

Weekend basketball
Aggies set to play Horns in Austin
Page 9

Genetic blueprints
Decoding may help AIDS victims
Page 12

Texas A&M The Battalion

Vol. 80 No. 79 USPS 045360 14 pages

College Station, Texas

Friday, January 18, 1985

Point plan offers new dining idea

By REBECCA ADAIR
Reporter

For avid credit card users, Texas A&M has an ideal dining plan: the Aggie Point Plan.

The point plan operates much like the popular automatic bank teller cards. Every student already has the necessary card to participate in the point plan, the student ID. All a student has to do now is back it up with cash.

As sophomore Amy Davis discovered at the beginning of the fall semester, the new point plan replaced coupon books. The coupon books were being illegally duplicated in Houston, said Tom Awbrey, business manager of food services.

Besides benefiting dormitory students, Awbrey says he thinks the new plan is ideal for off-campus students who are on campus for lunch.

"You can get a darn good meal for \$3.75," he said.

Although he still recommends the 5-day and 7-day plans, Awbrey said he is aware of the vastly different eating habits of college students.

Awbrey pointed out reasons for choosing the point plan are as diverse as the individuals using it. Some students like the convenience of being able to eat at any dining facility, while some don't eat often enough to need a full meal plan.

Awbrey said he is interested in the eating habits of those using the Point Plan. He has access to the computerized records of transactions, and will often go through the previous day's records to look for purchasing trends.

Duncan Dining Hall is the only facility where the Point Plan can't be used. Awbrey said the machines placed in Duncan were removed because the spare reader was needed at facilities with more dining traffic. There are plans to include Duncan in the point plan as soon as new machines are ordered and received.

The Point Plan has been mildly criticized for a lack of publicity, but Awbrey said the information was distributed at the beginning of the semester and also advertised in The Battalion.

"People just didn't make themselves aware," Awbrey said. "About two or three percent don't get the word. Some students even scraped off the magnetic stripe on the back of their IDs."

Julie Jones, a junior agricultural economics major, said she saw The Battalion advertising, but she wasn't aware of all the details of the plan.

"I think it's a good idea," she said, "especially since I won't have to carry cash and I can use it anywhere on campus."

After five years of careful consideration, the Point Plan was first instituted at the beginning of the Fall 1984 semester.

The idea for the Point Plan didn't originate at Texas A&M, but was discovered at a conference, Awbrey said. The plan isn't used at any other major Texas university, he said, but the University of Wisconsin at Stout uses the plan almost exclusively.

The equipment is hard to get, Awbrey said.

"We use a small computer as a separate backup, and if the system goes down, the computer takes over, holds the information, then puts it in the system once things are back in order," Awbrey said.

To use this system, any student or employee of Texas A&M can go to the Sbis Validation Center and sign a contract. Students can sign up any time except during validation days for regular meal plans.

This semester, signups will begin Monday, January 21st. The initial minimum deposit is \$150, and subsequent deposits can be made with a minimum of \$50.

As soon as the contract is prepared and the student's ID number encoded, the point plan is immediately in effect.

"We often tell students, 'Don't use it for at least three minutes,'" Awbrey said.

