

Trailways offers transport

# Runaways home free

By SARAH OATES  
Staff Writer

For many runaways, returning home can be as difficult as leaving. They often have no money and no one to turn to for help. Trailways Corp. has a solution to the problem of getting home. OPERATION: Home Free is an effort to help runaways return home by providing them free transportation. "We came up with the idea two years ago," said Tricia Barnett, vice-president of public relations. "We go everywhere and runaways go everywhere. As a corporation, we felt a responsibility to give something back to the public." Barnett said the corporation was unable to start a program without

the cooperation of law enforcement officials. Then Trailways was contacted by the International Association of the Chiefs of Police, asking for its cooperation in a program to help runaways return home. The organization effectively worked together to get it started. The program, which began in June and is available in every city and town served by Trailways, has been even more successful than its initiators had hoped. "We've helped over 1,000 runaways," said Robert Angrisani, IACP director of communications. "We're returning about 40 per day. "It's fantastic. We would not have predicted those numbers." To use the service, a runaway

must contact local police, who verify he has been reported missing. Police notify the person's guardians, and escort him to a Trailways station. Trailways provides the ticket and transportation home. Free transportation is available to runaways up to the age of 18 who are not under criminal charges. "Most of them are teenagers," Barnett said. Some runaways have signed releases giving their permission to be interviewed. However, because the releases haven't been returned, the IACP cannot yet release names of runaways who have agreed to speak to the press. Arrow Trailways bus services in Bryan and College Station are participating in the program.

# GSS president: bad feelings caused by misinformation

By MICHAEL CRAWFORD  
Reporter

He enjoys working out with weights, swimming, drawing still life pictures and he supports President Reagan. What separates Marco Roberts from 90 percent of Americans is his homosexuality. The Kinsey Study reports that about 10 percent of all Americans are homosexual. Roberts is president of Gay Student Services (GSS). He says he realized he was different at an early age. "I am so gay that there really wasn't enough room for question," he says. "Whereas, many people don't fall into that extreme and then they have something to confuse themselves with. They try to pretend (to be straight)." "As obvious as it was to me, I don't think I actually admitted it to myself until I was 14."

say that I was interested in this girl or that girl." Friends who are told by Roberts that he is gay often think he is lying or being cruel. "Often times the initial reaction ends up being the opposite of the long-term reaction," says Roberts. Roberts says he understands what a straight person feels when they find out about his sexual preference. "I do my best to try and explain our point of view and see how it goes," he says. Roberts says negative feelings about homosexuals are rooted in misunderstanding. A transvestite is not necessarily a homosexual and homosexuality does not mean a person is a transvestite. People confuse the two, not realizing that the issues are separate, Roberts says. "Doing what I do now, undergoing what I have been undergoing as far as criticism and exposure, I knew this would come out," he says. "I prepared myself. Anything people have negative to say I don't pay attention to. I just think they are misguided and I can't let it upset me."

feels the need to control so much about what the students read, see or experience." Roberts says he was sure the court fight for GSS recognition against Texas A&M would resurface while he was president of the organization. Roberts was elected president after only two months in the GSS. "Most of the stress of being president is from keeping the group together in a working body rather than from addressing the classroom," says Roberts. Roberts is a member of a speaker panel provided by GSS to address interested groups. "Sometimes I get more flak from my own members than I do from the people we address," he says. "They want me to do the best job possible. GSS is composed of members of different ideas, and we are concerned with the image we portray." Roberts says the GSS cannot afford to make even a minor mistake because those opposed to the group will focus on it. Roberts includes the A&M University administration among those who would concentrate on any error. "You can't just say to some group 'we don't want you here because we don't like what you say,'" Roberts says. "The test of freedom is not when the will of the majority is being followed."

In high school, Roberts would go to the school library and look up everything he could on homosexuality, he says. "I was really very curious. At that time I would never check the books out. I would read them in secret." Roberts says he knew he had to admit his homosexuality to himself if he was going to outgrow the helplessness he felt. Once he started going out to bars and meeting other homosexuals, he says, he began to feel good about himself. Roberts says he never felt guilty about his sexual orientation. "In my logic, a person who is very ugly may feel embarrassed, but I don't think that person feels guilty," he says. "I think I always recognized that I had not done anything to do that (feel guilty)." "I was still keeping up a cover with my friends. I would date girls and

Roberts spent many years in Latin America and was surprised at the differences between attitudes in the American and Latin American university systems. Universities in Latin America are considered sacred grounds where any idea can be expressed, says Roberts. "I'm just kind of suprised, coming to the United States, a land of freedom, that suddenly the universities have so many regulations as to what you can and cannot say on campus," he says. "If you can't express different ideas at the centers of learning, then where can you do it?" "I like this University and I want to stay here. I think the University has a lot of potential, but I'm disappointed that such a large institution, with so many resources at its hands,

Beyond the immediate concern of achieving recognition for GSS, Roberts wants to have a career as an elected official in the public service. "A gay person can get elected if he proves and shows to people that the stereotypes they hold about gays are not true," he says. "We would not have a female vice-presidential candidate if some woman 40 or 50 years ago had not tried to start to do something. Even if she knew the odds were against her."

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## ALCOHOL AWARENESS WEEK

★ SPECIAL EVENTS October 8 - 12 ★

The Texas A&M University Alcohol Awareness Program will host the following special events during Alcohol Awareness Week. In addition to these events, an alcohol resource table will be available each day in the MSC hallway from 10:00AM - 2:00PM.

**MONDAY:** DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICER WILL BE AVAILABLE TO TALK ABOUT SUCH TOPICS AS DWI LAWS IN TEXAS AND ARREST AND BREATH-TEST PROCEDURES. 10:00AM - 2:00PM MSC HALLWAY

**TUESDAY:** TEST YOUR DECISION MAKING SKILLS ON THE "BOOZE CRUISE" OR "MOUSE MAZE" COMPUTER GAMES. 10:00AM - 2:00PM MSC HALLWAY

**WEDNESDAY:** FREE, NON-ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE BAR. 10:00AM - 2:00PM RUDDER FOUNTAIN

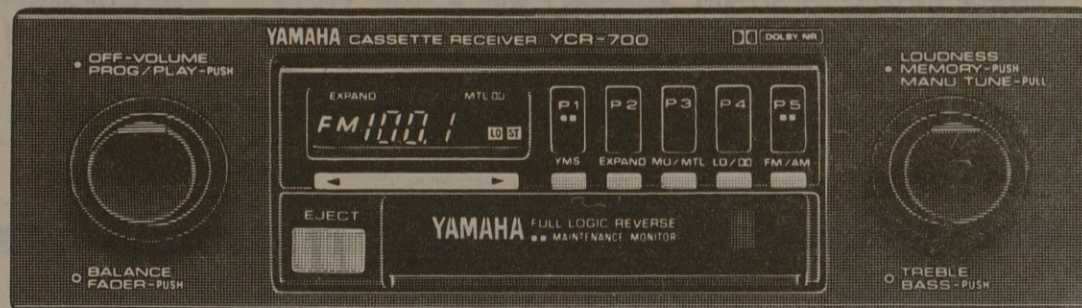
**THURSDAY:** RESOURCE TABLE REPRESENTING M.A.D.D. AND THE TAMU WELLNESS PROGRAM. 10:00AM - 2:00PM MSC HALLWAY

**FRIDAY:** FREE, NON-ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE BAR. 10:00AM - 2:00PM BLOCKER BUILDING.



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