

STATE AND LOCAL

A&M maid loves dorm residents



By SHERRIE COUCH Reporter

By appearance alone, Ora Carter is just another maid at Texas A&M. She's almost unnoticed as she enters Spence Hall.

Her uniform is just like the others': maroon polyester smock, white polyester pants and black, rubber wading boots. Appearances, though, can be misleading.

Last fall Carter turned 60, but her face shows no dramatic signs of aging. And her hair is still black. There's a slump in her shoulders as she walks, and at times she looks run-down, but her smile is always there.

Carter married early and had five children in eight years. All of her children are grown — the youngest is 34. And, she's been divorced for the past 33 years.

In the late 1930s, it was not uncommon for poor families to take their children out of school to help with the work, and Carter was one of those children who wasn't able to finish school.

"I just got through the eighth grade," Carter said. "But I don't feel bad about not finishing school. Somebody's got to do the hard work."

"I've been working here at the University for 17 years now," Carter said as she shrugged her shoulders and laughed. "I've got nothing better to do."

Day in and day out, Carter vacuums, cleans shower stalls, scrubs toilets and takes out the trash that 108 young women accumulate over the week. At times the trash doesn't even fit into the trash can.

During lunch, Carter usually takes a break to watch "All My Children" in the dorm lounge.

"You can always catch her taking breaks in her closet too, holding a

cigarette and reading The Battalion," one Spence resident said. "For a while there she gave up smoking because she couldn't afford to keep buying cigarettes. But I guess she just couldn't kick the habit."

Carter said she wanted to quit smoking because her job was on the line — not because the work she was doing was below standard, but because she was getting old. She knew she couldn't afford to buy cigarettes if she lost her job.

But her job is a little more stable right now. Spence Hall residents threatened to petition for Carter's job security.

"I like Spence," she said. "There's a bunch of good-timing girls here. They're not stuck-up or nothing like that."

At times Carter goes beyond her line of duty, doing extra work in the dorm. She repainted one dorm hallway in her free time during Christmas break.

This summer, Carter is working in Dorm 3 because Spence is closed for repainting.

Carter is a self-professed workaholic but admits the most important thing in her life will probably be her retirement.

"That'll probably be when I'm 80 years old," she said with a laugh.

Carter has her own personal closet on each of the four floors in Spence. The girls in the dorm have given her signs, cards and memo boards for messages to decorate the doors.

On one floor, Carter left the message, "You are so neat." Though the word was misspelled, the message was clear. There's a lot of love between the dorm residents and their maid.

Photo by ANTHONY S. CASPER

Ora Carter, a maid at Texas A&M, reads The Battalion while on her break in her closet in Briggs Hall.

Clements predicts oil boom in Texas by the year 2000

Associated Press

AUSTIN — Former Gov. Bill Clements predicted Tuesday that by the year 2000, Texas producers will have technology advanced enough to recover as much crude oil as the state has produced so far.

"It will have enormous implications for the economy of the state as well as our national security," Clements told the Texas Independent Producers and Royalty Owners Association. "We're talking about in the future producing from the known reservoirs of the state the equivalent amount of oil that we have produced to date."

Much of the state government revenue in the past has come from oil and gas taxes, but that has declined in recent years due to the oil industry's economic downturn.

Clements founded SEDCO Inc., an international oil drilling firm in 1947. SEDCO merged with Schlumberger Ltd. in 1984.

Clements, who as Texas' only Republican governor this century served from 1978 to 1982, said he was making a non-partisan effort

to stress the importance of the oil and gas industry to the state and nation.

"I'm not running for anything," Clements told reporters after his speech, but he did say he thought Democratic Gov. Mark White, who defeated him in 1982, is very vulnerable.

Clements, a former deputy U.S. defense secretary, also said the nation could not afford the luxury of not having an energy policy.

He said the nation's \$63 billion trade deficit, of which about half was caused by imported oil, is a serious problem.

"It not only affects our national security from a logistical standpoint, but it affects our relationship with both Canada and Mexico," he said. "If Mexico is to recover from the doldrums it is now in, it will be through its relationship through energy with the United States."

He predicted that crude oil prices will remain relatively stable at about the "current levels and then gradually increase by about 50 percent by the year 2000."

Judge: state violating mental health order

Associated Press

DALLAS — A federal judge, who ruled that Texas is violating an order regarding the release of mental patients, said he won't take action until after he gets a community service plan from the state mental health department.

In a 12-page ruling issued Monday, U.S. District Judge Barefoot Sanders said the state's community mental health services are only "minimally adequate" and blamed the Texas Legislature and local governments for not providing enough money for them.

Sanders ruled that the state has been violating his year-old order that mental patients be discharged only to proper community programs.

The Texas Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation has tried to comply with the order, he said, but hasn't had enough money.

The agency has not, however, been discharging mental patients before they are ready to re-enter society, Sanders said.

The judge said he must find "an appropriate remedy for failure to comply" with his order.

But Sanders said he will wait until he receives a plan next month from the mental health department, which is supposed to include a blueprint for developing community services and complying with requirements of a 1981 settlement of a class-action lawsuit against state mental hospitals.

B-CS population rises by 25 percent

Census Bureau releases statistics

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The population of Bryan-College Station has risen by 25 percent to 117,400 since the 1970s, making this community one of the fastest-growing metropolitan areas in the nation, according to the Census Bureau.

The bureau reported Tuesday that some smaller metropolitan

areas such as B-CS, with less of a population base to start with, showed even greater percentages of growth than large areas.

Florida and Texas accounted for 10 of the 11 fastest-growing metro areas, the bureau said. On a percentage basis, the bureau also listed these Texas metropolitan areas as three of the fastest growing in the nation: Midland, 113,600, up 38 percent;

Odessa, 144,500, up 25 percent and Austin, 645,400, up 20 percent.

The bureau also reported that Houston continued its phenomenal expansion to lead major urban growth in the United States.

Close behind Houston was Dallas-Fort Worth, with 14.2 percent growth to bring its population to 3,348,000. It ranked tenth in both 1980 and 1984.

But San Antonio was not to be outdone. One of the 37 largest metropolises in the nation, it was one of eight that grew by 10 percent or more between 1980 and 1984.

Metropolitan statistical areas are generally defined as regions of common economic interest with a city of at least 50,000 people at the center.

Advertisement for Fajita Rita's featuring Margarita Monday and Tequila Tuesday. Includes a large image of a margarita glass and text: 'We Have A Special For You', MARGARITA MONDAY & TEQUILA TUESDAY \$1.00 Margarita's Frozen or Rocks all Day Monday & Tuesday. Address: 4501 Texas Ave. South in Bryan 846-3696.

Advertisement for MSC OPAS featuring a quote from Mark Twain: 'I'll applaud anyone who can make a living toe-dancing or pounding elephant teeth.' Includes a cartoon of Mark Twain and a list of performances with dates and venues.

MSC OPAS 1985-86 TICKET ORDER form. Includes fields for Name, Address, City/State/Zip, Phone, and a table of ticket prices for 1985-86 Season Tickets. Categories include Regular (Adult) and Student (All). Prices range from \$45.00 to \$71.00.