

From past to future ...
20 years of B-GS change

Texas A&M The Battalion

Serving the University community

Vol. 76 No. 52 USPS 045360 22 Pages In 2 Sections

College Station, Texas

Thursday, November 11, 1982

Brezhnev dies, word comes late

United Press International
MOSCOW — President Leonid Brezhnev, who presided over the Soviet Union since 1964 and made it the military equal of the United States, died of an apparent heart attack or stroke, officials said today. He was 75.

The ruler of the world's largest country died suddenly early Wednesday, the official Tass news agency said

today. It was not known whether Brezhnev was at home or in a hospital at the time of his death.

Although Brezhnev's declining health had been a source of growing concern in recent years, there had been no hint in recent days that he was ill.

At his last public appearance Sunday, viewing the annual Revolution Day military parade from his custom-

ary post atop the Lenin Mausoleum in Red Square, Brezhnev appeared relatively vigorous.

The initial announcement, delivered simultaneously by Tass, Soviet Radio and Television, said simply, "Leonid Brezhnev died a sudden death at 8:30 a.m. (12:30 a.m. EST) on Nov. 10, 1982."

The wording of the statement indicated either heart failure or a massive

hemorrhage felled the stocky Communist Party general secretary. More complete medical details were expected later, however.

"The name of Leonid Ilyich Brezhnev, a true continuer of Lenin's great cause and an ardent champion of peace and communism, will live forever in the hearts of the Soviet people and the entire progressive mankind," Tass said.

No funeral arrangements were announced immediately for the Soviet giant who led his country during the terms of five U.S. presidents.

Brezhnev was both head of state and general secretary of the Communist Party, whose leadership he took over from Nikita Khrushchev just over 18 years ago.

There are no published guidelines indicating whether anyone would

take over those offices on a temporary basis. There was no indication how long the succession process would take.

Analysts said they expected the collective leadership of the Soviet Union — the Council of Ministers, which is in charge of the government, and the Politburo, the top executives of the Communist Party — would rule the country until a clear line of succession is established.

Unemployment becomes reality for many

by Maureen Carmody
Battalion Reporter

For a growing number of Americans, unemployment is not just a possibility, but a reality that must be coped with.

Once out of work, people not only have to deal with the economic problems of being jobless, but also with the psychological trauma.

In early September, the nation's unemployment rate rose to a post-Depression high of 10.1 percent, leaving 11.3 million Americans jobless. And that's the number of Americans who can be accounted for. The statistic does not include Americans who have become so discouraged that they have dropped out of the job market altogether.

And Brazos County has not gotten away unscathed. The total civilian labor force in Bryan-College Station grew from 49,800 in August to 50,500 in September. With unemployment at 5.8 percent, 3,000 people are jobless.

But it's people — not figures — that tell the real story.

One young oilfield worker, 22, whose asked that his name be withheld, talked about his problems while standing in the unemployment line.

"You hear it all the time, 'Thanks but no thanks,' or 'we'll call you if we need you,' and they never do," he said.

"It's getting so I can't take it anymore. I got no place to go and no money and no place to get it. What do you do?"

Patricia Arbuckle, service control specialist for the Department of Human Resources in Bryan, said the increase in the labor force is causing an increase in families requesting help. She attributed this, in part at least, to people coming into the state hoping to find a job.

"We are dealing with a more transient population," Arbuckle said. "Many people are coming into the county without any support."

And support is tough to get in Texas.

The maximum unemployment insurance a person may receive is \$160 a week. But according to a 1980 report released by the Labor Department, to live in moderate comfort a Houston urban family of four needs at least \$19,025 a year — nearly triple the amount received through unemployment insurance.

Arbuckle, who deals mainly with

the Aid For Dependent Children program, said that child abuse also is increasing. The increase may not directly relate to increasing unemployment, but it seems to be correlated, she said.

Even though Bryan statistics on the crime rate as compared to unemployment contradict each other — the crime rate has shown a small decrease in Bryan — national statistics show a definite correlation between the two.

A 1981 report by the National Advisory Council on Economic Opportunity showed that a one percent increase in unemployment in 1970 accounted for a 3.8 percent increase in all homicides, 5.7 percent increase in robberies, 2.8 percent increase in larcenies and 8.7 percent increase in narcotic arrests. And a recent study done by two labor economists showed that with every one percent increase in national unemployment more than 300 men commit suicide.

