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Texas A&M The Battalion

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Photo by JAIMI LOPEZ

Which way up

David Hessney, an architecture major from Plano, unloads furniture for Hart Hall. Hart and other dorms are getting new desks during a campus-wide dorm renovation project.

Most Aggies dislike Court's GSS decision

By KARI FLUEGEL
Staff Writer

Fifty-five percent of the students, faculty and staff polled by the Battalion said Tuesday they disagreed with the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals ruling in favor of Gay Student Services.

One hundred students exiting Sterling C. Evans Library between 12:30 and 3:30 p.m. Tuesday were randomly polled.

Participants were asked: "The Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals has ruled in favor of Gay Student Services which is seeking recognition by Texas A&M as an on-campus student organization. Do you agree or disagree with the decision?"

Of those surveyed, 40 agreed, 55 disagreed and five were undecided.

The polling should not be considered a true sample of the entire student body. Results did not reflect the true distribution of the make-up of the Texas A&M population; 39 seniors, 21 juniors, eight sophomores, five freshmen, 20 graduate students and seven faculty and staff members participated. Thirty-three women and 67 men participated, the average age of the respondents was 22.62.

The survey addressed a Fifth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruling made Friday stating that Texas A&M will have to recognize Gay Student Services as a campus organization.

The ruling, made by a three-judge panel, reversed the 1982 decision of U.S. District Judge Ross N. Sterling who had ruled that A&M did not violate a protected constitutional right by denying recognition to the group.

GSS was denied recognition by Texas A&M in 1976 on the grounds that homosexual conduct was illegal in Texas and that it would be inappropriate for Texas A&M to recognize an organization likely to "incite, promote and result" in homosexual activity.

That argument became outdated when a federal judge in Dallas struck down the section of the Texas Penal Code forbidding sexual acts between adults of the same sex.

Texas A&M also argued that GSS was a social organization and that the University does not recognize social groups. Sterling upheld the University's claim that the group was a social organization and that Texas A&M had legal justification to decide what type of organizations were recognized on campus.

But the Court of Appeals stated that: "At (the) heart of the First Amendment is the freedom to choose, even if such choice does not accord with the state's view."

The ruling also said: "TAMU's refusal to recognize Gay Student Services as an on-campus student organization impermissibly denied

appellants their First Amendment rights."

Most administrators are declining to comment until more facts are known about the formal ruling. Students, however, are expressing their opinions.

David Alders, student body president, said GSS has social connotations like sororities and fraternities, and the University is trying to be consistent with its policy.

On a personal note, Alders said whatever students do in the privacy of their own homes was not his concern, but he wonders why some students want to make their sexual practices public.

"I don't see the need for this type of group or any type of group based on sexual orientation," Alders also said. "Sexual orientation should not be a basis for a campus group whether it is heterosexual or homosexual."

Reactions from other students varied from support to opposition for the courts ruling.

"It (the ruling) doesn't bother me," said Marie Fischer, a junior bioengineering major from Houston. "I think they have a right to be represented."

Frank Boyd, a junior engineering technology major from Houston, said, "I think they (GSS) may be recognized as an organization but not on campus, like the fraternities."

Search for weapons in Texas prisons continues

United Press International

HUNTSVILLE — Fresh from the success of finding 524 weapons at the Ferguson Unit, a special weapons search team Tuesday moved its hunt to the maximum security Darrington Unit in Brazoria County.

The search at the Darrington Unit was the second by the 30-member team formed to combat the problems of violence and weapons in

Texas prisons. As the search was underway in one area of the prison, an inmate stabbed a guard who was escorting him from the shower to his cell, said Charles Brown, spokesman for the Texas Department of Corrections.

At the Darrington Unit, the special team worked with regular prison guards to search one cellblock at a time Tuesday, Brown said. The

1,904 inmates were searched and held in a day area while their celllocks were inspected, he said.

No figures on the number of weapons found will be released until the search is completed, which could be sometime Wednesday, Brown said.

Brown said the inmate who attacked the officer Tuesday had been in administrative segregation and

was being escorted from the shower when he asked the officer if he wanted to fight.

When the officer answered no, the inmate struck the officer with his fist," Brown said. "The officer attempted to restrain the inmate and the inmate stabbed the officer twice with a sharp object they say looked like a nail."

The officer, who was not identi-

fied pending the notification of relatives, was cut on the upper right shoulder and received a small hole in left forearm, Brown said. He was transferred to an Angleton hospital as a precaution.

The inmate, Mohammed Gholamian, 30, was immediately transferred to the Ramsey 1 Unit. Gholamian is serving a 30-year sentence for murder from Harris County.

The weapons search team was organized by TDC Director Ray Procunier, who has called the weapons problem in Texas prisons "astronomical."

Brown said 524 weapons were found in a weekend search of the Ferguson Unit in Madison County.

Efforts continue to remove oil from Galveston beaches

United Press International

GALVESTON — Concern over a nearly 2 million-gallon oil spill turned Tuesday to hills of soiled sand pushed away from the water line and the black mess covering pink granite rocks at the bottom of the seawall.

