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Bell tower complicates, delays traffic

By KARI FLUEGEL
Staff Writer

With the beginning of school every year, traffic throughout campus usually increases as students relearn the streets and parking lots.

This year, however, traffic congestion has an added complication — construction of the Ford D. Albritton Bell Tower.

When construction began on the bell tower last spring, the north side of Old Main Drive was closed and all traffic was detoured into the two lanes on the south side. Lamar Street, in front of the Grove, also was closed to accommodate construction of the tower.

Since last spring the detour has changed — from the south side to the north side of the tower. Lamar is still closed.

Stipulations were made in the builder's contract to keep one side of Old Main open at all times, Bob Wiatt, director of the University Police, said.

"Whenever you have construction, you're going to have problems," Wiatt said. "It hasn't affected anything, except delaying traffic."

No accidents have resulted from the traffic being squeezed into a bottleneck, but a few tempers have flared which always happens when there is an obstruction in the traffic flow, Wiatt said.

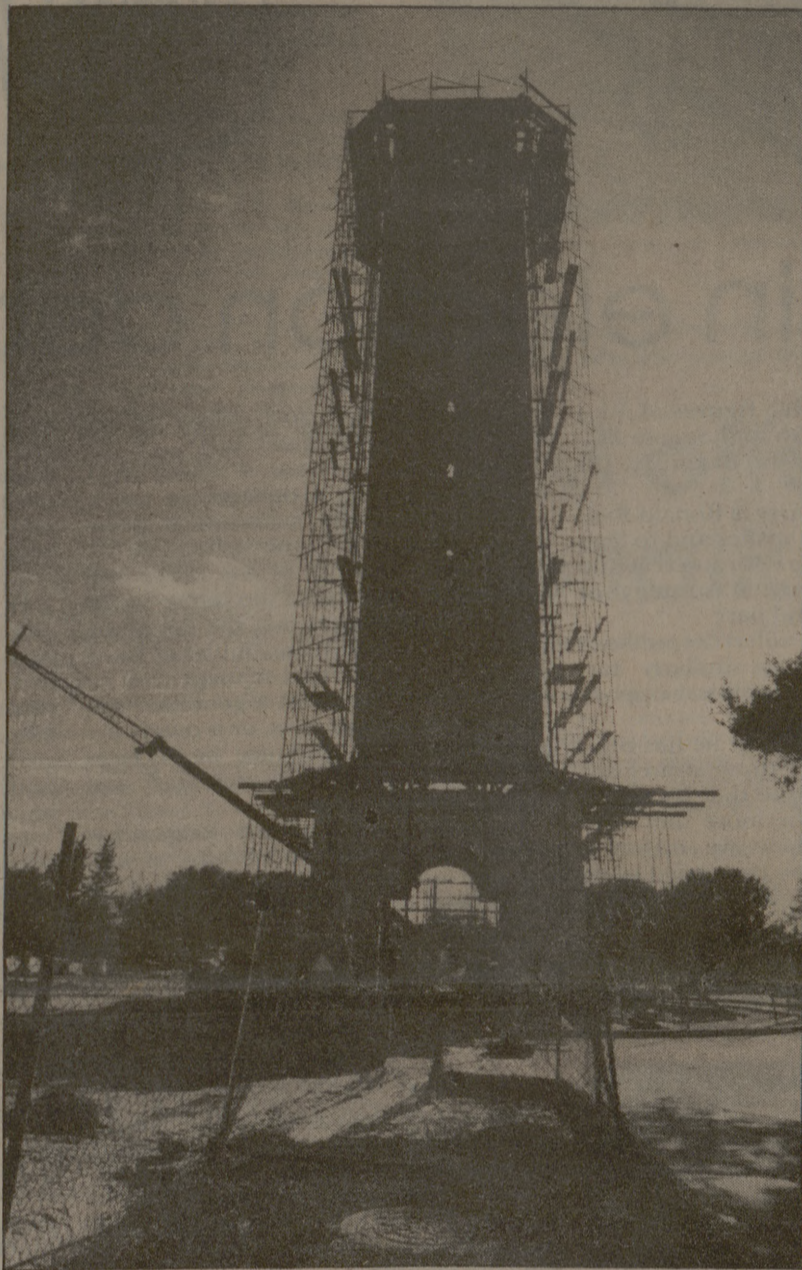
So far the problems, because of the construction, have not been insurmountable, Wiatt said.

"But I'll be glad when it's completed," he said.

The roads will return to normal the week of Sept. 17, Conrad Lozano, assistant project architect of Morris-Aubry Architects in Houston, said. At that time only minor work — such as street repair, lights and landscaping — will remain.

