdemeanor with penalties of a fine up to \$2,000, or up to one year in prison, or both.

If an alarm is activated more than twice because of unavoidable circumstances, such as bunsen burners in chemistry laboratories, the alarm will be moved to a better place, Dockery said.

Because of pranks, one pull station in Heldenfels Hall had to be moved near a group of offices so that it could be watched, he said.

Despite the high number of false alarms, the alarm maintenance crew and the University Police both say they respond to every alarm as an actual emergency.

Electrical shop technician Jim Anderson said, "In a way there's no such thing as a false alarm, when one goes off that just means that the system is working."

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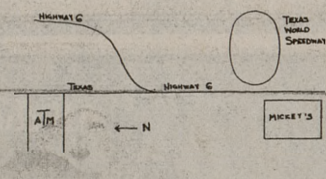
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## What's Up

### WEDNESDAY

- RENEWABLE NATURAL RESOURCE ASSOCIATION:** Meets at 7:30 p.m. in 350 MSC.
- CLASS OF '82:** Meets at 7:30 p.m. in 109 Military Science.
- HILLEL CLUB:** Elects officers at 7:30 p.m. in the Hillel Jewish Student Center.
- AGGIE SCOUTS:** Meets at 9 p.m. in 139 MSC.
- PRE-LAW SOCIETY:** Meets to elect officers at 7 p.m. in 308 Rudder.
- FAYETTE COUNTY HOMETOWN CLUB:** Elects officers at 7 p.m. in 200 Harrington.
- CLASS OF '82:** Juniors are asked to pick up pictures from the Junior Ball from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on the first floor MSC.
- MSC HOSPITALITY FASHION BOARD:** "Styles That Made A Splash" summer fashion show will be held at 11 a.m. at Rudder Fountain.
- "MIDNIGHT COWBOY":** This Academy Award-winning film will be shown at 7:30 p.m. in Rudder Theatre.
- EVANS LIBRARY TOURS:** Will be conducted at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.
- UNITED CAMPUS MINISTRY:** Aggie Supper and meeting will begin at 6:15 p.m. at the A&M Presbyterian Church.
- CATHOLIC STUDENT ASSOCIATION:** Newman Club will meet at 7:30 p.m. in St. Mary's Student Center.
- "BUSINESS WEEK 1981":** An Interviewing Seminar will be given by Joe Reynolds, District Sales Manager of Proctor & Gamble, at 3:30 p.m. in Rudder Theatre. "Transition From College Life To Work Life," a seminar by Dave Wilson of Arthur Young & Co., will begin at 3:30 p.m. in Rudder Forum.
- "CAREER FAIR '81" BANQUET:** Will begin at 6:15 p.m. at the Brazos Center.
- BAHA' CLUB OF TAMU:** Will meet and hold an April Fools' Party at 7 p.m. in 407 Rudder.
- HILLEL CLUB:** Will elect officers at 7:30 p.m. at the Hillel Jewish Student Center.

- STUDENT GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS:** Polls will be open from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.
- MATH CLUB:** Meets at 7:30 p.m. in the third floor lounge in Milner Hall.
- CHARITY CHILI COOK-OFF:** Tickets will be sold through Friday in the MSC.

