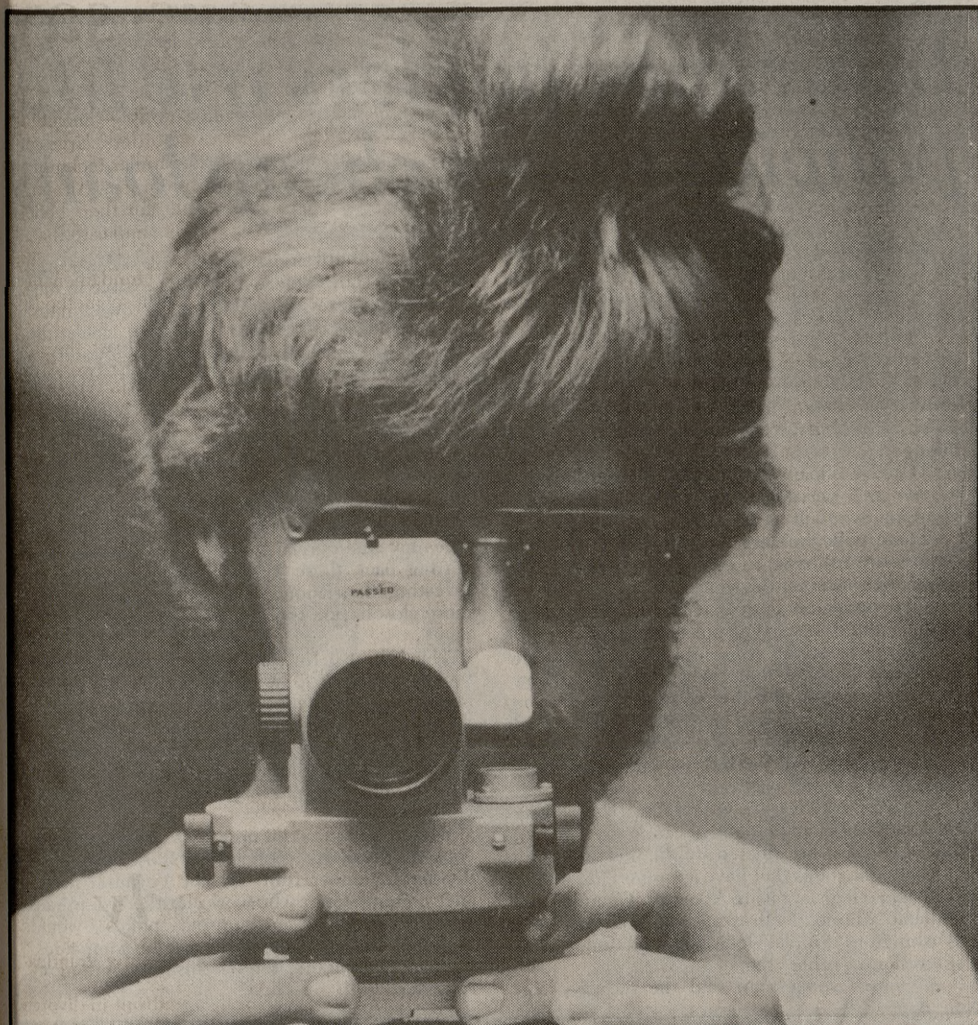


State



Staff photo by Greg Gammon

Telescopic vision

Scott McClure, a senior civil engineering student uses a transit to sight in on his target as part of a C.E. 201 lab exercise. The transit, a variation of a high powered telescope, is also good for girl watching, ... but don't tell the prof.

Local rates may increase; long distance to remain same

United Press International
AUSTIN — Southwestern Bell Telephone Co. Monday proposed a \$469.8 million rate increase for its Texas customers, 87 percent of which would come from increases for local telephone service.

Paul Roth, vice president for revenues and public affairs, said the "substantial" local rate increases were necessary because revenues from long distance rates can no longer continue to subsidize losses from local rate charges.

"Local service is price well below cost," he said. "Rates for the service must cover more of the costs. The time is here for local service to begin standing on its own."

The proposed increase would mean a charge of \$5.45 per month for one-party local residence service, and up to \$14.40 per month for one-party business local service.

The company also asked the Public Utility Commission for increase in private line services, touch tone services and custom calling charges. No increases were proposed for long distance, WATS, coin calls or directory assistance charges.

Last year Southwestern Bell asked the PUC for a

\$326.3 million increase, but the regulatory agency reduced the request to \$114.3 million earlier this year. Last November the telephone company instituted, under bond, a \$152.8 million rate increase.

The telephone company appealed the Texas Supreme Court for an injunction to allow Bell to continue the \$152.8 million rate increase after the PUC approved only the \$114.3 increase. The court denied the telephone company's request last month, and \$22.5 million are currently being refunded to customers.

Roth said the court's denial did not affect the company's proposed rate increase.

"We would have filed this rate increase request regardless of the appeal," he said. "The PUC has just not given us sufficient rate increases."