"They feel there is no significant threat to areas southwest of Galveston so all efforts are being concentrated here and on the (Bolivar) peninsula," Chief Warrant Officer Dale Puckett of the Coast Guard said.

He said owners of the British tanker Alvenus, which split open July 30 off the Louisiana coast, met Tuesday in Galveston with "everybody involved in the actual cleanup."

Oily residue that is not mixed with sand and was sucked up by vacuum trucks will be sent to Browning Ferris Industries in Hitchcock, Texas, Puckett said.

"They still haven't determined what they're going to do with the sand-oil mixture," Puckett said. "The (ship) owner does not want to

dirty clean sand with dirty sand. He's really pushing on trying to find a place for this."

An estimate by Research Planning Institute, hired by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, showed 2,500 to 3,500 tons of oil had hit shore and another 1,000 to 1,500 tons were in the surf zone, he said.

Five-thousand tons of oil are roughly equal to 1.47 million gallons. Officials estimate 1.89 million gallons of oil leaked from the Alvenus

and Puckett said the remainder could have evaporated.

"They're still working on it trying to catch it (incoming oil) as they can," Puckett said. "They've got most of the north end cleaned up."

John Dellanera, executive director of the Galveston Parks Board, said officials were trying to keep the amount of sand hauled away at a minimum.

"Sand is precious, especially on the west end of the island," Della-

nera said. "There is some discussion about replacing it."

Dellanera said it had not been determined who would pay for new sand, if it becomes necessary, but the ship's owners have agreed to reimburse the city for the work its crews have put in.

Contractors hired by the ship Tuesday began manually pushing oil trapped in the surf toward the beach, where it was vacuumed up, Dellanera said.

The method "won't require re-

moving any more sand," he said. Hurricane Alicia in August 1983 washed away the critical dune system along much of the beach.

After the beaches are cleared, attention will turn to the rocks and the seawall.

"That looks like it'll be done by high pressure water (to loosen it)," Dellanera said. "That's going to be slow and tedious."

Workers continued Tuesday to pump oil off the disabled tanker so that it can be moved to dry dock.

Today's computers are easier to use

By BONNIE LANGFORD
Staff Writer

(Editor's note: This is the second of a three-part series on computer use.)

Michael Hoeinghaus is a third grader. Like many 9-year-old boys, he's a Cub Scout, and he likes to play video games. His parents bought him an Atari game computer, and now they're planning for the purchase of a home computer. His parents believe that in a few years he'll need one. Michael already has started using computers at school.

"We usually use them for math, when we have time," he says. "We play math games — one had how long it would take to ride a bicycle from the earth to a star."

Though all Michael has done with the school computer is play math games once a week, he likes learning on it better than being in the classroom. He's excited about next year;

he took a test — and if he passes he gets to use the computer every day.

Michael is part of a new generation, one to be educated with the aid of micro computers — technology not much older than he is. He's not afraid of using them — to him, using computers is still fun.

Computers of today are causing changes, which, for the most part, bring joyous responses like Michael's. But not everyone is happy with this new technology.

Today, computers are smaller than the massive main-frame computers of the 1950s and '60s. First came the smaller mainframe, which consists of a central processing unit with a huge memory and supports a large number of video display terminals (VDTs are those TV screens with keyboards). The mini came next. It also uses a CPU with a VDT, and is less expensive, but it doesn't

have the working capacity of the mainframe.

The mini computer was developed by Lincoln Labs. It was used to test the TX II, Lincoln's first transistor computer, says Dr. Bruce McCormick, who heads the computer science department at Texas A&M.

The TX II has a huge memory of one million bits — a bit short for binary digit; it's the basic unit of computer memory. The memory was so large that it was unrealistic to test all of it at once. A mini computer was developed to check smaller parts of the memory. The maintenance computer contained only eight bits, he says, and was dubbed TX 0 as a joke. The TX 0 soon proved it was more than funny. Part of the engineering staff realized the marketing potential for TX 0 and left to form Digital Equipment Corp. The mini computer was soon selling well because it performed the simpler functions of

a mainframe — and it was cheaper.

The next natural extension of integrated circuits was an even smaller computer, the microprocessor. It has a microprocessing unit and uses its own software (programming). Intel was the first corporation to build a four-bit micro computer.

The first widely-known micro-computer got its start in the January 1976 issue of Computers and Electronics, says Dale Schafer, systems analyst for the Texas Transportation Institute here.

"You could order a micro as a kit — the Altair — for about \$400," he says. "The Altair made micros popular. The company, MITS, had expected only a few hundred orders. They were swamped with thousands."

The Altair had 256 bytes of memory. A byte is a group of eight bits; it

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In Today's Battalion

Local

• Two state-funded programs in Bryan-College Station provide hot meals to more than 100 citizens, 60 years old and older. See story page 5.

State

• Corpus Christi began strict water rationing with fines and the possibility of disconnection for overuse. See story page 4.

National

• Final arguments have ended in John De Loreau's cocaine trafficking trial. See story page 5.
• Democratic presidential candidate Walter Mondale attacked what he called President Ronald Reagan's "voodoo economics." See story page 6.