

State and Local

Farm Aid fans can use shuttle service to avoid traffic jam

AUSTIN (AP) — Farm Aid organizers and city officials said Wednesday that shuttle bus service to the event will be offered in an attempt to minimize the anticipated traffic jam around the rural concert site.

"We've seen stories in the paper about the possibility of real traffic congestion out there," said Cynthia Darwin, spokeswoman for the Capital Metropolitan Transportation Authority. "I hope people would see this as a good way to go."

The 18-hour Farm Aid II concert, being staged to raise funds for family farmers, will be held at Manor Downs, a horse racing and training facility 11 miles east of Austin.

Farm Aid ticket manager Bob Fuller said more than 30,000 tickets had been sold for the 18-hour event, which is scheduled to begin shortly after 7 a.m.

Organizers have urged spectators to form car pools or ride shuttle buses to keep traffic down as much as possible.

Darwin said Capital Metro will provide 15 buses that will run from northeast Austin's Reagan High School to Manor Downs every 30 minutes. Service will begin at 6 a.m. Friday, with return trips continuing until 2 a.m. Saturday, she said. Tickets are \$3.

The concert has attracted more than 75 acts, although Farm Aid officials said Wednesday they won't have a tentative schedule for each until Thursday evening.

The concert is being organized by singer Willie Nelson, who also orga-

nized the initial Farm Aid concert. Nelson said the first concert raised about \$9 million and that he hopes this event will do that well or better.

So far, some \$4.3 million has been used for rural relief efforts in nearly 40 states, funding such projects as telephone hot lines for farmers, legal services, food pantries and purchases of seed for farmers who otherwise wouldn't have been able to make this year's crop.

The concert will be carried live on cable television channel VH-1. Spokeswoman Margaret Wade said portions of the event also will be carried on the Voice of America radio network to listeners overseas.

This event comes within a year of the Live Aid concert for African famine relief, the first Farm Aid concert and a nationwide series of concerts to raise money for Amnesty International. But Nelson said he doesn't believe Americans are tired of giving to worthy causes.

"The American people are generous," he said. "I don't think anybody's tired of giving."

Nelson, a native of the small Texas town of Abbott, said he hopes the concert helps convince the public of how serious the farm crisis is.

"I'm sure a lot of people were just as ignorant as I was — before I got into this — about the problems of the American farmer and how many of them are going out of business even though they are good farmers, even though their credit has always been good," he said.

A&M studies bluebonnet bloom cycle

By Nancy Conces
Reporter

The Texas Agricultural Extension Service is competing with Mother Nature to grow Texas' state flower, the bluebonnet.

If research to control the bluebonnet's blooming cycle is successful, the Extension Service hopes the wildflower may be commercially sold so it can be grown in yards and gardens as well as along Texas highways.

The Worthington Hotel in Fort Worth, whose emblem is the bluebonnet, has given the Extension Service a special three-year, \$30,000 grant that will support intensive investigations into the bluebonnet's germination, pollination and color variations.

Extension Service horticulturists Dr. Jerry Parsons and Dr. Don Wilkerson are researching what makes the bluebonnet bloom.

"Our role is to continue studying the plant's germination characteristics," Parsons says. "We

hope to eventually unlock the secrets of the bluebonnet's blooming cycle to make commercial production of seeds for garden annuals both efficient and reliable."

Wilkerson says many people think that bluebonnets are wildflowers and, therefore, don't belong in flowerbeds.

"But, with the bluebonnet transplants that are available at most nurseries, people can plant them in their gardens in the fall and enjoy them (the flowers) in the spring," he says.

Wilkerson says that before the bluebonnet transplants were available, gardeners who planted bluebonnet seeds couldn't always be sure the flower would grow where the seed was planted.

"The flowers could wind up in the middle of your lawn or even in your neighbor's lawn," Wilkerson says.

"With the transplants, you plant them where you want them and when they start looking bad,

you just pull them up and plant something else," he says.

