

# Program helps senior citizens serve others

by Leslie Yoder

Battalion Reporter

The needs of our senior citizens are often overlooked, but the Retired Senior Volunteer Program has been serving Brazos County for the past 11 years in a most unique way.

"Most programs are designed to give to the senior citizen — Social Security and Medicare for example," Project Director Shirley Plapp said. "However, the beauty of RSVP is that people over 60 can serve the community by using the skills and expertise they have perfected over a lifetime of living, loving, and learning."

There are 46 active volunteer stations in the B-CS area that give senior volunteers the chance to serve as teacher aides, clerical assistants, beauticians, puppeteers or just someone willing to visit nursing home residents, she said.

The Lincoln Recreation Center, Bryan Volunteers in Public Schools, American Red Cross and Children's Story Hour are just a few of the stations that offer volunteer services.

RSVP Volunteer Coordinator Janie Velasquez spearheads the recruitment, orientation, training and job placement of the senior volunteers.

"Oftentimes, I will get a phone call from the families of senior citizens who want me to go to the elderly person's home and let them know what RSVP is all about," Velasquez said.

RSVP also supplies information to anyone interested in community volunteer service.

"We are here to serve those people over 60 and the non-profit agencies where they work," she said.

Plapp said RSVP, with nearly 500 volunteers, has been a highly-matched program for the past two years funded by federal, state, and local monies. The Brazos County Community Council, sponsor for RSVP, provided 50 percent of the funding while the remaining 50 percent of the budget has come from the Texas Department of Aging, Brazos County, United Way, the cities of Bryan and College Station, A&M Methodist Church, and the Kiwanis Club.

Last spring, a survey of 10 percent of the RSVP senior volunteers was conducted by a Texas A&M class under the direction of Dr. Shirley Stone in the Interdisciplinary Education Department at Texas A&M. Stone also serves as a volunteer management specialist on the RSVP Advisory Council.

"The results from the survey indicated that RSVP was a major part of the senior citizens' social lives aside from personal church involvement," Plapp said. Overall, the results showed that the senior volunteers had a positive attitude towards the RSVP program, she said.

Volunteer Joe Rodriguez, 70, has been active in RSVP for about 2 years serving as a translator for residents at the Sherwood home.

Another RSVP volunteer, 78-year-old Augustina Munoz, said she has enjoyed self-satisfying benefits from her six-year involvement in the program.

"Sometimes it just does me good to get out of the house and visit with everyone here at Sherwood," Munoz said. "People just need to be hugged and to have someone to talk with."



staff photo by Guy Hood

## Bohemian-sized pretzel

Sarah Marie Burton, daughter of Tom and Alison Burton, Class of '81, does her best to consume a German pretzel at the Brazos Valley Bohemian Fest.

A wide variety of food and music were provided during the festival, which was held Saturday in Central Park.

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7:30  
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are invited

## Police Beat

The following incidents were reported to the University Police Department on Friday:

- THEFTS:**
- A black Ranger 10-speed bike from the Moses Hall bike rack.
  - Two trees from the rear of AMU-TV.
  - A wallet from a backpack left unattended in the second lounge of the Memorial Student Center. The owner went into Rumours, which is lo-

cated behind the post office in the MSC. The wallet contained a Texas driver's license, Texas A&M I.D. card, IMPACT card, \$2 cash and other personal property.

- ARREST:**
- A student was arrested and charged with bicycle theft and possession of a prohibited weapon. University Police stopped the student, who was riding a bicycle that had been reported stolen from the Davis-Gary bike

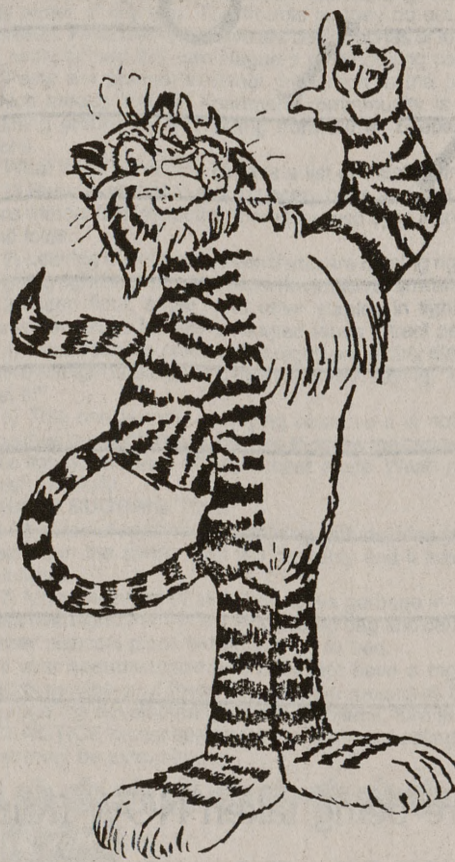
rack on Sept. 24. The police confiscated the student's weapon, a "knuckle knife," and notified the bike owner.

**BURGLARY:**

- A Clarion equalizer, two Jensen speakers, 48 cassette tapes and a tape case were stolen from a 1981 Ford pickup. The vehicle was parked in the student lot east of the John H. Linsey Building (University Press).

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by Jim E

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