

State and Local

B-CS task force takes to streets searching for drunken drivers

By Robert Morris
Staff Writer

Although few arrests have been made so far, the new state-funded driving While Intoxicated Task Force is in full operation, with local police combing the streets of Bryan-College Station one weekend each month.

For four hours this Friday and Saturday — 10 p.m. to 2 a.m. — the search for drunken drivers continued, but only a handful of incidents occurred and the city appeared relatively sedate.

The task force, now only a few months old, employs off-duty police officers on an overtime basis.

Col. Brad D. Smith, a nine-year veteran of the College Station Police Dept., was one officer who voluntarily spent those two nights on patrol.

Smith, who has participated in three previous task force outings, said that although the number of arrests hasn't been great, the visibility of the force has made a difference.

A brief description of Smith's Friday night patrol follows.

10 p.m.: Smith, along with three other task force officers, begins the shift.

Smith's patrol follows no particular pattern.

"Mainly what I do is comb the city," Smith said. "I go up and down the main thoroughfares, such as Texas Avenue, then a few side streets."

Drunks will often take side roads to stay away from the main traffic, or there might be a party in a residential area, he said.

10:30 p.m.: Smith has covered the south side of the city thoroughly, using radar to check for speeders, and watching for what he said were possible signs of drunken drivers — headlights not turned on, use of bright lights inside the city limits, weaving in and out of lanes, or rapid fluctuations in speed.

So far there has been no visible contact with possible offenders.

"If they're out there we will probably find them. Anyone I miss is likely to be caught by another patrol."

Col. Brad D. Smith, a nine-year veteran of the College Station Police Dept.

11:00 p.m.: It is becoming obvious that the majority of the night's work won't begin until after the bars close at 1:00 a.m.

By this time, Smith has covered the major thoroughfares in College Station and begins to criss-cross through smaller streets. Over the radio, another task force officer can be heard calling in the name and drivers' license number of a suspect he has stopped, which later became an arrest.

Smith turns down Holleman Drive and notices a large number of cars parked along the side of the street. He concludes there is a party

and returns several times later in the night.

12:05 a.m.: Smith has yet to stop a suspect, but traffic flow begins to pick up.

12:15 a.m.: After two hours of driving, Smith spots a suspect. A vehicle west-bound on University Drive is noticeably weaving in its lane and fluctuating in speed. Smith pulls the vehicle over and approaches the driver. After a brief conversation with the male driver and female passenger, Smith quickly determines the vehicle operator is

not drunk, but rather "occupied," by the sexual actions of his female companion.

12:45 a.m.: Smith pulls a speeder over. Again, he determines the driver is not drunk and issues a warning.

Smith said he uses several methods to determine whether a suspect is drunk. They include the suspect's ability to carry on a normal conversation — the method he has used in both cases so far — and the suspect's motor skills control.

"If I pull a female suspect over and she fumbles over her license two or three times when I can clearly see

it from outside the car, then I'm reasonably sure she is drunk," Smith said.

1:00 a.m.: "All hell will break loose after one o'clock," Smith had said quite prophetically earlier in the evening. Indeed, College Station becomes a different city after its numerous bars close.

Traffic increases and the calls over the radio come in rapid-fire succession.

But Smith's patrol finds no suspects.

1:30 a.m.: Still no DWI arrests, and the streets are beginning to slow down again.

Smith's patrol for drunken drivers is interrupted by a call for assistance. The night unexpectedly ends with Smith assisting an off-duty officer in an arrest for possession of a controlled substance.

2:15 a.m.: The patrol for drunken drivers ends unsuccessfully in the sense that Smith has made no arrests.

Yet, as Smith had pointed out earlier in the evening, the visibility of the patrol cars — which became increasingly apparent throughout the night — is the real heart of the program. Repeatedly during the evening, Smith said he would run into a fellow officer every time he turned a corner.

"It's like a dragnet," Smith said. "If they're out there we will probably find them. Anyone I miss is likely to be caught by another patrol."

Board committee discusses funding of biotech institute

By Frank Smith
Senior Staff Writer

The Planning and Building Committee of the Texas A&M Board of Regents on Sunday discussed appropriating \$550,000 for the preliminary design of the Institute of Biosciences and Technology, which will be based at the Texas Medical Center in Houston.

The appropriation for that design was one of several agenda items addressed by Board committees Sunday afternoon. All items approved in committee await the formal approval of the full Board, which convenes today at 3 p.m. Committee meetings resumed this morning.

In a written project justification, Dr. Eugene Sander, deputy chancellor for biotechnology development, said the proposed \$24 million Institute of Biosciences and Technology "will be a center of excellence for basic biological and biomedical sciences at the molecular level."

"It will provide an important interface between similar research at Texas A&M University and the various parts of the Texas Medical Center; scientific leadership and support for both new and established Texas industries in biotechnology; and support for outreach programs to Texas citizens in areas such as the relationship between nutrition and health," Sander said.

