

New library system is less error-prone

by Brenda Bivona
Battalion Reporter

A new computer system installed a year ago to improve book circulation in the Sterling C. Evans Library has resulted in fewer errors in the circulation process. "This system is much more accurate than the previous one because the computer scans the identification numbers," Colleen Cook, acting head of the circulation division, said. "Before, the numbers were key punched and there was a lot of room for error. The main reason for changing circulation systems was to eliminate as many errors as possible. With the old system we had people coming in with overdue notices and they hadn't even checked out the book. This system makes it easier to know what books are checked out and where they are."

The intention of the new system has been to maintain a higher level of circulation of books to the library's clientele. "It's hard to say when we noticed an improvement with the new system because we have been using the old system and the new system simultaneously," she said. "During the last year we have been phasing into the new system and in September of 1983 we had absolute conversion to the new system." The computer has 36,000 student library numbers in its data base. A library number is available for every registered student at Texas A&M. When a student applies for a library card he is given the number already assigned to him by the computer. The students' local mailing addresses are updated at this time for the purpose of sending overdue notices.

Texas A&M students cannot check out library materials without a library card. Applications for the cards are available at the entrance of the library. After filling out the application, the student needs to turn the form in to the circulation desk. Cook said that students usually receive their cards when they turn in the application. Faculty members have a combination I.D. card and library card, she said. "A goal we have is to combine the student's I.D. card and library card," Cook said. "I don't know when this could go into effect." Other schools using this computer circulation system include the University of Nebraska and Arizona State University.

Local Guardian Angels get new head, graduate eleven

by Tricia Parker

Battalion Reporter
For the Bryan-College Station chapter of the Guardian Angels, it was a weekend of growth and transition. Growth because the organization graduated its first class of 11 "Angels" and transition because of the resignation of the Joy McLean as head of the chapter.

McLean, who founded the chapter three months ago, resigned shortly after Saturday's graduation ceremony. She will be succeeded by Joe Bernal.

McLean said she resigned because of the time factor. She wants to join the Bryan police force and thinks the Guardian Angels takes up too much time for her to do both effectively.

"I think this was the most natural time for a leadership transition," McLean said. "I love the Angels very much but I have to look 20 years into the future to see what I'll be doing. I needed a job that I could work at for 20 years and still enjoy it."

McLean said she always wanted to join the police and that she joined the "Angels" because the work they do is similar.

"But the object of the Angels is crime deterrence," she said. "We look for people who need help, even if it's just carrying their groceries up the stairs for them."

She said the "Angels" are not vigilantes. "We don't go out there with this macho attitude. We talk to the people and see what they want, what they're afraid of."

The Guardian Angels work in patrols of eight people. The new graduates went on their first patrol Saturday night after the graduation ceremony. The patrol was led by Lisa Sliwa, the wife of the organization's founder.

From now on each new member will go on two four-hour patrols twice a week.

"We like quiet patrols best," she said. "They may be boring but we don't like to make arrests. We want things to be nice and boring."

"We go to where the criminals are, when they are there. It's not like if we see an armed robbery we're gonna bust in there and say 'We're the Guardian Angels, hand over your gun'. We would call the police and try to keep bystanders from getting hurt."

In addition to the biweekly patrols, members also attend one two-hour training session each week to learn new skills or to brush up on old ones.

"A person can't just go through the initial three-month training and be trained forever," McLean said.

McLean said the people who join the Guardian Angels are

tired of seeing people hurt and criminals going unpunished.

"They're very nice people," she said, "your basic all American type person. They're very intelligent and very kind."

Candidates are screened very carefully to make sure they have no criminal record or that they are not trigger-happy or emotionally disturbed.

"We don't even want to see those kind of people," McLean said.

There are 29 Guardian Angels now, including 18 still in training. McLean said she thinks will help deter crime.

"We just care about this town and the people," she said, "and we don't want to see anyone hurt by criminals."

Foreign students to get a hand with adjusting

by Jamie Hataway
Battalion Reporter

Foreign students coming to Texas A&M next semester will have help adjusting to the new environment through a buddy system called International Friends. The Tau Kappa junior honor society is starting the program in an attempt to help foreign students adjust to life in the United States and, more specifically, at Texas A&M, society member Mark Eddy says.

Tau Kappa, whose activities center on serving the University and the community, will meet with a group from International Student Services next week to discuss problems facing foreign students and how to handle these problems.

Eddy and three other Tau Kappa members formed a committee this semester to determine ways to help foreign students. The committee is trying to arouse interest on campus to

make the new program a success, Eddy said.

Committee members have met with groups such as Student Government and extramural sports clubs to gain University support for the program and get the new students involved in campus activities.

Although many activities help American students adjust to life on campus, there are not many to help foreign students, Eddy said. The International Student Association and other related clubs help in some situations but not in all cases, he said.

"They get together and discuss problems abroad and problems in the United States, but they don't get any actual involvement with the Americans," he said. Even though the world is becoming more "Americanized," he said, people from other countries still aren't aware of the huge cultural difference

between them and us.

"These students need someone to be their friend," he said. "They need someone to call on if a problem ever comes up."

"The first thing we need to do is get the students out of their apartments. Sometimes there's not a lot of American students in the complex and the foreign students tend to isolate themselves and study a lot. We need a way to help them meet people."

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