See Point, page 14

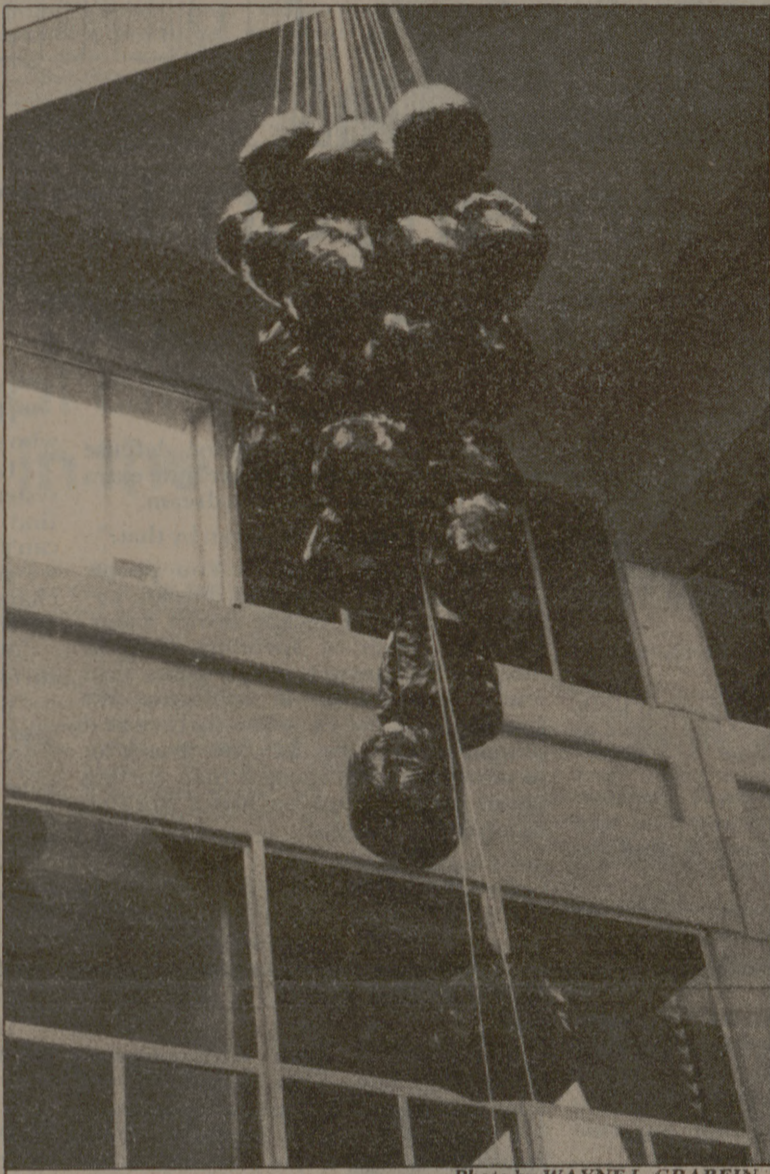


Photo by WAYNE L. GRABEIN

Just Hangin' Around

This unusual artistic endeavor was found hanging from the ceiling of the Langford Architecture Building. The work is composed of filled trash bags suspended by rope. Its origin is unknown.

A&M System bracing for budget shortfall

By SARAH OATES
Staff Writer

Chancellor Arthur G. Hansen said Wednesday Texas A&M University System officials are looking at ways to prune the System's budget according to cuts proposed by the Legislative Budget Board. Hansen said after he receives their reports, he will submit a report on their findings to Gov. Mark White by the end of the month.

"We're looking at the worst possible scenario right now," Hansen said. "What's unknown right now are what other sources of revenue may become available. The shortfall is real and we will have to accept cuts, but ultimately, the situation won't be as bad as it seems now."

Hansen said he expects System university presidents, vice presidents and agency directors will first suggest cuts in "areas related to convenience," such as travel expenses and phone usage. He said cuts might also be proposed in such areas as construction and repair.

He stressed everything possible will be done to protect academic programs and research, and the primary missions of System agencies.

"I want them to think not in terms of cuts," Hansen said, "but rather in terms of what we can do to maintain programs and quality at a lower base."

The LBB recommended last month higher education absorb \$676 million of an expected \$900 million shortfall for the state next year. The proposal calls for an appropriation of \$241.5 million for the Texas A&M University System for each year of the 1986-87 biennium. A&M's share for each year is 143.2 million, a 20 percent reduction over the University's current year appropriations.

Hansen said he does not think the recommended cuts are final. Calling White's request Tuesday for a \$265.2 million appropriation for the System "a step in the right direction," he said he will fight for more money.

Hansen said he wants to show state legislators that A&M is willing to carry its portion of the proposed cut, but he also wants them to realize the importance of keeping research and academic programs stable.

"I'm afraid there's a misunderstanding about the function of academic institutions," he said. "They're extremely fragile. It doesn't take much to lose the quality of education and research, but it takes a long time to recover. The message we're trying to put forth is that we've come a long way and we can't afford to lose that."

Hansen said Tarleton State University, Prairie View A&M and Texas A&M University at Galveston would be hardest-hit by the cuts because "they don't have as strong a base as A&M."

Hansen said System officials should view the proposed cuts as a chance to improve A&M.

"This is a chance for the System to become more efficient not only for the taxpayer's good, but for our own discipline and productivity," he said. "That's an exciting challenge."

However, several A&M faculty administrators are worried budget cuts would affect the quality and number of programs offered by their departments.

Dr. Dean Corrigan, dean of the College of Education, said he is fighting any cutbacks.

"The cuts for education don't make sense right now," he said. "We've got the severest teacher shortage ever in this state. It doesn't

make sense to cut the budgets of the institutions training the teachers."

Corrigan said cutting the budget would include offering fewer class sections and possibly a hiring freeze.

But Corrigan's biggest worry is damage to the College's national reputation if the proposed cutbacks become law.

"Our reputation would be affected in terms of attracting grad students and faculty," he said. "We'd be losing them."

Corrigan said tightening the budget might even affect basic programs of the College.

"If we went ahead with the proposed cuts, I'm afraid it would be difficult for us to maintain the programs for our state accreditation," he said.

"The quality of education is directly affected by economic development. We've got to do everything we can to get public officials to recognize this link."

Dr. William Mobley, dean of the College of Business Administration, said faculty are "developing alternative scenarios to dealing with budget cuts as severe as those suggested by the LBB."

Mobley said lowering the budget would include offering fewer class sections and increasing the size of sections currently offered.

"There are two problems with this," he said. "One is that there's a shortage of large section rooms. The other is that we're already teaching large sections because the college has never caught up with its rapid enrollment growth in the past decade."