Wilkerson says the color variations of the bluebonnet include pink, white, dark blue and a recently discovered pale blue which has been named the "Worthington Bluebonnet".

The pale blue bluebonnet was named in honor of the Worthington Hotel grant.

"These different colors really aren't that pretty standing by themselves, but in combination they're striking," Parsons says.

The Extension Service is trying to establish new color varieties of the bluebonnet by separating the odd color seeds from the normal color seeds.

"We do this with successive generations until the seeds come back 80 to 85 percent in the odd variety," Wilkerson says.

Parsons says the white variety of bluebonnets are becoming more common but research is several generations away from



firmly establishing colors and mass production.

The ultimate goal of the Worthington grant, Parsons says, is to produce pot-culture bluebonnets so people in Texas can give away bluebonnets at Christmas instead of poinsettias.

EPA issues strict new discharge rules for Gulf

DALLAS (AP) — The Environmental Protection Agency issued its strictest discharge regulations ever for the Gulf of Mexico on Wednesday, guidelines that are already sparking protest in the oil and gas industry.

For the first time, the EPA has included enforceable toxicity limits for all drilling fluid discharges including mixtures of water, clays, minerals, oil and special chemicals used in drill-

ing gas and oil wells, EPA spokesman Roger Meacham said.

About 2,000 sites in the Gulf — spanning an area beginning three miles from the shoreline and extending up to 200 miles offshore — are covered by the new general permit that went into effect Wednesday, Meacham said.

Bobby Hall, oil production director for the American Petroleum Institute said, "We can see some prob-

lems already, and we haven't even finished digesting it. We're not sure exactly what some of the limits mean."

Technically, all companies operating in the Gulf now comply with the permit, Meacham said.

Companies violating the permit could face civil penalties of up to \$10,000 per day per violation. Criminal violations, which the EPA would have to prove intentional disregard

of the law, could bring up to \$25,000 per day per violation.

Meacham said he didn't know how many companies are affected by the permit, which he said protects biologically sensitive areas such as coral reefs by limiting discharge rates within about one-third of a mile of those areas.

But Clark said the cost of complying with the permit could doom marginal oil leases in the Gulf.

What's up

Thursday

STUDENT GOVERNMENT: applications for External Communications and Public Relations will be available through the summer months. Please come by 221 Pavilion from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. to pick up applications. For more information call 845-3051.

BRAZOS DUPLICATE BRIDGE CLUB: meets every Thursday at 7 p.m. at the College Station Community Center. Beginners are welcome.

Items for What's Up should be submitted to The Battalion, 216 Reed McDonald, no less than three days prior to desired publication date.

No-pass, no-play

Statistics 'don't prove' minority, handicapped discrimination

HOUSTON (AP) — Statistics from 700 of 1,000 Texas school districts don't prove that no pass, no play rule discriminates against handicapped and minority students, a special court master has ruled.

"It's a rare case where statistics and imbalance alone are enough to prove an equal protection case," Gerald Treece, who served as special master, said Tuesday.

Treece said the trial, set for July

16, will have to expose a historical background of discrimination, specific events that led to the discrimination, any departure from the norm and the legislative history.

"I will agree there is some imbalance between Anglos compared to the handicapped and minorities, but these statistics should only be the beginning of the inquiry, not the end," said Treece.

His report showed 29 percent of

handicapped children, 23 percent of black students and 22 percent of Mexican-American students were

excluded by the law from participating in school activities, compared with 15 percent of Anglo students.

Correction

The July 1 issue of *The Battalion* mistakenly printed the emergency number for the Texas A&M Emergency Care Team.

The correct number for phones with an 845- or 260- prefix is 9911 not 911. *The Battalion* regrets the error.

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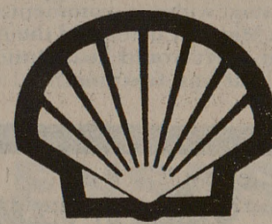
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