

A&M merges shuttle bus service for Munson, Scarlett O'Hara runs

By Rachel Cowan
Reporter

The Munson and Scarlett O'Hara bus routes were combined Monday, said Douglas G. Williams, manager of Texas A&M bus operations. The routes had been combined last semester, but only from 6:30 p.m. to 10 p.m., Williams said. Both bus routes now include all the stops along University Oaks Street. Under the revised route, the Scarlett O'Hara buses stop at the Plantation Oaks apartments first and the Village Green and Tanglewood apartments last. The Munson buses now run in the opposite direction along University Oaks. Because of these changes, buses will be three or four minutes apart before 10 a.m. along the Plantation Oaks, Sausalito, Sundance, Courtyard, Travis House and Village Green bus stops. After 10 a.m., the buses will be about six minutes apart.

Before the new plan was implemented, Scarlett O'Hara buses ran 12 to 15 minutes apart. "The changes in bus routes mainly help students on the Scarlett O'Hara route," said Bill Conaway Jr., assistant manager of bus operations.

"Students on the Scarlett O'Hara route are used to . . . waiting eight minutes for a bus, but . . . they were waiting up to 15 minutes."

— Bill Conaway Jr., assistant manager of bus operations

The decision to combine routes was made after students complained about long waits for buses and being late to class, but bus operations won't charge extra money for the changes, Conaway said.

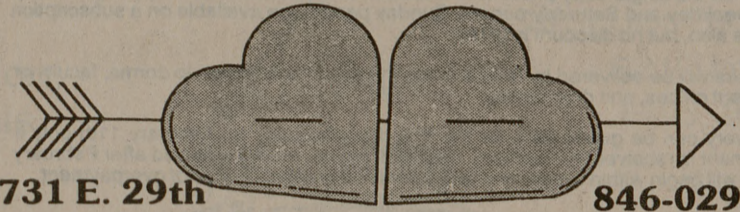
"This will make things a lot easier," said Chris Stafford, a sophomore electrical engineering major. "Sometimes I would wait as long as 22 minutes."

The reason the Scarlett O'Hara buses don't run as often as last semester is that the buses on the new Dartmouth route now pick up some of the students who used to be on the Scarlett O'Hara route, Conaway said. Because the Scarlett O'Hara route eliminated two bus stops (Woodstock and Post Oak Village), bus operations could not afford to spend as much money on the route.

Last semester, bus operations allotted three buses to the Scarlett O'Hara route, while this semester there are only two, he said. "Students on the Scarlett O'Hara route are used to better services, waiting eight minutes for a bus," Conaway said, "but at the beginning of this semester, they were waiting up to 15 minutes."

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NBC affiliate to delay show on condom use

FORT WORTH (AP) — A television sitcom episode about a teen-age boy who buys condoms will be run by the NBC affiliate in the Dallas-Fort Worth area on a delayed basis and will be followed by a forum on teen-age pregnancy, station officials say. Doug Adams, news director of KXAS-TV, said the station received permission from NBC to run the episode of "Valerie" at 10:30 p.m. CST Sunday instead of its regular 7:30 p.m. time slot. The station earlier had announced it would not run the episode. In the episode, series star Valerie Harper discovers her 17-year-old son has purchased condoms as a safeguard for a sexual encounter. "Our feeling is that we're supportive of the show and of teens watching it," said O'Neil. "But we think we've made a contract with families that between 7 p.m. and 8 p.m. they don't have to worry about the programming that's coming into their home." The show will be followed by a forum on teen-age pregnancy to be produced by the station, Adams said.

Doctors: Mexican diet pills can endanger student users

By Tami Tate
Reporter

Some college students are losing weight with possibly harmful diet pills obtained in Nuevo Laredo, Mexico.

One of those students, Lisa Dickard, a student at the University of Texas, has been taking the diet pills since August 1986.

Dickard, 21, says she heard about the diet pills through a friend.

Dickard and her roommate, Pam Pinder, first went to Nuevo Laredo in August 1986. They crossed the border into Mexico, hailed a taxi and gave the driver the address of a physician who would prescribe the pills, she says.

About 25 people were waiting for prescriptions in the doctor's office, which she says was about the size of a bathroom.

Before receiving any pills, the women were told to fill out an index card with their names and heights, Dickard says, and then they were weighed.

The doctor then showed her the drugs — three different pills. One is taken early in the morning, another at about 10 a.m. and the last at 2 p.m., she says.

One of the pills, which the doctor

called a "fatburner," had no prescription, ingredients or name on the pill bottle. The other two drugs, Micil and Ionamin, required a prescription, Dickard says. The cost for a three-month prescription and the doctor visit totaled \$30, she says.

The pills were obtained at a local pharmacist in Nuevo Laredo. In order to bring the drugs into the United States, proof of a prescription was required, she says.

John Thompson, associate director for the Texas State Poison Center, says Micil is a diuretic which produces urine flow, therefore, getting rid of excess fluid. If used in excess, Thompson says, a person can become dehydrated. Ionamin, an appetite suppressant, can lead to high blood pressure and a high heart rate if too much is taken, he says.

Jackie Howell, a nursing supervisor and licensed vocational nurse at Care Plus in College Station agreed with Thompson, saying Ionamin is an amphetamine, more commonly known as speed, and affects the central nervous system.

Howell says the Physicians Desk Reference characterizes Ionamin as a short-term weight reducer that elevates the blood pressure and causes stimulation and hyperactivity. Iona-

min also may impair driving, make it difficult to operate machinery and, in rare instances, cause psychotic episodes. An overdose of Ionamin can cause tremors, hallucinations, fatigue, depression and panic.

Dickard lost 15 pounds in three weeks and says she could hardly eat for a week. The Nuevo Laredo doctor had told her she would lose most of the weight in the first two weeks.

"The first day is the worst," she says. "It sort of makes you feel like you're in a daze the first day."

When she began taking the diet pills, Dickard says she couldn't sleep for a few days and when she did, it was a fitful sleep. She also noticed having a lot of energy, and then none at all. She thought it was because one of the pills was a stimulant and the other pill counteracted the first one.

Dickard says she wasn't afraid to take the pills because she has never had heart or blood problems and would probably continue taking them.

In Dickard's opinion, the Nuevo Laredo doctor would prescribe the diet pills to anyone, including underweight people.

"He wouldn't care I don't think," she says. "He doesn't care."

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