Roth also said competition on long distance services by other companies was a reason revenues from that service could no longer subsidize losses from local service.

"Increases in long distance service would only lead to further erosion of our revenues," he said. "If anything long distance rates should go down."

Prison law unaffected by decision

United Press International
HOUSTON — A lawyer for Texas prisoners who won a court order phasing out the housing of two inmates per cell said Monday a Supreme Court ruling that double-celling in Ohio is legal does not signal reversal of the Texas decision.

Attorney Donna Brorby of San Francisco told UPI by telephone she had not read the opinion early Monday but had inquired about it and believed the Ohio and Texas cases were significantly different.

"The lower court (in Ohio) found that housing two people in a 65-square-foot cell was per se a constitutional violation," Brorby said. "The Supreme Court is telling us now that that's not true."

"But the Ohio case is nothing like the Texas case. In Texas, we have old buildings, instead of new buildings. And we have 45-square-foot cells instead of 65-square foot cells. Forty-five square feet is substantially less."

"The bottom line in Texas is we're not talking about just a little bit of crowding. We're talking about crowding which has had a malignant effect on every aspect of prison life."

"I'm sure it (the new Supreme Court ruling) is not controlling. As a matter of law, I don't think it has much to do with our case at all. The Supreme Court hasn't made a definitive ruling in this area. And it still hasn't."

Texas Attorney General Mark White, Texas Department of Corrections officials and Justice Department lawyers who participated in the case were not immediately available for comment.

In a sweeping prison reform decree, U.S. District Judge William Wayne Justice earlier this year ordered TDC to end the practice of housing two inmates per 45-square-foot cell by Aug. 1, 1983.

Texas has indicated it will appeal that ruling.

Hill Country hit hardest

Flooded rivers claim 4

United Press International
A sixth straight day of rain again threatened the sodden Texas Hill Country, where four people have died, two remain missing and 2,000 had to be evacuated in widespread weekend flooding.

Four out-of-state sightseers who ventured onto rocks protruding from the rainswollen Perdonales River were swept away by the raging river Sunday. Two died, their bodies found in brush in the fast moving river, and officials resumed their search for the two missing at daylight Monday.

Officials said they feared the missing had drowned.

Although the heaviest rains occurred Saturday night and early Sunday, runoff from the slow-moving storms continued to pour into the numerous winding creeks and rivers that cut through the central Texas Hill Country.

Rivers and streams were at near bankful and minor flooding was reported in the Universal City and Schertz areas northeast of San Antonio as Cibolo Creek crested 2 feet above flood stage.

A flash flood watch was in effect Monday for much of the Hill Country and south central Texas, the National Weather Service said.

Cibolo Creek crested shortly before 4 a.m. at 19 feet, a Universal City police department spokesman said, and the Farm Road 78 bridge was closed due to high water.

However, waters began receding shortly before dawn and only minor flooding in low areas was reported, police said. No reports were received of homes being threatened by high water.

Several area creeks and rivers were expected to crest today and officials feared any more rainfall would cause widespread flooding.

"We're just watching and waiting," Department of Public Safety information officer Bill Carter said. "Nobody knows what's going to happen. We're hopefully looking at the sky."

The persistent storm system, however, continued to hover Monday over the waterlogged area.

"We're just at the saturation point," said Carol Golden of the Kerrville Fire Department Sunday. "If we get any rain of any kind, it's immediately going to run off. If we get any heavy rain now, we'd be in the same situation as the floods of '78. They killed about 25 people."

Most of the worst flooding — in

San Marcos and Austin — had begun receding early Sunday but officials worried additional rains could send the swollen waterways over their banks again. San Marcos officials said late Sunday they expected the Blanco River to crest about 25 feet out of its banks early today but cause only minor flooding.

"The river has dropped about 15 feet today," a Hays County Sheriff's Department spokesman said. "It crested once at about 2:30 Sunday morning and we're hoping the Monday morning crest won't be so bad."

San Marcos received more than 13 inches of rain during the weekend, forcing evacuation of 1,700 residents of the picturesque town of 22,000 located at the foot of the Hill Country. Most people were allowed to return home on Sunday but some, upon surveying the damage, turned around and returned to emergency shelters.

"Some went home but they

can't stay there because their clothes, mattresses and other belongings were damaged too heavily," said Red Cross spokesman Roger Colunga. "Some lady called to complain that she couldn't stay in her house because there were snake tracks on the floors."

Rains ceased during the night and all roads in Hays County were open, although a flash flood watch remained in effect, a sheriff's department spokesman said Monday.

In Austin, about 30 miles to the north, most of the 100 Onion Creek subdivision families evacuated by helicopter and four-wheel drive vehicles the night before returned to their homes despite warnings more rain could send Onion Creek over its banks again.

Residents of the capital city, site of Memorial Day weekend flooding that killed 13 and caused millions of dollars worth of damage, again Sunday found themselves cleaning up.

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