

# FCC delays access charges

**United Press International**  
 WASHINGTON — The Federal Communications Commission, responding to a storm of protest from Congress and consumers, tentatively voted Thursday to delay — as late as June 1985 — \$2-a-month telephone access charges for residential and small business customers.

The agency also said that when the flat monthly long-

distance surcharges, which had been set to start April 3, go into effect, they should be phased in gradually until 1990 and climb no higher than \$4.

The commissioners agreed to meet next Wednesday to issue a final ruling on the decision. They are taking a major shift in position reflecting virtually every suggestion contained in a letter that 32 senators, led by Sen. Robert Dole, R-Kan., sent to the FCC Wednesday.

But the decision apparently will not halt legislation aimed at delaying the charges for two years. Sen. Robert Packwood, R-Ore., chief sponsor of the measure that goes much further than the FCC decision, said he

will bring it to the floor for debate next week and still expects it to pass.

The House already has passed a bill to totally ban the charges for residential and small business customers.

Consumer groups, which want the charges eliminated, called the FCC decision a "transparent" tactic to delay the politically charged issue until after the 1984 elections.

The biggest winners in the decision were long-distance companies such as MCI and Sprint that compete with American Telephone & Telegraph.

Under the new plan, the companies would pay more for their connections to local lines but

would get a 55 percent discount — a sharply larger price break than the 20 percent to 25 percent post-divestiture discount initially planned by the FCC.

The discount would continue until the quality of the connection for the competing firms is improved to equal that of AT&T's.

While delaying the surcharge to individuals and businesses with one phone line will save customers some money.

FCC Chairman Mark Fowler said the action also would reduce or eliminate the \$1.75 billion cut in long-distance phone rates AT&T had originally planned to coincide with its breakup Jan. 1, a development he called "most unfortunate."

The commissioners said access charges that large business customers pay for their hook up to long distance services — \$6 per line — will go into effect April 3 as scheduled.

Jack Smith, head of the agency's Common Carrier Division, told reporters the FCC expects to complete a study of the surcharges by Dec. 1, but that they may not be imposed until late spring or June 1985 because of required procedures.

The commissioners said the decision to delay the charges came in response to a crush of protests from the public, state governments, state regulatory agencies, Congress and businesses.

## Arbor day celebrated

By ERIN K. PYLE  
 Reporter

Today is the 111th anniversary of Arbor Day, and the office of College Station is celebrating with a tree planting ceremony at the Southwood Athletic Park at 4 p.m.

The word "arbor" is derived from the Latin term meaning tree. Arbor Day was originally conceived as a beautification program for public grounds, but it has grown to represent the importance of forestry preservation.

Arbor Day originated in Nebraska in 1872. The idea of Arbor Day was first proposed by J. Sterling Morton, member of the Nebraska Board of Agriculture who later was U.S. secretary of agriculture.

In Nebraska, Arbor Day is observed on April 22, Morton's birthday. Observance of Arbor Day has spread throughout the U.S. and to foreign countries. The date of the observance varies, but the last Friday in April has been adopted in several states.

College Station Mayor G. Halter, Mike Owens, campus director of College Station Independent School District, the Rev. Bill Oxley of St. Thomas Episcopal Church and Dorothy Miller, current director of Brazos Beautiful Inc., a statewide beautification organization, will take part in the program.

## Seniors

(continued from page 1)

If the graduating seniors are clear and sees no red dots, is then ready to board his plane.

Flights will leave G. B. White Coliseum at 2 p.m., 7:30 p.m. Friday, May 4 and 8 a.m. Saturday morning, May 5.

Senior Schedule for Spring 1984:

- Now - Order Degree Applications - Heaton Hall
- Feb 3 - Last Day to apply for a degree, last day to order graduation announcements
- April 2 - Cap and Gown available - MSC Bookstore
- May 2 - Blocked Graduation list (clear list) posted - Heaton Hall
- May 4-5 - Commencement

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**DELTA UPSILON**  
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 NOTICE: New location for the January 20th party!  
 - Southwest Village Apartments Party room, 1101 Southwest Parkway, 8 p.m. -  
 -For more information call Nigel 693-6515 or Chip 693-6365-

**MSC Town Hall**  
 presents  
**An Evening of Jazz with PAT METHENY Group**  
 Sunday February 5, 1984  
 8:00 pm  
 Rudder Auditorium  
 Tickets: \$9.00, \$8.50, \$7.50  
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**Welcome Back, Aggies!**  
 The Brothers of Sigma Chi cordially invite all men interested in fraternities to join us in our Spring Rush activities.

**SPRING RUSH SCHEDULE**

Jan. 21,	8 p.m.	WELCOME BACK AGGIES	Sigma Chi House
Jan. 25,	8 p.m.	SKI LODGE PARTY	Sigma Chi House
Jan. 28,	8 p.m.	BARN DANCE	Sigma Chi House
Feb. 1,	8 p.m.	TGIW	Sigma Chi House
Feb. 4,	8 p.m.	FINAL RUSH	Sigma Chi House

**If you have any questions, do not hesitate to call:**

**Sigma Chi House 693-8265**  
**Tom Owen (Rush Chairman)**  
 or  
**Jim Klatt 779-8965**