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'The Great Wall of Texas'

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A New Aggie Tradition

Photo by JAY BLINDERMAN

The first Rush seminar for social fraternities was held in Rudder exhibit hall on Tuesday afternoon. The event was sponsored by the Texas A&M Interfraternity Council, which was officially recognized

by A&M during the summer. More than 15 fraternities participated in the Rush seminar, which marked the beginning of Fall Rush for 1985.

Reagan ready for serious talks with Gorbachev

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The White House on Tuesday sidestepped Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev's charge that the United States is setting up a confrontation at the November summit, and chose instead to welcome his pledge to propose ways of improving superpower relations.

In the administration's first formal reaction to Gorbachev's debut interview in the Western press, presidential spokesman Larry Speakes dismissed the Communist Party chief's claim that the United States expects the Soviets to make all the concessions.

President Reagan, Speakes said, is prepared "to meet the Soviets halfway in an effort to solve problems."

Meanwhile, a delegation of U.S. senators who met with Gorbachev in Moscow on Tuesday said the Soviet leader told them he is ready to make radical offers to reduce nuclear weapons arsenals and may not oppose basic U.S. research on space-based military systems — the so-called "Star Wars" program.

Speakes said the administration has heard such talk before and challenged the Soviets to put their proposals on the table when arms control talks resume Sept. 19 in Geneva if they are serious about negotiating

arms reductions.

"Our views of the causes of the present U.S.-Soviet tensions are quite different from that presented by Mr. Gorbachev," Speakes said in response to the Soviet leader's interview with Time magazine. But he said, "We do not intend to enter into a debate in the media," preferring to prepare for the summit through confidential diplomatic channels.

He repeated Reagan's challenge to the Soviets to permit the American president the same access to the Soviet Union's government-controlled media as Gorbachev has to the independent Western press.

"We are pleased that Mr. Gorbachev was able to present his views to the American public," Speakes said. "If President Reagan had a comparable opportunity to express his views to the Soviet people through the Soviet media, this would doubtless improve our dialogue and indicate Soviet willingness to accept a degree of reciprocity in an important aspect of our relations."

The spokesman said the United States has received no response in recent weeks to its latest proposal that the U.S. and Soviet leaders arrange exchange appearances on each other's nationwide television media as part of a broader effort to increase mutual understanding.

Scientist says any attempt to salvage Titanic 'ridiculous'

Associated Press

BOSTON — The sunken Titanic is remarkably intact with a hull "like a museum piece," but any salvage attempt would desecrate the gravesite of the more than 1,500 people who died with it, the first man to view the wreckage said Tuesday.

Robert Ballard, chief scientist of the joint U.S.-French venture that found the oceanliner on Sunday and an engineer at the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute, described to associates in Massachusetts the remote-control television survey he made of the 73-year-old wreck.

"The ship was pretty intact and upright . . ." said Nancy Green, a public relations assistant at Woods Hole.

Shelley Lauzon, public relations director at Woods Hole, spoke with Ballard in a ship-to-shore telephone

call to the Navy research vessel Knorr.

She said Ballard took time off from videotaping the 2½-mile-deep wreck Tuesday because "he's been working 'round the clock for three days on just two hours sleep."

The Titanic was the biggest, the most luxurious and supposedly the safest liner of its time. Its builders had called it unsinkable because of its double steel hull and waterproof compartments.

But an iceberg cut a 300-foot gash across several of the compartments and the ship sank on the night of April 14-15, 1912. About 700 people managed to get to lifeboats and were saved, but 1,513 others died.

The Knorr arrived last Wednesday at the Titanic sinking site 500 miles off Newfoundland, where the scientists had spent a month in June

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Wiatt: abusers will be ticketed

Parking problems continue

By TRENT LEOPOLD
Senior Staff Writer

The weather's hot and so are Aggie tempers when it comes to the Texas A&M parking situation. But Bob Wiatt, A&M's director of security traffic, said Tuesday that tickets will continue falling "like snowflakes" as long as people abuse parking spaces.

The latest complaints have been from students who are used to parking in parking area 51, east of Zachry Engineering Center, and faculty who have been finding students parked in their spaces.

Parking area 51, designated for faculty with yellow parking stickers, is entirely closed to students this week while University Police conduct a survey of the lot to determine whether or not faculty would use it, Wiatt said.

Students who have blue parking stickers normally are able to park in

"It is essential that students stay out of faculty lots. If they don't they will keep getting ticketed and towed and that just makes things bad for everyone." — Bob Wiatt, Texas A&M's director of security and traffic.

the 400 spaces behind the grassy median located in the middle of parking area 51.

A similar survey conducted last year showed that faculty didn't use the 400 spaces and the lot was reopened to students, he said.

"We are finding that the faculty quite obviously isn't using the lot this year either," Wiatt said. "So the back spaces probably will be opened up for students again on Monday."

Wiatt also said any student who received a ticket for parking in the back spaces of parking area 51 yesterday or Monday can get it dis-

missed if he comes to the University Police Station on Houston Street.

