

# State and Local

## Solution to close quarters of G. Rollie White in sight

Proposed events center to seat 15,000

By Stuart Vorwerk  
Reporter

The cramped seating conditions of G. Rollie White Coliseum have frustrated many an avid sports fan, but a remedy to its capacity problems is on the horizon.

Plans to build a special events center that would seat approximately 15,000 have been proposed to the Texas A&M Board of Regents, said Wesley E. Peel, vice chancellor for facilities planning and construction.

The center would be designed by Crain/Anderson Inc. and would be built on the east side of Beef Cattle Road, across from Kyle Field and adjacent to the Anderson Track and Field Complex. It would double G. Rollie White's capacity of 7,500 to 15,000.

Peel said plans to build the center have been put on hold and they haven't been formally approved, but he feels they will be authorized soon.

Funding is the biggest obstacle to the center's development, he said, because most of the estimated \$34 million needed to build the center must come from sources other than state revenues.

But this has been partly solved, Peel said, with donations from former A&M students, such as Chester Reed, who has donated land to A&M, appraised at about \$13 million at 1985 rates.

Although A&M basketball would be played in the center, Peel said, the primary focus of the center would be community use.

The larger seating capacity would enable A&M to draw more well-known rock, pop and country/western groups to perform concerts.

The center also would provide the opportunity to host National Invitational Tournament and National Collegiate Athletic Association basketball tournaments, as well as professional exhibition games of the Houston Rockets,

Dallas Mavericks and San Antonio Spurs.

Other sports, such as volleyball, wrestling and gymnastics, also could take place at the center.

The proposed 20,000 square-foot area could host other events, such as circuses, professional rodeos, ice shows, exhibit and trade shows, Peel said.

The center also could make the staggering of A&M graduation commencement ceremonies unnecessary, Peel added.

Shelby Metcalf, A&M head basketball coach, said, "I would be very happy for them to have a new one (special events center) because it would help recruiting."

However, Metcalf made a point to say, "I love playing in G. Rollie White, and until the new one (special events center) is built, G. Rollie White is the greatest place to play a basketball game in the world, and that's how I feel about it."

## New fiber-optics probe designed by A&M graduate awaits FDA OK

By Rene Moody  
Reporter

A fiber-optics probe invented by a former Texas A&M graduate student and used to measure chemical levels in blood awaits approval by the Food and Drug Administration.

A&M graduate David Costello said the probe is inserted intravenously and works like the pH indicator that tests swimming pool water. Made from tiny, clear-plastic fibers, the probe can be inserted through a hypodermic needle slightly larger than one used for routine injections, Costello said.

Light is reflected through a section of the U-shaped tube containing chemical indicators, which react with the ion concentration of the blood, causing the light to change colors. The color change is analyzed by a microprocessor and results are displayed, Dr. Charles Lessard, professor of biomedical engineering, said.

"The new device may one day allow doctors to obtain instantaneous blood readings without having to wait two to three hours for a lab report," said Lessard, who was Costello's advisor. "This would be useful during surgery or for patients, such

as those with emphysema, whose blood must constantly be checked."

Costello wanted to find a way to test chemicals without electricity. He invented the device while working on a master's degree in bioengineering at A&M. He then proposed his idea to the Hyperbarics Division of the U.S. School of Aerospace Medicine in San Antonio, which financed its development for \$75,000.

After graduating, Costello and three partners, Les Schlain, A&M graduate Steve Spar and Mark Abrams, founded Optex Biomedical in Houston. Costello said the firm hopes to gain FDA approval for the probe and begin production by the end of 1987.

A&M holds patent rights on the probe and will receive royalties from sales, Taylor Morgan, System Patent Administrator, said. A definite use for the income has not been designated, but Morgan said it may go back into research.

The fiber-optics device also may be used to monitor chemical reactions in operations such as those used in breweries and food processing plants, Costello said.

The Medical Sciences Division of Johnson Space Center also has expressed interest in the device, which could be used in space to monitor environmental conditions in cellular chemical experiments, such as producing insulin, Lessard said.

