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Small hearing loss often not noticed

By ALIS MAHLEN
Reporter

More than 15 million Americans suffer some form of hearing loss, the Texas Medical Association recently reported.

However, if the hearing loss isn't severe enough to encompass the frequency range of the voice, it often goes undetected, said Dr. Claude Goswick, director of A.P. Beutal Health Center.

"A subtle, small change is simply not noticed," Goswick said Friday.

The most common type of hearing loss detected at the health center is temporary due to wax impacted in the ear canal, Goswick said. These plugs of wax occur when wax from the glands in the outer ear is produced too rapidly.

It also can be caused by pushing wax down the ear canal while attempting to clean it, Goswick said. He advises that when cleaning to stay on the outside of the ear. "The ears clean themselves," he said.

The most common cause of hearing loss is the normal aging of the hearing nerve, said Dr. N.D. Shipman, an ear, a local nose and throat specialist (otolaryngologist). This gradual hearing decline usually does not begin until after age 60. The aging of the nerve can't be sufficiently corrected by medical or surgical treatment, Shipman said.

Some children have a different problem.

Shipman said most often he sees a type of middle ear problem in children called serous otitis media. This fluid behind the eardrum is removable through drainage and surgery, if necessary, restoring normal hearing, Shipman said.

The ear is divided into three areas: the external ear, including the auditory canal; the middle ear, an air-filled cavity containing the three bones of the ear; and the fluid-filled inner ear, located in the temporal bone.

Problems within the external and middle ear usually are problems of conduction and can be treated. Nerve deafness, in the inner ear,

cannot be improved by surgery and rarely by medical treatment, he said.

Repeated or prolonged exposure to loud noises can damage hearing, Shipman said.

"People working in high noise environments should have their hearing checked about every three to five months to make sure they aren't suffering from a frequency loss," he said. Otherwise hearing should be checked about once every five years, unless a problem is noticed.

Wearing ear plugs around loud noises and cleaning the ears with an antibiotic ear drop after swimming helps prevent hearing problems, Goswick said.

"People working in high noise environments should have their hearing checked about every three to five months to make sure they aren't suffering from a frequency loss," local otolaryngologist Dr. N.D. Shipman says.

"Realizing that problems can occur, being aware of symptoms early and getting problems checked out immediately is by far the best treatment," he said.

Ototoxic — ear-poisoning — drugs, cause temporary and sometimes permanent impairment to hearing, Shipman said. Most ototoxic drugs are controlled or prescription drugs, he said. Susceptibility to nerve damage depends upon the individual.

Modern hearing aids are electronic and mainly consist of a microphone, an amplifier and an earphone. Hearing aids differ for each person's needs, Shipman said.

"Some frequencies may need more amplification," he said. For these people, the hearing aid is electronically set to amplify only those specific frequencies needed.

Correction

In Monday's Battalion, the emergency number on campus was incorrectly reported. The emergency number on campus is 9911. The Battalion regrets the error.

Democrats open local party offices

By JAMES WALKER
Staff Writer

Brazos County Democrats celebrated the official opening of their party headquarters Monday.

Bryan Mayor Gary Halter performed the honors in a chain cutting ceremony, a trend that has caught the fancy of Texas Democratic leaders. The practice began when newly inaugurated Gov. Mark White, in 1982, symbolically cut a lock on a gate surrounding the Governor's house. White referred to it as the "lock of indifference" left by his predecessor former Gov. Bill Clements.

Although the party office has been operating since May, yesterday's opening served as an opportunity to meet with several precinct chairmen and local area candidates.

Among those present were Neely Lewis, incumbent District 14 state representative, and Dan Kubiak, candidate for U.S. Congress, 6th District. Both of these candidates will meet head-to-head with their Republican rivals Richard Smith and Joe Barton today at 7 p.m. in the Sons of Hermann Hall.

Although no debate will take place, each candidate will give a speech. The event is sponsored by TREEPAC, an association of Texas realtors.

Also today the Republicans will formally open their headquarters at 7:30 p.m. It is located at 3130 E. 29th Street in Bryan. George Strake, state Republican Party chairman will officiate at the gathering.

Student seminar series aids money management skills

CARMEN THOMAS
Reporter

Three seminars on money management were held last week for students by the Texas A&M Student Financial Aid Office.

The seminars informed students about available scholarships and financial aid, budgeting tips and the advantages of a checking account.

Another group of financial seminars are scheduled for October.

Ann VanWinkle, a Texas A&M financial aid counselor who helped conduct the seminars, said the low attendance at the seminars last week allowed the counselors to work more closely with the students. VanWinkle said, however, attendance should increase at the October seminars be-

cause students' funds are lower at the end of the semester.

The financial aid office began work on the seminars last spring by researching the students' money management skills.

Free budgeting seminars will be held Oct. 23-25 in 230 MSC. Students should contact the financial aid office for more information.

Officials: enrollment stabilized

University News Service

Texas A&M officials Friday announced a fall enrollment of 36,827, saying enrollment has stabilized as a result of policies initiated two years ago to limit the school's rapid growth during the last 10 years.

The enrollment for the 12th class day — the official reporting date to the Coordinating Board, Texas College and University System — reflects a decrease of 19 students from last fall's record figure.

The policies to control enrollment include requiring higher Scholastic Aptitude Test scores for all new students except those in the top quarter of their high school class.

During the 1970s, Texas A&M more than doubled its enrollment, making it one of the fastest-growing major universities in the nation. Fall enrollment this year includes a record 14,369 women, about 40 percent of the total.

Texas A&M's College of Engineering reflected the largest decrease in enrollment, with 748 fewer students enrolled than last fall. Requirements even more stringent than for admittance to the University are in effect for engineering programs in an attempt to cope with crowded classrooms and laboratory conditions and shortages in the teaching ranks.

The colleges of Agriculture, Education and Geosciences also showed enrollment decreases over last year.

The fall enrollment figures indicate that the colleges of liberal arts and business administration report the largest increases in enrollment, with 352 and 202 more students respectively.

Texas A&M's colleges of engineering, architecture and environmental design and veterinary medicine have been the largest in the nation in recent years, and the College of Agriculture has ranked second.

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