Mobley said fewer sections would mean fewer part-time and visiting faculty and no faculty recruitment next year.

See BUDGET, page 14

The Corps: a visible, unique part of the A&M campus

Cadets believe in keeping traditions

This is the third part of a three-part series on the Texas A&M Corps of Cadets.

By MIKE DAVIS
Reporter

Less than 6 percent of the students at Texas A&M belong to the Corps of Cadets, but the Corps is still one of the most visible aspects of the University.

Attrition is a problem in the Corps, however, because the regimented lifestyle of the cadets is not for everyone. Director of Business Services Don Powell, Class of '56, said attrition is a problem because the former students themselves make it too easy for their children to quit the Corps.

"They send their children here because they believe in Texas A&M

and they remember the Texas A&M that they went to where everybody was an equal, where everybody learned character-building traits," he said.

Parents forget that part of the reason they got so much out of the Corps was because of the hardships they encountered while here, Powell said.

"Students today are given too much," he said. "Our students have a lot of money, and it's too easy to get out of the Corps now."

"When you were a freshman and a sophomore before, back in the '50s and earlier, if you didn't like the Corps or for some reason you didn't want to be here, your only choice was to leave school," Powell said. "You couldn't become a civilian student."

Gen. Ormand R. Simpson, assistant vice president for student services, said all students should be in the Corps because of what it has to offer.

"I know what the Corps does for people who spend four years in it," Simpson, Class of '36, said, "what it teaches them in terms of maturity, a sense of responsibility."

Powell said the Corps and its products are what keeps tradition alive at A&M.

Corps members are "the keepers of the traditions" because of the Corps' strong belief in those traditions, Powell said. A&M students are for the most part conservative, patriotic people who believe in traditional American values, he said.

"I think the Corps is part of that," Powell said. "We never had any riots

against the military or burning of ROTC buildings or anything like that here because our student body, by and large, supports the Corps."

Though the Corps has strong support, the reduced size of the Corps and the diversity of A&M students has hindered the close family feeling on campus, Powell said.

"Back in the olden days, students at Texas A&M had a lot more in common," Powell said. "They were generally from middle class or lower middle class families. They were from small towns or rural areas, and everybody dressed alike in a Corps uniform."

"You never knew whether anybody had any money or didn't have any money. Everybody went through the same experience. All of your buddies throughout the whole

school had the same thing in common — they were all treated like dirt when they were freshmen."

Powell said the biggest loss to the University is that not everyone experiences the same hardships that strengthens a person's character. Powell attributes the success of many former students to the hardships they encountered while in the Corps.

"They (former students) have been very successful because they learned at Texas A&M what it is like to put up with adverse conditions, poor conditions where you've been treated badly," he said.

Powell said one speaker at Aggie Muster who had been a prisoner of war in Vietnam gave an example of

See Corps, page 14

Senator to be crewmember on February shuttle mission

Associated Press

SPACE CENTER, Houston — Jake Garn, who has spent 10 years in the U.S. Senate approving funds for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, will see first hand how the money is spent on Feb. 20, the day he'll be launched into orbit aboard the space shuttle.

NASA announced Thursday that Garn, a 52-year-old Utah Republican, will be one of seven crewmembers, including a Frenchman, on space shuttle Challenger for the four-day mission in February. Garn will participate in an experiment that may require him to throw up.

It was announced last year that Garn would fly on the shuttle as part of his "oversight" responsibilities in the Senate. He is a member of a subcommittee that monitors NASA expenditures.

The senator started pre-mission training last week, but insisted as late as Tuesday he didn't know when he would fly into space.

The prime mission of the shuttle flight is to launch a Tracking and Data Relay Satellite and a Canadian communications satellite, the Telesat 1.

Other crewmembers on the flight are Karel J. Bobko, commander; Donald E. Williams, pilot; and mis-

sion specialists Rhea Seddon, S. David Griggs and Jeffrey A. Hoffman. The Frenchman on the crew is Patrick Baudry.

Both Garn and Baudry carry the mission position of payload specialists. They will have no responsibilities in operation of the craft itself, but will take part in experiments.

Garn said he was prepared to take part in a medical experiment on space sickness, a motion ailment that affects about half of all space fliers. Garn said part of the experiment may require him to move his head rapidly in a way that may cause him to become ill and vomit.

The Battalion makes switch to AP news wire

By switching to The Associated Press wire service from United Press International, The Battalion will benefit from better written and more comprehensive stories, Don Johnson, student publications coordinator, said Thursday.

The Battalion began running the Associated Press stories Jan. 15.

Johnson said the newspaper switched wire services because student editors and professors feel the AP is much better than UPI. They wanted to change in

the past, but waited until a reduced rate became available to student newspapers, he said. Even with the discount the new service is about \$240 dollars a week, three times as expensive as UPI.

UPI's financial problems were not a reason for the change, Johnson said, although it was discussed when the decision was being made.

"Actually we felt a little bad (changing) because we knew losing customers would hurt them," he said.