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by Scott McCou

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## SHOE

by Jeff MacNe

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## Emergency care team teaches hundreds CPR

By PATRICIA FLINT  
Staff Writer

"If we could just keep the brain from dying before we can get there, we can keep a lot of people alive," Jodith Allen, educational coordinator of the Texas A&M Emergency Care Team, said Friday.

"One of the objectives of our organization is to teach the general public about emergency medicine," she said. "If someone collapses or goes into cardiac arrest and CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) hasn't been initiated, it's usually too late—brain damage sets in."

The Texas A&M Emergency Care Team (TAMECT) offers CPR and basic first aid classes to the public.

David Phillips, TAMECT ambulance chief, said in four years he's taught a couple hundred CPR and first aid classes.

"The demand around here is tremendous. I wish it was even bigger," Phillips said.

Phillips said it usually takes an incident of some sort to get people concerned with knowing how to perform CPR and first aid.

A problem with administering first aid, Phillips said, is the attitude that "if I at least do something it will help."

"No it won't," Phillips said.

"Either you do it right or you do it wrong. We have had a few problems with that. We've gotten on the scene and they're doing CPR that is questionable—at the least.

"Very few people need their chests pushed on, but many people need their air ways cleared—like the drunk person who is choking on his own vomit," he said.

For this reason both Phillips and Allen said that CPR is the most important of all emergency medicine taught to the public. Next is basic first aid, such as administering bleeding control, splints, burns, seizures, until an ambulance arrives. The class also teaches when to call, and when not to call an ambulance.

"A lot of this stuff we can present in a minimum of time—not CPR—and we'll do it for free just so we have a little less work to do," Phillips said of the all-volunteer student organization. By correcting misconceptions "maybe we'll have a few less pieces to pick up because we showed them the right way to do this," Phillips said.

"If someone wants us to teach a class all they have to do is get the people and the place. We provide the instructors, the equipment and do all the paper work. All they have to do is take the course and pass it," Allen said.

"We want to teach people," she said. "That makes our job so much easier."

To make an appointment to take up a class, call 845-4321 at least a week in advance.

Dr. Claude Goswick, TAMU health advisor and A.P. Beutel Health Center director, agreed with Phillips and Allen that CPR is an important skill for everyone to know, but that it must be administered correctly. J.S. Allen said he had a heart attack several years ago.

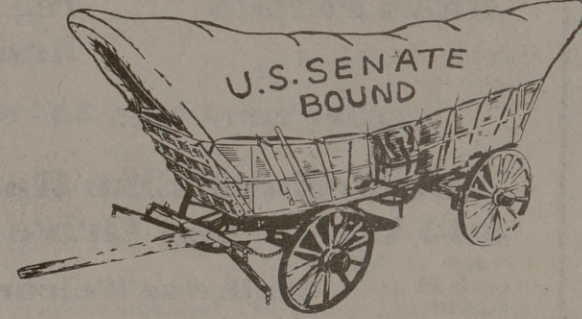
"A person should not do CPR unless they don't know how to do it," Goswick added, saying that watching someone else perform CPR on television is not a good idea.

"I saved my life," said Goswick. "The A&M ambulance crew was very helpful in probing my chest and giving me CPR. I was in the hospital for several days. I don't know how to do it, but I know CPR is an important part of a person's education."

The Aggie Red Cross, formed in 1961, also teaches classes in CPR. Sherri Lewis, vice president of the student group, believes that knowing CPR is an important part of any student's education.

"There are so many people in Austin who have died just because nobody knew CPR," she said.

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