

'Aggies make up 70 percent'

# Student shoplifting increases

by Christine Mallon  
Battalion Reporter

The number of students prosecuted for shoplifting in College Station is increasing and one supermarket manager says that students make up 70 percent of the problem in his store.

Safeway assistant manager Dan Feldman estimates that about 35 percent of his customers are students.

"But they're about 70 percent of our shoplifting problem," he said.

Feldman, who has been the assistant manager at the Safeway in Culpepper Plaza for five years, said there has been a huge increase in the number of students his store prosecutes for shoplifting.

College Station policeman Lt. Bernard Kapella said that because of the large increase in the amount of retail stores in the area, there has been a large increase in the number of Texas A&M students arrested for shoplifting.

"Females are the worst," Kapella, head of crime preven-

tion and community relations, said.

"More than 80 percent of the shoplifters brought in are females," he said.

This high percentage can probably be attributed to the assortment and high prices for cosmetics, Kapella said, which are the items most often taken by female shoppers.

The Kroger store located in Southwest Parkway Shopping Center is one of the three local supermarkets that employ security guards.

Skaggs Alpha Beta manager Oliver Bishop said his store has almost a 100 percent prosecution rate of shoplifters, but it is not his company's policy to discuss the methods of catching them.

"If we told people how our security system operates, then it wouldn't be very effective," Bishop said.

Feldman said he does not mind making the public aware of how Safeway's security system against shoplifters works.

"Hopefully, once shoppers know how much time and

money we spend to safeguard against thefts, they'll think twice before they steal something," he said.

Safeway hires off-duty police officers from the College Station Police Department to work in the store undercover.

Feldman said officers hide in catwalks which run throughout the store and use binoculars to closely watch shoppers.

Once a shopper is seen concealing an item, Feldman said, the officer continues to watch him to see if he leaves the store with the item. When he is outside the store an awaiting officer approaches him. The officer asks the suspect if he has something in his possession that he didn't pay for. If the shopper can't prove that he paid for the item, he is brought back into the store and arrested.

"Once an arrest is made, it's out of our hands and into the police department's," Feldman said.

"The rest is just like Adam-12," he said. "They're taken to either the city or county jail, depending on the value of the item

stolen."

The city jail handles all Class-C misdemeanors. Thefts under \$5 fall into this category. Two hundred and six dollars must be posted to be released.

"That \$206 is used to pay the fine in most cases, but all jurisdiction is left up to the judge," Kapella said. However, \$206 is the maximum fine in these cases.

The Brazos County jail handles all Class-B misdemeanors, including theft from \$5 to \$20. A maximum fine of \$1,000 and/or a small jail term is assessed. A Class-A misdemeanor for theft includes items valued between \$20 and \$200. The maximum fine for a Class A is \$2,000 and/or a maximum jail sentence of one year. Any theft above that amount is a felony.

Michelle McDonough, a graduate student in the psychology department, has talked with several students who have been

arrested for shoplifting. She said most of them admitted to shoplifting before, but this was the first time they were caught.

McDonough said she is aware there are some people with problems who steal for attention, because they're compelled to or because they have a serious problem and don't realize what they're doing.

Feldman, Class of '66, said he realizes that Texas A&M students are a major asset to the community and because of that, he gives them special considerations when it comes to prosecuting.

"Usually, we'll prosecute a student under a Class-C no matter how much the stolen goods cost," he said.

He also said that on rare occasions he'll completely drop all charges on a Texas A&M student if he feels the student has learned a lesson without being arrested.

## European companies agree on missile pact

United Press International DALLAS — The LTV Corporation announced Sunday at the Paris Air Show that its Vought aerospace subsidiary has signed an agreement with three European firms for international marketing of Vought's Improved Lance missile.

The agreement includes Wegmann & Company of West Germany, BPD Difesa Spazio of Italy and the Royal

Ordnance Factories of the United Kingdom and calls for an evaluation of the European market and a preliminary production analysis to assess the feasibility of European production, said a Vought spokesman.

Improved Lance is a highly advanced version of the Lance battlefield missile currently deployed by the United States and five other NATO countries.

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## Senate OKs House changes in bill creating state ethics commission

United Press International AUSTIN — The state Senate Saturday agreed to House changes in a bill to create a state ethics commission, clearing the way for the measure to go to Gov. Mark White.

The compromise bill, fashioned by a joint conference committee, drew some opposition from Sen. J.E. "Buster" Brown, R-Lake Jackson, because it contained no provision

requiring immediate reporting of contributions during the final nine days before an election.

But Sen. Ted Lyon, D-Rockwall and sponsor of the bill, accused Brown of supporting the provision — which has widespread opposition among legislators — merely as a means of killing the bill.

Currently, campaign contributions received during the final nine days before an election

are not required to be reported until a month after the vote.

The major provision in the bill approved by both Houses would prohibit for the first time the personal use of campaign funds.

The conference committee also altered the bill to specify that only one of five citizens on an Ethics Advisory Commission could be a lobbyist.

## Actor O'Brien falls ill

United Press International SAN ANTONIO — Actor Pat O'Brien became ill during the final act of a weekend theater performance and was taken to a hospital, authorities said Monday.

He was listed in stable condition in Humana Hospital of San Antonio early Monday, a hospital spokeswoman said. Another spokesperson said preliminary tests on the actor, 83, indicated he was suffering from anemia.

O'Brien was hospitalized late Saturday after he started to stagger and had to leave the stage during the final act of "On Golden Pond" at the Fiesta Dinner Playhouse, the spokesperson said.

The actor was to have finished the four-week performance Sunday.

O'Brien, cast as a fast-talking Irishman in most of his more than 110 pictures, appeared in such movies as "Boy Meets Girl," "Angels with Dirty Faces" and "The Fighting 69th."

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