

What's up

Wednesday

AGGIE SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY: will meet at 8:30 p.m. in 502 Rudder.
TEXAS STUDENT EDUCATION ASSOCIATION: will have a student-faculty Christmas party at 3 p.m. in the lounge of Harrington Tower.
AMERICAN RED CROSS: will hold a blood drive from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. at the Veterinary Medicine Complex and Harrington Tower.
TAMU POLO CLUB: will hold a mandatory meeting at 7 p.m. in 407 A-B Rudder.
EUROPE CLUB: will meet at 9 p.m. at the Flying Tomato.
BIG EVENT: will have a mixer with the Traditions Committee at 7 p.m. in the party room of Plantation Oaks apartments.

Thursday

AGGIE SPACE DEVELOPMENT SOCIETY: will show the videotape "America's Future in Space" at 7 p.m. in 604-B Evans Library.
ATARI USER GROUP: will present a demonstration of word processors for the Atari ST and XL/XE computers at 7:30 p.m. in 102 Teague.
ECONOMICS SOCIETY: will elect officers at 7 p.m. in 125 Blocker.
MSC LITERARY ARTS: is now accepting submissions for "Litmus." Call 845-1515 for more information.
PARENTS' WEEKEND COMMITTEE: has applications for nominating 1987-88 Parents of the Year available in the Commons, Sterling C. Evans Library, the Memorial Student Center and the Pavilion.
Items for What's Up should be submitted to The Battalion, 216 Reed McDonald, no less than three working days prior to desired publication date.

Paper: Ordinance on lead pollution wasn't enforced

DALLAS (AP) — A clean-air ordinance passed almost 20 years ago would have prevented the lead poisoning of a generation of children during the 1970s, but city officials avoided enforcing it, the *Dallas Morning News* reported.

In a Dec. 3 copyright story, the newspaper said records indicate that officials seldomly enforced regulations against even the most conspicuous sources of environmental lead pollution in the city.

The *News* reported Sunday that RSR Corp. agreed to pay \$20 million in a secret out-of-court settlement to 370 children who lived in a low-income neighborhood near the company's smelter in west Dallas.

Testimony taken from medical experts acknowledged that the children had suffered brain damage that might leave them only marginally employable for life.

Despite the 1968 ordinance, "there was a considerable reluctance on the part of local officials to believe there was a problem," said Ian von Lindern, an environmental engineer who has studied the Dallas situation.

City officials in positions of authority in the 1970s say when they tried to enforce the regulations they

were attacked by the smelter operators.

Former City Manager George Schrader said the smelters demanded that officials prove that people had suffered ill health.

Dr. E. Lowell Berry, head of the Dallas City Health Department from 1972 until his retirement in 1982, said there was no evidence that children were flocking to health clinics because of poisoning.

But von Lindern said he uncovered hundreds of reports filed during the late 1960s and early 1970s that document emission levels so high that they clearly showed a threat to children living near the smelters.

The plaintiff's attorney in the case, James Barber, said a conspiracy among city officials, smelter operators and lawyers allowed the issue to fester for years.

The public record indicates the city took no action for the first six years after passage of the clean air ordinance despite mounting complaints by residents of the acrid, sooty pollution that hung over their homes, the *News* reported.

NL Industries closed in 1979, and RSR closed in 1984, rather than installing pollution control equipment.

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Off-campus bus service to add new route beginning in spring

By Molly Pepper
 Reporter

Texas A&M's off-campus shuttle bus service will include a new route this semester, Bus Operations Manager Doug Williams says.

The route will serve residents in apartments on Dartmouth Street, who now catch the bus on Harvey Road. It also will pick up residents in East Mark Apartments on Central Park Lane and residents in other complexes who have not had shuttle bus service in the past.

"People who don't have service now are wanting service," Williams says. "And we could relocate two stops from another route and combine it with this area. We feel it will have sufficient ridership to justify a route."

The off-campus shuttle bus system helps lessen the parking problem on campus, he says. This semester the system has 17,698 passengers a day traveling to and from the campus.

"There's no way you can get everyone to campus in a car and park them, too," he says.

He adds that the shuttle bus system saves fuel.

"I can assure you we burn much less fuel hauling the people in a bus than they would go individually in cars," he says.

The system gets most of its funding from user fees, but there is a small subsidy from student services fees and a varying amount made from charters, Williams says.