"If I wanted to be a hardhead about this I could say everyone will have to pay their tickets because the lot clearly is marked for faculty use," he said. "But we will only make those students who were ticketed for parking in the front part of parking area 51 (the area in front of the grassy median) pay the ticket."

"And we will be able to tell whether the ticket came from the front part of the lot or the back part of the lot."

For the remaining part of this

week, tickets will not be given to students with blue stickers who park in the back part of parking area 51, Wiatt said.

The red flags near parking area 50, which is across the street from parking area 51, apparently are serving no purpose except possibly to students in civil engineering courses, he said.

Faculty members' tempers also have been hot since students have come back for the fall semester, Wiatt said.

"We have faculty calling up here right and left wanting cars towed from their parking spaces," he said. "People are coming back to school and some of the freshmen might not be aware of where they are supposed to park."

More than 100 vehicles have been towed from campus since Saturday.

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Texas reforming language education

By HADDON JOHNSTON
Reporter

When seven languages are being spoken in a classroom of 30 children, teaching may seem like an impossible task. But educators in Texas are facing this challenge with a new and positive outlook.

Texas' language education is in a period of transition, establishing a precedent of involvement now that the amount of federal support is waning.

Until 1969, Texas state law prohibited teachers from speaking Spanish and other languages on school grounds, except in foreign language courses. The state mandated bilingual education only 12 years ago, after the federal government became more involved in education.

State activity in education was stimulated further by increased federal aid. But under the Reagan Administration, federal money is declining and state and local governments are assuming almost complete control of education programs.

Elisa Gutierrez, education pro-

grams specialist and chief consultant at the Texas Education Agency, says the states may have learned a lesson from the attention of the federal government.

"It seems that the state of Texas is interested in quality education," Gutierrez says. "There have been a lot of reforms."

Recent educational reforms in Texas have been made possible by an increase in state funding since 1984.

"They are creating more money but want to see results," Gutierrez says. "The state of Texas is making a huge effort to improve quality education and the special populations will be a part of it."

The special populations include children who are gifted and talented, blind and deaf or economically deprived. Children who have limited English proficiency (LEP) also are target populations that receive specific state-appropriated money for bilingual education programs.

Texas education officials estimate the state has about 285,000 children who qualify for bilingual education.

Texas law requires school districts to offer bilingual instruction in any grade with 20 or more LEP students, Gutierrez says.

If a grade level has less than 20 LEP students, English as a second language (ESL), must be provided by the school district, regardless of students' citizenship.

The teaching approaches of bilingual education vary across the nation, but Texas uses the transitional method to develop the skills that a LEP child has in his primary language and transfers them to English, Gutierrez says.

"Everything must be provided in such a way as to develop a positive self-concept in reference to a student's cultural heritage," Gutierrez says.

"Bilingual education curriculum is mandated by the state, but the teacher has the training in classroom management and may be better at deciding specific approaches as long as two languages are used as the medium for instruction," she says.

Bilingual education teachers are becoming a scarce commodity nationwide. There are only about

158,000 bilingual instructors in the country and only one for every 38 pupils in Texas.

Competition for teachers in Texas has become fiercer since the passage of a new state law requiring districts to offer free bilingual classes to preschoolers.

The shortage exists because fluency in another language is not an easy skill to acquire, Gutierrez says.

"Many certified teachers are bilingual natives who go into other careers, and other teachers return to, or stay in, the community they are from," Gutierrez says. "It is a local matter, however."

School districts required to have programs must recruit teachers on their own, and many rely on universities near the Texas-Mexico border. "Recruitment is something that is ongoing, and some districts offer bonuses (up to \$6,000 a year) and other perquisites," Gutierrez says.

Dr. Nancy Jo Dyer, modern languages professor at Texas A&M, instructed bilingual education teacher

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Public school reforms include basic skills test

Associated Press

AUSTIN — The state's oft-praised, oft-criticized public school reforms enter their second year this fall with plans to test students, teachers and the schools themselves.

While the results of some tests may prove embarrassing, reform backers say tougher standards and full disclosure of a school's shortcomings will force higher achievement in the future.

"If you don't make demands on people, nothing is going to happen," says Dr. William Kirby, the state commissioner of education.

Beginning this year, 11th graders must pass a basic skills test to get a high school diploma. Teachers must show they can read and write. And every school campus will file reports in November that will allow the parents and taxpayers to compare the academic and fiscal performance of each.

"If there's anything that's going to

create pressure and stress for educators, it's those kind of comparisons," Kirby said of the individual school reports.

"We're the only organization that blames failure on the product (students)," Kirby said.

But he said those days are over. Last year, under the reform law passed by a special legislative session, passing standards were raised to a grade of 70. This spring, students were required to pass all courses to participate in extracurricular activities.

That controversial "no-pass, no-play" rule could seem tame compared with the exit test required of all students before graduation, experts say.

"We have not seen havoc yet until we have parents with students who do not graduate" because they failed the test, said Sue McGarvey, presi-

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