

# Bryan students learn with computers

by Jamie Hataway  
Battalion Reporter

With closed eyes, the sounds of the room create an image of a video arcade. An excited, suppressed, "ptchoo" or "gum" occasionally interjects the "chug-chug" of aliens as they march in on their victims. But open eyes reveal four elementary students in class, intent on shooting the alien before it gets them. The children can outsmart the alien only by bombing it with a correct answer. These children are im-

proving their math skills with the help of computers. One computer-assisted instruction program now being used in Bryan schools is called Chapter 1. The program was started in Bryan in 1975, but included only fifth, sixth and seventh grades. Now grades two through seven are included and 140 computers are used in the program. The federally funded program is for students who have fallen behind in math or reading. "We have found that this type

of child responds well to instruction through computers," Bryan Independent School District computer education supervisor Sandra Davis said. "The kids love the computers," she said. "They are not least bit intimidated by them and you'd be surprised to see how quickly they learn to use them." Second grade students are introduced to the computer and its use as a learning tool, but no work is done on them. From third grade on, the computer is the teaching

method used to get children caught up in school. The children are taken out of regular class — usually physical education — for 30 minutes two or three times a week. Third grade students try to master games such as Alien Addition, while fourth grade students tackle Meteor Multiplication and others. Sylvia Colwell, who teaches remedial level courses at Henderson Elementary School and St. Joseph Parochial School, said that fun games are played at

times to relax the students. They become so intensely involved in the learning games that at times a break is needed. Fun games also are a reward for good work, she said. But all games have educational qualities. A child is given incentive to practice reading skills when a reward message flashes before him or when instructions for playing the games are on the computer screen. "The children have become extremely enthusiastic about learning by using computers,"

Colwell said. "Some of these children have failed so long they just don't care anymore." But computers are changing that attitude. As one group of students lined up to leave the one-room portable building housing the four computers at Henderson Elementary, four other children burst through the door, anxious to get busy. Computers started beeping and aliens commenced bombing as each student tried to beat the computers so they could move to a faster level.

"Look Mrs. Colwell," one student exclaimed, pointing to the computer screen. "Hits — 66, Misses — 1" flashed before him. After praising the accomplishment, Colwell set the computer at a higher level and the child once again became absorbed with outsmarting the aliens. "They love it," Colwell said. "The computer is one of the best things that's happened to education. At home it's so hard to compete with television and the video industry."

## Faculty offered free counseling

by Kimm Daulton  
Battalion Reporter

A free counseling service is available for Texas A&M faculty members who are experiencing pressure or job changes. The Faculty Assistance Program, which began in September, is aimed at preventing minor problems from becoming serious ones, Associate Dean of the College of Liberal Arts Dr. Candida J. Lutes said.

with psychologist Dr. Sara Jones, who works 10 hours a week with the program, Lutes said. "We wanted someone who was familiar with the University who could deal with short term crisis off campus," Lutes said. Jones, who works with the College of Medicine, also has an office located in a professional building off campus so participants "won't be seen," Lutes said.

"We feel like many people don't get help in the early stages for a number of reasons," Lutes, who is chairman of the Faculty Assistance program, said. "Either they don't know where to go, they are afraid of going, or they lack of confidentiality. There is a great deal of faculty pressure existing at A&M and we wanted a program that would ensure confidentiality so people might consider counseling," Lutes said. "Since the visits do not require University payments, there are no insurance forms to back that might reveal someone's identity," she said. Faculty members are allowed six free visits a year

Jones meets with the committee to report head counts and general response to the program, but her contract requires that she keep identities confidential, Lutes said. Jones deals with two types of counseling; short term or diagnosis and referral. Faculty usually are referred to local services when a need for long term counseling is diagnosed, Lutes said. Although the program has not been well publicized, the response has been overwhelming, Lutes said. About 82 percent of those who have used the program have had problems that they felt affected their job performance, whether stress related or otherwise, Lutes said. The program, the first of its type at Texas A&M, is on a trial basis and has not been funded yet, Lutes said.

## Police beat

The following incidents were reported to the University Police Department through Tuesday: THEFTS: • A red 10-speed bicycle from the Leggett Hall bike rack. • A red 10-speed bicycle from the front of Puryear Hall. • A red 1980 Honda motor-

cycle from the staff lot east of Kyle Field. RECOVERY: • A white 10-speed bicycle was found on Front Street in the Married Student Housing area. The bike was taken to the police department. ARREST:

• A person was arrested for the possession of a pipe that contained marijuana. The person also was wanted for two unpaid traffic tickets issued by the Texas Department of Public Safety, University Police said. The person was taken to Brazos County Jail.

## Burglars plague restaurant

Sometime during the night of Oct. 30, burglars broke into Ben's Bar-B-Que at 1600 San Jancinto St. in Bryan — the third burglary at the restaurant since February. More than 100 pounds of cooked meat, seven cases of beer, and other items were taken. Any information about the crime or the persons responsible should be reported to Crime Stoppers at 775-TIPS. If information submitted this week leads to an arrest and a grand jury indictment, Crime Stoppers will pay the caller \$1,000 in cash. Callers will be given a special coded identification number for their protection. Crime Stoppers also pays cash for information on any felony crime or wanted fugitive.

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