

Date of Muster could change due to holiday

by Holly Powell
Battalion Reporter

The Student Government Muster Committee is considering changing the date of Muster this year because it could conflict with students' Easter weekend.

The traditional date of the memorial service, April 21, falls on the Saturday before Easter this year, which may cause fewer people to attend, Muster Committee chairman Nancy York said.

"We're really sitting on the fence here," York said. "We

have to decide to uphold tradition or make Muster available to everybody."

The committee will vote on the issue at a Student Government meeting next week.

"There is no precedent for this, so after they vote I'm sure they will get a lot of opposition," director of student activities Carolyn Adair said.

The committee surveyed students in mid-November for reaction to changing the date of Muster. The majority of the students surveyed said

they would not stay for Muster on April 21 and that the date should be changed.

The committee also received input from the School of Military Science and the Association of Former Students, York said.

The general consensus of the former students was to change the date. The basic attitude of the military science department, however, was "You don't change Christmas because it comes at a bad time," she said.

6 killed, 6 injured in Trailways wreck

United Press International

LIVINGSTON — A Trailways bus rammed the rear of a truck before dawn Wednesday, catapulted off a slicked U.S. 59 bridge and slammed into a creekbank below, killing six people and injuring six others.

Some witnesses said the badly injured driver suggested he might have blown a tire, but a passenger said he thought the driver, at the wheel less than an hour, might have dozed off. A cop said the bus apparently was speeding.

The Texas Department of Public Safety said there were 12 people aboard. Six were killed, including three mothers traveling with young children who survived — and six, including the driver, were injured.

Rescuers had to cut through the roof of the crumpled wreck — these three miles north of this east Texas town, 75 miles northeast of Houston, to get to the dead and injured.

All but four rows of seats, the luggage and the rear lavatory toilet seat were found piled in front of the bus. Pools of blood stained the creek.

The truck driver involved, Edward Palomo Garcia, 43, said he had just left home in his outboard Trailways bus, en route from Shreveport, La., to Houston, hit his truck about 1:55 a.m.

He thought the bus tried to pass him because most of the damage was on the left side of the trailer.

The crippled bus careened across the median of the four-

lane road, crashed through a guardrail, became airborne briefly and landed on the bank of Milton Creek 31 feet below, investigators said.

Garcia said two trucks had passed him moments before and the bus shocked him when it slammed into his truck.

"I never saw it. I don't know where it came from," said Garcia, who was unhurt.

"That bus hit me hard," Garcia said. "I didn't know what had hit me, so I parked across the bridge and ran back. I knew something went down off the bridge. When I ran back, I saw

Mora, 40, who said he was an illegal alien from Veracruz, Mexico, living in Nacogdoches, Texas, said he was sitting behind the driver and thought he might have dozed off.

"I think he fell asleep," Mora said in Spanish to reporters at Livingston Memorial Hospital.

A DPS spokesman said the official cause was undetermined, but the road was rained-slicked and Trooper David Sandlin at the scene said "there was an indication of excessive speed" by the bus.

Garcia, who said he was going about 40 mph in the right lane at the time, said it was not his fault.

"I really think there was nothing I could do. He just hit me and went down," Garcia said.

Business Manager Myrtle McLaurin of Livingston Memorial Hospital said the 45-bed facility was overloaded by the accident, which forced Administrator Robert Finch to declare a hospital "disaster."

Four injured were taken to Hermann Hospital in Houston by helicopter ambulance, including the driver, another man and two 12-year-old children, a boy and a girl. Their conditions were listed as satisfactory.

The two admitted to Livingston Memorial, a 10-year-old girl and Mora, also were listed in satisfactory condition.

Trailways said the bus left Shreveport, La., at 1:55 a.m. CST, stopped in Logansport, La., and Nacogdoches, and changed drivers in Lufkin. The bus was due in Houston at 7:30 a.m. Greyhound does not serve the route.

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"It was quiet and that scared me. I hollered and one lady answered there were people hurt."

Garcia ran to his house a half mile away, called authorities and his wife, Dale, came back with him in his pickup and helped him aid some of the victims.

The bus landed on its side with the door toward the sky, witnesses said. The bus driver, Edward Perry, 37, of Houston, was pinned inside and had to be cut free before being taken by helicopter ambulance to Houston.

Injured passenger Ramone

Wrecked plane's tapes could determine cause

United Press International

EL PASO — Tapes from a twin-engine plane that crashed into the Franklin Mountains last week, killing all four people aboard, will tell whether an air controller led the plane into the mountains during a windstorm or the pilot made an error, an aviation expert said Wednesday.

"I am drawing no conclusions," said J.O. Johnson, a National Transportation Safety Board investigator, "until I have heard the tapes of the transmissions" between pilot Lyle Foster, 46, of Temple City, Calif., and an air controller from Albuquerque, N. M., 266 miles away.

Johnson said there is no local air control at El Paso between the hours of midnight and 6 a.m., a condition that has existed since the traffic controllers' strike of 1981. Foster's plane, owned by Gordon Coker of Santa Fe Springs, Calif., crashed at 12:40 a.m.

Johnson said all major airports in the country have an "approach plate," a standard set of instructions concerning the individual airport. In El Paso's case, he said, the standard instructions for westbound aircraft are to fly south around the Franklin Mountains.

"If he (pilot) was flying visually, he would follow those instructions," Johnson said. "If he was flying by instrument and Albuquerque Air Control, I would think he would still be using his approach plate, too, but I don't know that."

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Whether the crash was caused by an Albuquerque air controller's directions or pilot error will be determined by a study of the tapes,

Johnson said he was told by the chief of the Albuquerque Air Traffic Control Center that an Albuquerque air traffic controller was in contact with Foster when he flew his Cessna 210 into the side of El Paso's Franklin Mountains in the early morning hours of Nov. 22.

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MADD to monitor reps who nix container law

United Press International

D-LUBBOCK — Mothers Against Drunk Drivers will monitor re-election bids by legislators voting against a bill that would have banned open alcoholic containers in vehicles, the MADD state director said Wednesday.

Marinelle Timmons of Houston said MADD does not endorse candidates, but she said MADD members would raise questions at the public forums of certain legislators up for re-election, including state Rep. Roy Salinas, D-Lubbock.

the a Texas Tech student organization, Timmons said Salinas hurt himself by leading opposition against the bill.

She said MADD members will ask Salinas and others why they did not support the bill that

would have banned open liquor containers in cars.

"We'll put them on the spot," she said, adding MADD members would return to Austin next session to lobby for legislation outlawing open alcoholic containers in automobiles.

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