Walt Baker, office manager of the local Texas Employment Commission, says the reason employment is at such a low is simply a collaboration of events such as high interest rates, a decrease in oil production and de-

mand, and a decrease in construction. "It's like tossing a rock in the middle of a pond, you don't make just a splash, you make ripples all over the pond," he said.

Even though Bryan-College Station's unemployment rate is down from 6.8 percent in August to 5.8 percent in September, there are still 2,950 people unemployed, Baker said. The decrease in unemployment is mainly because of seasonal hiring at Texas A&M, but even at the University the job openings are less than in previous years. From September 1981 to September 1982 the number of people applying for either employment or unemployment insurance in Bryan-College Station has increased 383 percent, he said.

Baker also said he didn't see any relief in the near future.

And how do the unemployed feel? Well, the young oilfielder agrees with Baker.

"I've been out there," he said. "There just isn't anything. And it's not like I haven't been looking because I have, I have. I don't want to go on welfare or anything, but you have to eat."

See Jobs, page 5



Political promises could cost consumers

White's policy may raise utility bills, prof says

by Brian Boyer
Battalion Reporter

Eliminating monthly fuel adjustment charges as proposed by Governor-elect Mark White in the recent election campaign would lead to higher utility bills for consumers, Texas A&M researchers say.

"We've been hearing a great deal during recent political campaigns about eliminating the right of the utilities to pass on increases in fuel prices to consumers," said economics professor Dr. S. Charles Maurice.

"If you did that, you would have a far higher increase in rates because the companies would request additional funds in case the costs for fuel jumped higher than they anticipated."

This viewpoint is shared by Texas A&M Electric Power Institute director John Denison.

"I don't really believe, that Mr. White or anybody that looks into the situation carefully will disagree with the basic idea that anybody who is selling energy is entitled to recover the cost of their fuel," he said.

Utility bills in most Texas cities include a base rate for electricity — plus the controversial fuel adjustment charge. The fuel adjustment fee is one way energy producers cope with frequent changes in the cost of fuel used to produce electricity.

To compute the fuel adjustment charge, a rate at which the utility company expects to be able to buy fuel is set. If the cost of fuel rises

above the predetermined rate, the additional expense can be passed on to consumers through the fuel adjustment charge without changing the base rate. A drop in the cost of fuel below the predetermined rate would result in a corresponding credit to customers.

College Station buys electricity from Gulf States Utilities Co. rather than generating its own power. The city uses a power adjustment clause to pass changes in the cost of power along to customers.

Denison explained how the system will deal with an impending increase in the cost of power supplied by Gulf States to the city:

"I'm not sure we know how much that increase is going to be. When it occurs, rather than us having to change College Station's

rate structures very rapidly and without a thorough analysis, we will merely use the power adjustment clause to pass on to the customer whatever increases we have to pay Gulf States over and above the level that was built into the rate structure."

The increase in the cost of power eventually will lead to an increase in the base rate charged to College Station customers, but with the power cost adjustment the base rate change doesn't have to be made immediately, Denison said.

Companies that sell conventional goods and services can increase their rates as costs increase. But utility companies must have Public Utility Commission approval before increasing base rates.

Research on the issue by Maurice and graduate assistant Jane Hobson indicates that eliminating the fuel adjustment clause could lead the utility companies to bankruptcy. The economists said forcing utility companies into bankruptcy would only cost taxpayers extra money, because the state would have to salvage the companies.

"If politicians really want to help consumers, they will deregulate the utility companies," Maurice said, "but I don't think you'll hear anybody in Texas talk about deregulating these companies anytime soon."

Dennison notes a potential for abuse in the system as it stands now, since there is no incentive for utility companies to hunt for the best price for fuel.

Columbia launches smoothly; begins a 5-day space mission

United Press International
CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. — Four astronauts flew the space shuttle Columbia into orbit today, carrying two commercial satellites for paying customers for the first time.

The big winged space freighter took off on time at 7:19 a.m. EST and reached into a normal orbit for the fifth time in a year and a half.

It was a spectacular Veterans Day send-off for astronauts Vance Brand, Robert Overmyer, Joseph Allen and William Lenoir, the first four-man crew and the first to fly a space shuttle on a charter flight.

Air Force space trackers calculated the Columbia would come within 60

miles of the two-man Soviet Salyut 7 space station in darkness over the Indian Ocean at 11:16 a.m.

