

A&M physical plant keeps campus life running smoothly

By Mark Figart
Reporter

The Texas A&M University Physical Plant replaced 6,023 light bulbs and 1,832 air filters during March.

"And that was a slow month," says Bennie Bilbo, a maintenance foreman for the department.

Director Joe Estill says the Physical Plant is the school's largest non-academic department, with about 1,000 employees.

"Our responsibility is to keep this campus operational," he says. The following statistics show just how big of a job that can be.

The transportation department maintains 900 vehicles for the University, 500 of which are leased to various departments. All of the familiar white trucks and small utility vehicles belong to the plant.

Two crews, a filter crew and a re-lamping crew, work around the clock replacing filters for the heating and cooling systems and light bulbs in every building on campus. Light bulbs account for \$65,000 of the department's \$80 million annual budget.

The department's power plant, across the street from Heaton Hall, supplies nearly all of the electricity used on campus. During peak elec-

tricity usage, some power is purchased from Brazos Power & Electric.

The wastewater treatment plant handles 4 million gallons of waste every day.

The Physical Plant maintains not only buildings on campus, but the research annex on Highway 21 as well.

Estill says the Physical Plant uses an "area maintenance concept," operating out of five area shops. This, he says, allows quicker reaction time to emergency service orders. The shops are equipped and staffed to handle minor repairs, while more complicated problems are tackled at the main shop on Agronomy Road.

Nearly every aspect of campus maintenance and operation is handled by the Physical Plant. The staff also is responsible for custodial service, fire safety equipment, telephone service, shuttle bus service, water supply, garbage collection, maintenance and modification of buildings and minor construction.

Most of the funding comes from state appropriations, Estill says, but student fees, including bus passes and parking permits, also help pay the bills. Other departments that use the plant help out with the funding as well.

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In Advance

Speaker to explore 'Religious Right'

"The Religious Right" will be explored in a program presented at 8 p.m. Thursday in 601 Rudder by the MSC Political Forum. Admission is free.

The Rev. John H. Buchanan Jr. will be the featured speaker. Buchanan is chairman of People for the American Way, a private, non-partisan group espousing constitutional liberties.

Buchanan served 16 years in the House of Representatives' Alabama delegation, and was a senior member of the education, labor and foreign affairs committees.

He also is president of the Council for the Advancement of Citizenship and vice chairman of the Republican Mainstream Committee.

'Dating Game' version comes to A&M

By Jeanne Ferris
Reporter

Romance and courtship — chaperoned by a game-show host — will fill the air at Texas A&M Thursday when Aggies play their own version of the television show "The Dating Game."

Pi Beta Phi sorority and Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity are presenting the Aggie Dating Game at 7:30 p.m. Thursday in Rudder Auditorium.

The show's format will feature a male or female interviewing three members of the opposite sex, says Dawn Butz, the event's co-chairman.

The interviewer cannot see the bachelor or bachelorette during the program. The interviewer asks the contestants three to five questions about their likes and dislikes and then chooses a date from the three contestants.

Contest prizes include concert tickets and a day of boating. A couple also will be flown to dinner.

The game will benefit the Muscular Dystrophy Association and Phoebe's Home, a Bryan shelter for battered women and children.

Butz says Corps outfits, fraternities, sororities and dormitories all were asked to nominate contestants.

Two of the games will involve members from the audience. These contestants will be able to win a date with former yell leader Troy Ireland or Diamond Darling Lisa Murray.

Door prizes including free scooter rental, haircuts and makeovers will be awarded to audience members.

Advance tickets for \$4 are on sale now through Thursday in the Blocker Building and the MSC or from any member of Pi Beta Phi or Sigma Alpha Epsilon. Tickets will be \$5 at the door.

MSC POLITICAL FORUM

MSC Political Forum

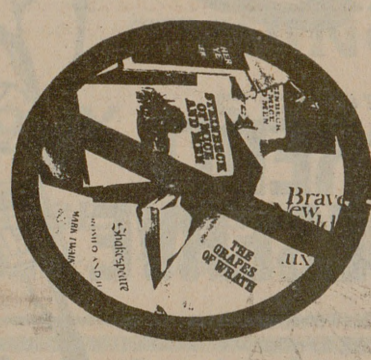
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Prison inmates testify TDC failed to provide recreation, health care

HOUSTON (AP) — A parade of prison inmates testified Tuesday that the Texas Department of Corrections failed to give them adequate recreation time and health care and improperly confiscated personal property in violation of court-ordered reforms.

The inmates appeared before U.S. District Judge William Wayne Justice during the second day of a hearing to determine whether the state should be ordered to pay \$800,500-per-day fines as Justice had ordered.

"What's important to note is that improvements have been made," said F. Scott McCown, special assistant attorney general.

William Bennett Turner, attorney for the inmate plaintiffs, agreed, saying the department — the nation's third-largest corrections system — is placing officers in dormitories and has hired medical personnel in line with Justice's orders.

"But the TDC responds only to court orders with dollar signs," Turner said. "This hearing is just a clean-up effort at this point. We'll be back into court time after time."

Turner said deficiencies remain in treatment of prisoners confined to administrative segregation, in single-celling of inmates and in mixing inmates of differing custody classifications.

Justice on Dec. 31 found the state in contempt of an agreement to improve prison conditions and gave the state until April 1 to comply or face fines of \$24 million a month. The fines were delayed pending the outcome of this week's hearing.

Attorneys for both sides said they did not expect Justice to rule on the fines immediately but instead to take the matter under advisement.

Turner began his case Tuesday by calling as witnesses inmates in administrative segregation, where prisoners are confined due to the likelihood of violent behavior.

Inmates told of having feeding times coincide with recreation times, meaning they had to decide whether to miss recreation or a meal. They also complained about sporadic recreation, having basketball nets but no basketballs and volleyball nets but no volleyballs.

John Whiteman, an Eastham Unit prisoner, said guards confiscated his personal property without a hearing and never returned the items to him.

Most of the inmates complained about not being able to have water-immersible heating elements, which are plugged into electrical outlets to heat cups of water for tea or coffee.

McCown said the devices — known as "stingers" — also are used to toss scalding liquids on officers and other inmates. He characterized several of the witnesses as members of violent prison gangs.

Three physically handicapped inmates, all confined to wheelchairs and all from the Jester III Unit, complained about inadequate working conditions and poor health care.

Carl Jeffries, Corrections Department assistant director for treatment and classification, testified the state is moving to make single cells available for inmates and construction will add more beds for female inmates.

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