The tower currently is about 80 percent completed. The tower will be dedicated Oct. 6 before the Texas Tech football game.

During the summer, work on the tower was delayed, but not halted,



The Ford D. Albritton Bell Tower.
Photo by JOHN RYAN

when difficulties arose with the bell shipment from France. Weather has not caused any delays, Lozano said, but due to the size of the tower, it has been difficult to have workers working in the same area at the same time.

Though traffic around the tower is heavy, John Lake, bus operations manager, said the operation of the

Park and Ride system, the new intracampus shuttle service, has not been affected by the blocked streets.

"Everything is going according to plan," Lake said.

The system is running into some traffic problems at other areas across campus, but not around the bell tower, Lake said. Traffic currently is a problem around the Rudder, Blocker and Commons areas.

Intracampus shuttle offers general public three route options

By ALIS MAHENA
Reporter

A new intracampus shuttle bus system began operating Monday at Texas A&M. The free Park and Ride shuttle service travels three different routes around campus Monday through Friday. And transportation is available to everyone — no bus passes are necessary.

The Park and Ride shuttle service consists of 10 small buses, capable of carrying 26 to 28 seated passengers, and two larger buses, capable of carrying 46 passengers. The buses will run at 10 to 12 minute intervals.

Two of the bus routes, the Academic Run and the Rudder Run, will operate from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. The third, the Express Run, stops on campus at the Blocker Building and the Engineering Research Center

only, and will be operating from 7 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. and 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. The buses for all three routes start out from Olsen Field each morning.

At present, there are few marked bus stops along the Rudder and Academic runs, therefore the buses will pick up and drop off passengers at most stop signs along the routes. Douglas Williams, assistant manager of Shuttle Bus Operations, said bus stops will be designated and signs marking the stops will be put up later in the semester.

The Express Run is designed to carry large numbers of students quickly to the Blocker Building and the Engineering Research Center. It will travel down Beef Cattle Road to Agronomy Road to University Drive. It will stop at the Blocker

Building and the Engineering Research Center. The shuttle will return the same way.

The Academic Run will leave Olsen Field and travel to the campus via Old Main and Houston. The shuttle will cross to Jones street at the fountain and run east on Ross Street to Bizell. It will return to Olsen Field via University Drive and Agronomy Road.

Rudder Run will leave Olsen Field and travel on Joe Rott to Coke Street. The shuttle will then turn north onto Lubbock Street, travel down Lubbock to Bizell Street and from Bizell, head south on Lamar Street to Nagle Street. The Shuttle will then travel around to Lamar Extension (the street between the physics building and the Trigon) and west on Joe Rott back to Olsen.

Check cashing policy tightens; 2 ID's needed

By LISA SPILLER
Reporter

Check forgery at Texas A&M is the cause of a new, more stringent check cashing policy. The policy began this summer when Texas A&M signed a contract with Check Worthy of Bryan, said Bob Piwonka, manager of Student Financial Services.

The new check cashing policy requires two sources of identification. At least one of these must be a picture ID. The fiscal office and Check Worthy prefer the forms of identification to be a student ID and a Texas driver's license, Piwonka said.

The additional identification is actually for the protection of the student, Piwonka said. The student ID picture is often blurry which makes

its validity questionable, he said. The extra ID also provides more sources for investigation if there is a problem.

Personal checks still can be cashed at the MSC main desk for up to \$25. Check cashing has, however, been discontinued at the Coke Building.

"The fiscal office has physically outgrown the building," Piwonka said. "We simply do not have the space to continue the check cashing service."

But, he said, students now have the PULSE and MPACT machines for 24 hour service and can withdraw greater amounts through the machines.

Piwonka said forgery has been a problem on this campus for several years and seems to be increasing.

Many checks are forged after they are stolen from someone else. The greatest amount of check theft usually occurs in the dorms at the beginning of the semester, Piwonka said.

The worst part of this type of theft is that it goes undetected for so long, he said. The checks are usually stolen in a batch from the middle of the checkbook or singly from different places in the book. Many students do not notice that checks have been stolen until their account has been overdrawn, Piwonka said.

Relief on way for student tripples in dorms

By ROBIN BLACK
Senior Staff Writer

The deadline for checking into dormitories was Monday at 5 p.m. Anyone who failed to check in by that time lost their space, housing Coordinator Tom Murray said Tuesday.

"We're still frantically trying to process all the head counts we got in today," Murray said.

Once the number of no-shows is determined the housing office can begin reassigning those students who have been temporarily tripled-up in dorm rooms.