National Aeronautics and Space Administration officials hailed the five-day, \$250 million mission as an important step toward shifting much of the shuttle system's operational costs from the government to commercial users.

Satellite Business Systems and Telesat Canada, the owners of the twin 7,300-pound communications satellites hauled up in the shuttle's cargo bay, are paying NASA \$18 million for carrying the satellites into orbit.

The shuttle, weighing a record

4,488,000 pounds at engine ignition, left a long trail of smoke and flame in its wake as it climbed into the cloudless sky.

The next shuttle flight is scheduled for January. It will be made by the second shuttle, the Challenger.

The weather was perfect for Columbia's launch, and Brand told the control center before takeoff: "I appreciate you guys ordering it for us."

The lakebed runways at Edwards Air Force Base in California's Mojave Desert were under water from recent rains, but officials said the Columbia will be able to land on a paved runway there next Tuesday.

Chemical plant blast injures several men

United Press International
LAKE CHARLES, La. — An explosion rocked a southwest Louisiana chemical plant early today, igniting a fire that critically burned at least one worker and forced officials to close a stretch of interstate highway.

The blast tore through a portion of the Olin Chemical Co. about 6:30 a.m. CST, said State Police trooper J.B. Singer. The extent of damage and the cause were not known, but the blast apparently was confined to an ammonia unit.

One worker suffered burns and was taken to West Calcasieu Cameron Hospital in Sulphur.

The fire apparently was under control about one hour after the explosion and officials reopened an 8-

mile area of Interstate 10, said trooper Gary Viator.

One man was killed and 58 other workers injured at the plant June 2 in a leak of toxic nerve gas. Discharges of phosgene, a deadly gas used during World War I chemical warfare, occurred twice at the plant in as many days.

The gas, used by Olin as a chemical catalyst, spewed into the air for 2½ minutes June 2. The accident killed Frank Rodriguez, 50, of Fresno, Texas. Two Olin employees, eight workers at an adjacent Conoco plant and 48 construction workers contracted by Conoco were treated for respiratory discomfort. No one was injured in the second leak June 3.



staff photo by Robert Snider

Russell Sanders' modern art is displayed on the Academic Building's front lawn.

Paper plate art stolen

by Patti Schwierke
Battalion Reporter

To Russell Sanders they were pennies from heaven — or modern art. To persons unknown they were paper plates to be disposed of — stolen, in Sanders' point of view.

To someone who knows who took them, they're worth a \$1 reward.

This fanciful set of circumstances grew out of Sanders' personal campaign to put a little art into the everyday life of the Texas A&M University campus. He had hoped to remain anonymous in his efforts, but he went public this week after his latest paper plate sculpture — which he called "Pennies From Heaven" — was stolen from the front lawn of the Academic Building.

The sculpture — or environmental painting — like two previous ones, was made of paper plates arranged to represent a musical composition.

"The idea I'm trying to portray is

visual music," said Sanders, a senior environmental design major from Abilene. "I happen to be doing it with paper plates because they are cheap. We are in an art vacuum here at Texas A&M. You can't get a total education without that art element."

Sanders said he started his campaign when he decided that substantial art — such as sculptures and paintings and a museum to put them in along with large-scale environmental structures — wasn't in Texas A&M's immediate future. Sanders said he wanted something now and decided to do something about it himself.

"I don't have \$50,000 or \$100,000 but I do have a brain and an imagination," Sanders said. "After I did the first one — 'Primary and Secondary Colors in C Major' — I had a vision for the next four. I decided to call the whole series 'Greatest Musical Hits: A Five Part Series.'"

The problems started when Sanders realized his art was being stolen from in front of the Academic Building each time he put it out. The latest incident occurred Tuesday with the theft of "Pennies From Heaven."

"If the art thieves are not caught, then we may have to move the next two paintings and possibly guard them," Sanders said. "I don't understand why people are stealing it."

"At first, I thought it was the trash people, but I found out it wasn't them."

Sanders said he had permission from the ground maintenance department to display his work on the lawn.

"Are people stealing it because it is that bad?" he asked.

"I wasn't sure if it was art at first but now I am. I'm reacting to nothing because there is nothing here for art. I am filling that void."

inside

Around town.....	4
Classified.....	6
National.....	11
Opinions.....	2
Sports.....	13
State.....	5
What's up.....	12

forecast

Today's Forecast: Chance of showers today. Cooler temperatures expected as weekend approaches.