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# Vets using group practices

**By DEE DEE DAMON**  
*Reporter*

The face of veterinary medicine is changing. "The big change that I've seen in my profession in the last decade, is I see (it) going more and more toward group practice," said Michael J. Shively, associate professor of veterinary anatomy at Texas A&M.

"In other words we are seeing two or more veterinarians getting together and running a single practice," Shively said.

"It only makes sense when you stop to think about it. Compare veterinary medicine...to human medicine. Veterinarians have to build their own hospitals; physicians don't. Veterinarians have to

buy their own x-ray machines, whereas most physicians have their's done by the radiologists at the hospital."

Charles L. Boyd, professor of veterinary large animal medicine and surgery at Texas A&M, agrees that the investment into a veterinary practice is expensive. "It depends on the size of the facility," Boyd said. "It costs about \$125 to \$140 per square foot. That includes some fixed equipment, such as laboratory cabinets, and some built in facilities in the cages area, but it doesn't include microscopes, electrocardiograms, operating tables and other movable equipment. So, the ordinary two-person-practice facility would cost anywhere from \$180,000 to \$260,00.

Those are the average facilities that would meet the American Animal Association regulations for certification."

Another change that Shively has noticed is that the veterinary profession is more specialized. "Twenty years ago," Shively said, "it was very common for a veterinarian to treat all creatures great and small, so to speak — anything that came in the door. Most people (today), by far the majority, are at least specializing down into dogs and cats or large animals or something like that. They are at least going that far. Some are going as far as extreme specialization, such as just birds or just cats."

Being an individual in a general practice, there are too many

things to know and too many services to render to try to do it alone, Boyd said.

"Let's face it, a veterinarian has to be a jack-of-all trades," Shively said. "Not only do we have to be a surgeon and an internist, and a dermatologist and a parasitologist, but also our patients don't talk."

The field of immunology in preventive medicine has improved, Boyd said. Many diseases can be controlled through nutrition, such as internal and external parasite control.

"Advances in sophisticated diagnostic equipment and laboratory technicians have given us credence to veterinary medicine," Boyd said.

## Professor's study links diet and behavior

# Caffeine usage affects mood

**By CLARA HURTER**  
*Reporter*

Caffeine and refined carbohydrates can change one's behavior according to a two-year study recently completed at Texas A&M. The study is one of the first to show a definite relationship between diet and mood disturbance, says Dr. Larry Christensen, professor of psychology at Texas A&M.

The study began two years ago. Christensen said he wanted to see if people who are adversely affected by caffeine and refined carbohydrates, such as table sugar, had hypoglycemia — a deficiency of sugar in the blood. Pilot studies didn't support his theory so Christensen tried to de-

velop a test for people who are sensitive to what they eat.

Christensen said changing the dietary habits of a sample of people sensitive to caffeine and refined carbohydrates has shown beneficial results.

"For some time the effects of diet on behavior and emotional states have been debated," he said. "Recently some studies show that caffeine and refined carbohydrates have a detrimental effect on people. Dr. Wurtman and his colleagues at Massachusetts Institute of Technology have located mechanisms that identify why high carbohydrate diets may affect behavior."

Christensen is optimistic about his

findings but acknowledges his skepticism.

"A lot of skepticism revolves in this area," he said. "Some people say the study and its experiments are not supported by rigid scientific scrutiny."

Texas A&M nutritionists Karen Kubena and Joanne Lupton question the validity of Christensen's experiments. The skepticism, however, doesn't relate to the results or theory behind the experiment, but to its methodology, Lupton said.

"There are so many variables in the study," Kubena said. "The way to make an accurate test is by eliminating as many variables as possible

in your experiment except for the that you are testing for."

Kubena suggested a double-blind challenge to ensure an unbiased of a person's reaction to a certain medication (caffeine). A placebo, a caffeine capsule are given to the subjects, and neither the person giving the medication nor the subject who receives it know which capsule is administered.

"Caffeine is bitter and may be recognized by the person taking it," Lupton said. "The person taking the capsule probably can't tell the difference between the caffeine and placebo unless the capsule comes up in their mouth or throat."

# Computer acquisition plan set for '86

**By MARY ANGELA LEBLANC**  
*Reporter*

An 11-member committee is establishing a microcomputer acquisition program on campus to provide microcomputers at a discount to students, faculty and staff, Don Bugh, director of systems analysis at Texas A&M, said Monday.

Bugh said that the committee will select about five vendors and sell ba-

sic microcomputer systems.

Letters were sent to several micro-computer vendors explaining the program, Bugh said. A second letter was sent last week requesting proposals from the vendors which responded to the first letter.

Questionnaires also have been sent to numerous faculty members asking for their preference in micro-computer companies, peripherals and software. Bugh said about 500

students, randomly selected and representing all the colleges, will be involved in a questionnaire as well.

With the input, Bugh said, the committee will decide which computer lines to sell from each vendor.

The committee, which plans to begin the program in the spring of 1986, has selected the Texas A&M Bookstore as the sales site for the computers.

"We see a big ordering wave," W.A. Wasson, committee chairman.

Wasson, who is also vice chancellor and system controller, said beside the computer shop, two other functions make up the program: said provisional maintenance provided by the vendors for computers and a center for computer technology will be established.

# Performance lab named for coach's widow

**By KATHERINE HURT**  
*Staff Writer*

Texas A&M's Human Performance Laboratories in East Kyle were named Friday in honor of Elouise Beard Smith, widow of former A&M tennis coach Omar Smith. Dr. L.D. Ponder, head of the Department of Health and Physical Education, presided over the ceremony in East Kyle.

"This family probably means more to this department than any

other individuals," Ponder said.

Omar Smith, a successful businessman and entrepreneur, endowed the Omar Smith Chair in Health and Physical Education at A&M. Ponder said, "This chair, the first such chair in the United States, will allow us to do things in our Human Performance Laboratories that would not have been possible otherwise."

Texas A&M President Frank E. Vandiver presented a plaque bear-

ing Elouise Beard Smith's name to adorn the door of the laboratories.

"The marvelous thing is the character of this fine lady," he said. "Having her name attached to these laboratories is quite an honor."

In response, Smith said, "I'm just overwhelmed by all the honors they've given me today ... just overwhelmed."

Barney Welch, Class of '48, assistant football coach under A&M coach Gene Stallings and long-time

friend of the Smiths, gave a biography of the family and commented on their generosity and dedication to A&M.

The sophisticated, well-equipped Smith laboratories are facilities for graduate student and faculty research. Projects conducted at labs range from extensive physiological and psychological evaluations of unteer faculty and staff to the use of using sunscreen.

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