## Houston adds incentives to convention

HOUSTON (AP) — In a last-minute effort to gain the 1988 Democratic National Convention, city officials have turned to a \$5 million insurance policy issued by Lloyd's of London to back a promise to the party.

City officials are hoping the policy will defuse Democratic National Committee Chairman Paul G. Kirk's objections to the unfinished George R. Brown Convention Center.

Houston's host committee chairman, Joe Russo, said Saturday that Houston will sweeten a \$5 million insurance policy that is payable to the party by guaranteeing that the center will be fully operational by January 1988.

That would be more than seven months before the Democrats meet in July 1988.

Under the new plan, if the center is not completed or if any system in the center is not working by Jan. 1, the Democrats will be \$5 million richer.

"We're trying to plug any remaining hole," Russo said. "We're trying to add more belt suspenders to our proposal."

Russo has written a letter explaining the policy to Kirk and members of the site selection committee. The party is expected to announce the host city Tuesday. Houston and Atlanta are the apparent front-runners.

## Nine death row inmates face execution soon

HUNTSVILLE (AP) — Nine death row inmates, including a man who killed a highway patrolman during a crime spree and a former janitor who says he is innocent of a rape-murder, face executions between now and April, officials say.

But lawyers say some of the condemned will receive stays of execution as their appeals proceed. Of those with execution dates, Eliseo H. Moreno, 27, has said he does not wish to appeal his March 4 execution.

Texas has executed 21 prisoners — tops in the nation — since the death penalty was resumed in 1982.

Moreno, who had no prior prison record, was convicted of capital murder in the October 11, 1983, shooting of state trooper Russell Boyd near Hempstead.

Boyd, 25, was one of six people who pro-

secutors said Moreno killed during a 160-mile crime spree that began at College Station with the slayings of his brother-in-law, Juan Garza, 30, and Garza's wife, Esther, 31.

Moreno also was charged in the shooting deaths of James Bennett, 62; his sister-in-law, Ann Bennett, 70; and Allie Wilkins, 79, in Hempstead.

According to investigators, Moreno forced a family of five to drive him to Pasadena and subsequently abducted a Friendswood man, whom he forced at gunpoint to drive him toward the Rio Grande Valley. State troopers arrested him at a roadblock in Wharton County.

Clarence Lee Brandley, who received his March 26 execution date Friday, was convicted of raping and killing Cheryl Dee Ferguson, 16, at Conroe High School on Aug.

25, 1980. The student, a manager for the Belville High School volleyball team, was at the school for a scrimmage.

Brandley, 35, who initially had been scheduled to die two years ago, received his execution date as about 200 supporters protested outside the Montgomery County Courthouse. His attorneys maintain that another janitor killed the girl.

Elliott Rod Johnson, 28, is appealing his case to the U.S. Supreme Court for the execution-style shooting death of Joseph Granado, a Beaumont jewelry store owner, during a robbery April 8, 1982. He is scheduled to die before dawn Wednesday.

Fletcher Mann, 25, is scheduled to die Feb. 25. He was convicted of capital murder in the Sept. 11, 1980, shooting death of Christopher Lee Bates in Dallas.

Those scheduled to be executed in March include Clifton Russell Jr., March 10; and John H. Selvage, March 12; Raymond Landry Sr., March 16; Larry Anderson, March 17; and Jerry L. Hogue, March 24.

Russell, 25, received the death penalty for the Dec. 3, 1979, stabbing death of Hubert Otha Tobey, an air traffic controller in Abilene. Tobey was found stabbed outside an abandoned house with his skull crushed.

Selvage, 36, who has had two previous execution dates, was convicted in the July 30, 1979, shooting death of Harris County sheriff's deputy Albert Garza, 48.

Landry, 37, was convicted of shooting 33-year-old Kosmas Prittis, a Houston restaurant owner, to death during a robbery on Aug. 6, 1982.

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PLACE: IM-REC Sports Office

SPORTS: Volleyball Triples

DIVISION: CoRec A, B, C

DATE: March 2-March 10

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