The total budget for this year is

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 — Doug Williams, bus operations manager

\$1.12 million, and the system is not in need of more funds, Williams says.

The system consists of nine routes served by 35 buses. All the buses are not used every day, Williams says; several are kept in the garage on Agronomy Road for back-up service and maintenance. But he says the buses haven't needed much maintenance.

"Occasionally you're going to change engines or transmissions," he

says. "But generally they seem to be holding up really well."

Buses run on different schedules at different times during the day. In the morning, when the largest loads are being shuttled to campus, Williams says, some routes have four buses out. When this is the case, the buses arrive at stops seven minutes

apart, he says.

Later in the day, buses usually run 10 to 15 minutes apart, Williams says, and after 6:30 p.m. the nine routes are combined into five and buses run 30 minutes apart.

The buses are the busiest before 8 a.m. and before 9 a.m., Williams says, because passengers don't arrive at the stops until it's too late to get them all to class on time.

"The biggest problem I'd say is for people to adapt to the schedu-

ling," he says. "Because everyone wants to go to school 15 minutes late and everyone can't get on the bus 15 minutes late, you've got to space out your schedule."

An off-campus shuttle bus service has existed at A&M since 1972, he says, but it was contracted out to a private company, Transportation Enterprises Inc. The University didn't renew the contract and took over the shuttle bus service in 1982 because of complaints about poor maintenance and service.

The University ordered 33 new buses built to its specifications for \$47,000 each. The buses have rear-mounted diesel engines and no air conditioning.

The drivers of these buses are chosen through an interview process and put through a three-step training program. First, drivers practice on obstacle courses set up at the Research Annex on Highway 21. Next, they're allowed to drive on the roads of the annex. And finally, they can drive on College Station streets and learn the routes.

Estimates for fish kill in Texas hit 300,000

AMISTAD RESERVOIR (AP) — Deadly algae and dead fish reached the Amistad Reservoir Tuesday, 11 days after the toxic substance first surfaced in the Pecos River.

Estimates of suffocated fish have reached 300,000, Texas Water Commission spokesman Max Woodfin said.

Water Commission officials hope the purer Amistad Reservoir water will dilute the deadly chemicals, but "we don't know whether the fish kill will continue in the lake or not," he said.

TWC biologists discovered dead fish and algae Monday all the way down to the headwaters of the Amistad, about five miles downstream from the spot where the Pecos River empties into the

Rio Grande, Woodfin said.

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department Game Warden Don Jackson said Monday that animals are feasting on fish that died in the algae-clogged Pecos the animals are surviving.

Jackson said game wardens tracked 250 raccoons that ate the dead fish, and they all seemed "alive and healthy."

Water Commission officials last week estimated that more than 200,000 carp, gar, bass, minnows and catfish died since Nov. 29.

Parks and Wildlife tests showed that the algae, identified as *Pyrnnesium parvum*, gives off between two and 12 chemicals when it dies in salty water, Jackson said.

Forestry prof says clearing trees won't affect wildlife

HOUSTON (AP) — A controversial plan to clear areas of the Sam Houston National Forest damaged by pine beetles will not have any effect on the wildlife living in the area, a forestry professor said Tuesday.

"It will not affect the number of species at all," Robert Whiting, associate forestry professor at Stephen F. Austin University, said. "We will not lose species. There will certainly be some mortality but I suspect the mortality will be mostly rodents."

The state attorney general's office is trying to convince U.S. District Judge Lynn N. Hughes to bar the U.S. Forest Service from clearing the area.

A 52-ton tree crusher is being used to mow down trees in 2,500 acres of the forest's Four Notch Area near Huntsville. When the clearing is completed, officials plan to burn 1,100 acres in the area this year.

But state officials argue the plan is too broad and that specific environmental impacts at the site have not been studied. A state biologist said the endangered red-cockaded woodpecker that lives and feeds in the area is already being killed because of the clearing.

Forest Service officials, however, said knocking down the pines and hardwoods will allow room for new trees to grow. Whiting agreed, saying the clearing project would help the woodpecker.

Environmentalists also have said the tree crusher is disturbing soil in the area, preventing the woodpeckers from feeding on earthworms. But Whiting said he found worms in the tracks of the tree crusher last week.

A suit filed by Texas Attorney General Jim Mattox asks that further study be required to determine whether work should proceed.

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