Murray said that as of Tuesday morning, approximately 250 men

and 200 women have been assigned to rooms on a temporary basis. That means those students share — on a temporary basis — a dorm room with two other students.

Of those listed as temporaries, Murray said, about 45 men and 35 women have been moved into study carrels in the commons area.

Murray and the three dorm area coordinators (commons, central and northside dorms) will meet today to evaluate the number of no-shows so that students temporarily assigned to dorms can be moved to a normal two-occupant situation.

There were fewer no-shows this year than in the past, Murray said,

and that may interfere with resolving the dorm room over-assigning situation.

"Last year we had no triples after the first week of classes," he said. "So even though we had fewer no-shows, we hope the same thing happens this year."

Students are not tripled up in non-air conditioned or balcony dorms, he said.

"We think it would just be too uncomfortable for the students to be tripled in the non-air conditioned dorms," Murray said, "and the furniture in the balcony dorms cannot be moved around to make more room for an extra roommate."

But all estimates are just that, Murray said, because exact figures won't be in until today.

Murray said that the campus housing office intentionally over-assigns students in order to compensate for those who don't show up.

If there are empty dorm rooms, it costs the University money, and as a result the cost of dorm rooms must be increased to make up for the loss. Respective resident hall advisors will notify students of any housing changes by early this evening.

If there are still empty rooms after all students already on campus have been reassigned as needed, students may apply for the rooms on a

walk-on basis, he said.

"We started taking walk-on candidates on the 22nd, and we'll continue accepting them through noon Thursday," Murray said. "These students will be given rooms only after the triples have been moved out, so we've told not to be optimistic since there's no guarantee that they'll get a room."

There is no waiting list right now, Murray said, because a waiting list for any given semester becomes defunct when the semester begins.

"We have to assume that 99.9 percent of the students on the list have already made other arrangements," he said.

Daniel Mizer, housing coordinator for the commons area dorms, said that the moving-in process has gone smoothly this semester.

"We've had a steady flow so far," he said, "and there's not been any real rush. People have been trickling in steadily to check in to their rooms."

Denise Heitkamp, head resident advisor for Briggs Hall, said she's having little trouble with the tripling situation.

"I think all of our temporaries will be put into rooms," she said, "and the women temporaries have been limited to freshmen women."

More inmate violence in TDC; death count to 125, stabbing count to 265

United Press International

HUNTSVILLE — Four separate stabbing attacks in Texas Department of Corrections units pushed the inmate death count to 125 and the number of stabbing incidents to 265 this year, officials said Tuesday.

Two inmates died in attacks Monday night, a third was hospitalized in critical condition and a fourth was treated for a minor wound Tuesday, TDC spokesmen Charles Brown and Phil Guthrie said.

Terry Black, 21, was stabbed in the shoulder about 7 a.m. Tuesday at the Darrington Unit as a guard was searching a cell for weapons. Another inmate ran out of the cell

and attacked Black, Guthrie said. Both Black and the suspect, Rolando Bolano, are black and prison officials have no motive, he said.

The dead inmates from Monday's stabbings were Curtis Ray Williams, 22, serving a 5-year Howard County burglary sentence at the Clemens Unit in Brazoria, and Raymond Mathias, 25, a convicted murderer serving a 99-year sentence at the Wynne Unit in Huntsville.

Everitt Matthews, 20, was in critical condition at John Sealy Hospital in Galveston Tuesday with multiple stab wounds he received during an incident at the Darrington Unit at Rosharon about 10 p.m. Monday.

Brown said the fatal stabbing at the Clemens Unit and the Monday night assault at the Darrington Unit appeared racially motivated. A white suspect was being questioned about the death of Williams, who is black.

Three Hispanics were being questioned about the attack on Matthews, also a black.

Brown said authorities had no explanation for the killing at the Wynne Unit.

Authorities locked down an estimated 180 inmates in cell blocks on both the Clemens and Wynne Units and guards Tuesday were searching for weapons.

So far this year, 12 inmates have

been killed inside the walls of Texas' 26 prison units. TDC reported a total of nine inmate homicides last year and eight the year before. Thirty-nine stabbings have occurred in August.

Ray Procunier, who took over as TDC director in June, attributes the increased inmate violence to a shortage of guards and poor inmate classification in which hardened criminals live alongside younger, weaker inmates.

Officials also cite the elimination of the use of inmates as building tenders, as ordered in a federal reform mandate, as another factor in prison violence.

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State

• Study shows elderly Texans going hungry. See story page 5.

National

• The Agriculture Department plans to continue an emergency disaster program. See story page 6.