### THURSDAY

- "BUSINESS WEEK 1981":** "Patterns of Managerial Lives," a seminar by Dr. Ann Howard, Manager of Human Resources Research at AT&T, will begin at 3:30 p.m. in Rudder Forum. An informal party for students, faculty and company recruiters participating in "Business Career Fair '81" will begin at 7:30 p.m. at the Knights of Columbus Hall, Croesbeck Street, Bryan.
- TAMU JUGGLERS ASSOCIATION:** Meets at 8 p.m. in 302 Rudder.
- CATHOLIC STUDENT ASSOCIATION:** Night Prayer will be said at St. Mary's Church at 10 p.m.
- ALVIN HOMETOWN CLUB:** Will elect officers and hold an end-of-year party at 6 p.m. at the Dallas Club on FM road 2818.
- MSC OUTDOOR RECREATION COMMITTEE:** "Yukon Passage," a National Geographic documentary, will be shown at this meeting beginning at 7:30 p.m. in 301 Rudder.
- "FINIAN'S RAINBOW":** Fred Astaire and Petula Clark star in this musical fantasy about a leprechaun searching for his stolen pot of gold. 7:30 & 10:15 p.m. in 601 Rudder. Admission is \$1.
- EVANS LIBRARY TOUR:** Will be conducted at 11 a.m.
- INTERNATIONAL STUDENT WEEK:** A Food Fair with dishes prepared by international students will be held from 6-8 p.m. in the MSC. A fashion and talent show will begin at 8 p.m. in Rudder Auditorium. Tickets for the evening are \$6 and may be purchased at the MSC Box Office.
- BLACK AWARENESS COMMITTEE:** "Legacy Of A Dream," a film in memory of the assassination of Martin Luther King, will be shown at 8 p.m. in 401 Rudder.

## Center to honor scientists

A new \$2.2 million facility housing Texas A&M University's Food Protein Research and Development Center will be named in memory of Dr. Karl F. Mattil and Dr. Carl M. Carter.

The two scientists' work helped the center make a worldwide impact on production of high-protein foods from non-conventional sources.

H. R. Bright, chairman of the Texas A&M University System Board of Regents, announced the 28,000 square-foot building will be designated Carter-Mattil Hall.

Mattil was director of the center from 1968 until his death in 1977. Carter, who was killed in a 1976 airplane crash, headed the center's oilseed products division. He joined the staff in 1966.

The center works with a variety of protein food sources but is best known for its pioneering efforts with glandless cottonseed.

Normal cottonseed is toxic, but glandless seed can be processed and eaten by humans in addition to being used as feed for livestock.

## Whitt ...

(Continued from page 1)

instead of just writing formulas on the board," he said.

Whitt said that teachers, especially those teaching first-year mathematics courses, have to come down and communicate to the student's level.

Whitt said he had discussed his desire to pursue this "non-front-line" type of research with both C.J. Maxson, previous head of the mathematics department, and Lacey, but they had discouraged him.

On Whitt's third-year review, May 1, 1980, Maxson wrote, "... your research activity to date falls definitely below these goals (productivity coupled with a quality appropriate to the University mathematics department), and would not lead to a recommendation for tenure."

On Whitt's fourth-year review, March 3, 1981, Lacey wrote, "... by your own choice you have decided to move into research that is not the depth of research that is expected of candidates for tenure."

Whitt said he has discussed his evaluations with students as well as faculty because he feels "students have a right to know how their educators are selected and rewarded."

He said, "When I received my fourth-year evaluation I could see the writing on the wall, and I knew I would most likely not receive tenure, even though I still have two years left at A&M if I want to stay."

The student grapevine started buzzing after Whitt began expressing his dissatisfaction with the review process, but somewhere in the chain of conversation a few facts became distorted.

Since January, nearly 100 students have been writing letters, making phone calls and visits to administrators or signing petitions to demonstrate support for Whitt.

Tammy Vanwart, a senior chemistry major, said she first got involved when another student told her Whitt was being dismissed.

"I had Dr. Whitt two years ago for calculus and I couldn't believe that the math department would actually want to get rid of such a fine teacher," she said.

Vanwart said she sent a letter to both Chancellor Frank W.R. Hubert and Lacey in January urging them to reconsider the decision to dismiss Whitt.

She said: "Dr. Lacey questioned me sharply about where I received my information and told me that the situation was none of my concern because it was an administrative matter."

Lacey disagreed with one aspect of Vanwart's report: "I told her that she didn't have her facts straight and asked her where she had received her information but I don't recall telling her that it was none of her concern," he said.

However, Lacey said, "In my opinion and experience students have no input into decisions on tenure and promotion."

Vanwart said that after she received the call from Lacey she contacted Whitt and got the correct story. Vanwart has since passed out two petitions supporting Whitt.

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