



**Symphonic Band**

Cindi Tackitt, Battalion staff

The Texas A&M Symphonic Band performs in the Memorial Student Center Thursday

afternoon in a continuation of the Memorial Student Center Christmas Program.

# Arkansas prison board told on overcrowding

**United Press International**  
PINE BLUFF, Ark. — The state Correction Board was told Thursday that the population of the state prison system again is nearing capacity, and that as many as 600 new beds might be needed by the end of the next year.

A.L. "Art" Lockhart, director of the Correction Department, said the system's experience from March to November of this year had led to a projection that the system would see a net average increase of 67 inmates a month next year.

The department expects to get 200 new beds when the Bi-State Criminal Justice Center at Texarkana is opened next March, but, if population projections are accurate, 600 more beds will be needed before the end of the year. Griffin predicted that as many as 300 beds would be needed by August.

"If our math is correct, by December of next year we will have 600 inmates backed up (in county jails)," Richard Earl Griffin of Crossett, the board chair-

man, said, adding that he was not optimistic about any immediate efforts to resolve the problem.

"Because of the nature of corrections and the fact that we don't have the constituency our problems aren't dealt with until they're major problems. I think the next session of the Legislature will deal with that," he said.

Griffin said he was startled particularly by the increase in the system's female population, which was projected at 18 percent annually.

As of Thursday, a total of 4,144 inmates were being housed in the system, leaving only 40 empty beds. The population of the Women's Unit at Pine Bluff was 206. The facility is designed to hold only 175, but Lockhart said the larger population had been accommodated by double-bunking and putting beds in areas not designed for them.

At one point earlier this year, about 200 inmates were backed up in the state's county jails, but

the problem was relieved temporarily with the opening of new facilities.

## Amtrak toll-free number

**United Press International**  
WASHINGTON — Planning a train trip for the holidays? Amtrak has a new, easy-to-remember, nationwide, toll-free number for information and reservations from anywhere in the 48 continental states. Just dial 1 (800) USA-RAIL.

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## Red bricks aid traffic decay

by David Manning

**Battalion Staff**  
The landscape at Texas A&M undergoing a facelift with the placement of the epoxy-rock concrete, better known as prairie rock, with interlocking bricks.

Michael Goldwater, assistant director of the Grounds Maintenance Department, said Thursday the brick is a better alternative to the epoxy-concrete because it will hold up longer under heavy traffic.

Michael Goldwater, assistant director of the Grounds Maintenance Department, said Thursday the brick is a better alternative to the epoxy-concrete because it will hold up longer under heavy traffic.

"The cost of replacing the pebbles with the bricks is approximately \$4 a square foot, so we're trying to replace larger areas at a time to reduce costs," he said.

The maintenance department does not have the money to finish replacing all the prairie rock on campus this year, Goldwater said, so everything will be done a little bit at a time.

He said most people seem to like the brick because it's much easier to walk and bike on.

The bricks also offer an advantage to the epoxy-concrete because when underground utility repairs need to be made, a few bricks can be dug up easier than having to tear up the whole area of the concrete, he said.



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