The planning committee also moved to recommend:

- A \$165,000 appropriation for the preliminary design of the proposed \$9.4 million Doherty Petroleum Engineering Building addition on campus. According to a written project justification, the addition "will provide the space needed to accommodate research programs necessary to strengthen the petroleum and pe-

trochemical industry for both Texas and the nation."

Regent Joe Richardson told committee members the project is "for the future of Texas."

"This (the petroleum industry) is one thing that's going to come back someday," he said.

- Awarding an \$869,464 contract to Bandas Industries Inc. of Temple for the construction of an aircraft parking apron and taxiway for the proposed north terminal at Easterwood Airport.

- A project to prepare an asphalt overlay for Kyle Field, replace its artificial turf and apply an asphalt overlay to the stadium's track.

Wesley Peel, vice chancellor for facilities planning and construction, said the Athletic Department has said the project must be completed by the start of August.

- Awarding a \$2.39 million construction contract to Lecco Constructors Inc. of Houston for the renovation of the Physics Building. As soon as the renovations are complete, Peel said, the building will be occupied by the psychology department.

In another meeting, the Committee for Academic Campuses moved to recommend adoption of a resolution on the "mission and structure" of Texas A&M at Galveston. The resolution aims to re-affirm the Board's commitment to research and instructional programs at that campus.

It authorizes Chancellor Perry Adkisson to "proceed with planning for a major research institute of marine sciences at Galveston, possibly in collaboration with the University of Texas."

"We feel there are some economies that can be made by combining some of our facilities," Adkisson said. "We also feel we could compete for federal monies better with a combined effort."

Man behind blow-dart incident sentenced

By Curtis L. Culberson
Staff Writer

The man charged with the Oct. 27 aggravated assault of two Texas A&M students with a blow-dart gun was sentenced Thursday to a \$1,000 fine and deferred adjudication.

Michael C. Garner, 18, of Route 5 in Bryan pleaded guilty to one count of aggravated assault.

Judgment was delayed on the case by District

Court Judge Carolyn Ruffino for an 8-year probationary period, Assistant District Attorney Hubbard Kennedy III said.

Under the terms of deferred adjudication, if Garner is not charged with any new offenses for 8 years, the judge will not find him guilty and the offense will not become part of Garner's record, Kennedy said.

In the Oct. 27 shootings, one student was shot in the hand by the the 3½-inch needle-like dart and the other was struck in the chest.

Garner's sentence was the result of a plea-bargaining agreement between defense attorney Roland Searcy and Kennedy. Because of the ruling on the first charge of aggravated assault the second was dismissed.

But Kennedy said his office was satisfied with Garner's sentence.

"It was a reckless act," Kennedy said. "He's a young man who made a mistake. For the next 8 years he will have a chance to prove he can live within the law."

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RECORD WORLD

The MSC Opera and Performing Arts Society (MSC OPAS) presents the irresistible Cambridge Buskers Thursday, January 29 in Rudder Auditorium at 8 p.m. Michael Copley and Dag Ingram were Cambridge University students who began their career as street musicians (buskers) playing classical music to earn train fare. Since busking is illegal in London, they were arrested. Since then they have played the concert halls of the world in order to live outside the confines of jail.

Hear them for yourself! Dag Ingram plays solo on the piano accordion and Michael Copley, flutist, comprises the rest of the orchestra (33 other wind instruments) — sometimes with more than one instrument in his mouth at a time! The San Francisco *Examiner* calls them "astounding musicians!"

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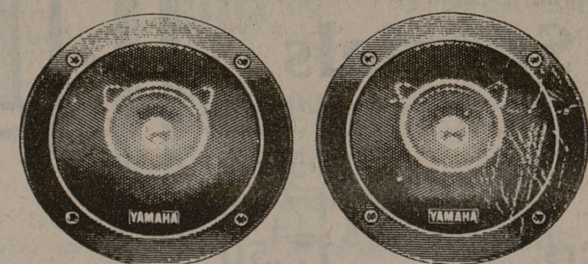
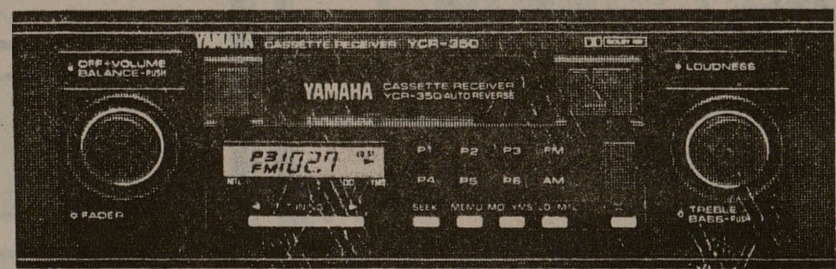
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