

## State and Local

# DG to offer counselors to help fall freshmen adjust to A&M life

By Kirsten Dietz  
Senior Staff Writer

To help the freshmen who will move into Davis-Gary Hall this fall adjust to college life at Texas A&M, the Department of Student Affairs is creating freshman counselor positions, said Debbie K. Owensby, Central Area coordinator.

Aside from the hall staff, only freshmen will occupy Davis-Gary in the fall. The 156 residents who were to return to the dormitory were reassigned to other dorms earlier this summer because of what housing officials termed "excessive vandalism."

The freshman counselor position was established after the housing office received calls from former Davis-Gary residents who were concerned that, because the dorm will be almost completely occupied by freshmen, no upperclassmen would be around to introduce the newcom-

ers to the traditions of A&M and of Davis-Gary, Owensby said.

"It's not very often that you have a hall that's all incoming freshmen," she said.

One counselor will be assigned to each floor. Owensby said the department is seeking upperclassmen who

smoother transition for the freshmen."

Owensby said that because all eligible or interested students may not be on campus for the summer, the department is asking the Department of Student Activities and MSC groups to suggest students qualified

start planning fall activities during the summer. The student affairs department is trying to perform some of the duties a hall council usually does, such as planning several parties and mixers for the dormitory, sending a newsletter to the new residents and printing hall T-shirts, she said.

Owensby said she sees the new position as part of a concentrated effort that must be made to ensure positive developments this semester and to erase Davis-Gary's negative reputation.

"We view this as a challenge to wipe away the negative attitude that so many people outside our department have of that residence hall," she said.

Applications for the freshman counselor positions can be picked up at the Central Area office, at the corner of Hughes and Moses halls.

*"They're sort of the go-between between the residents and the staff. We hope this will make a smoother transition for the freshmen."*

— Debbie K. Owensby, Central Area coordinator

have lived on campus at least one year, have demonstrated leadership ability and have at least a 2.0 grade-point ratio.

"They're sort of the go-between between the residents and the staff," she said. "We hope this will make a

for the position. These students will be sent letters explaining the new position, she said.

Another drawback of having a dorm with no returning residents is that no hall council exists, Owensby said. She said hall councils usually

## Clements raises possibility of another special session

AUSTIN (AP) — As efforts to shape what could be the largest tax bill in Texas history spilled from committee rooms to the Capitol lawn Tuesday, Gov. Bill Clements raised the prospect of another special session on the budget crisis.

Clements said his goal of holding 1988-89 tax increases to \$2.9 billion "is not standing up too well" as senators considered a House-passed increase nearly double his bottom line.

With the Legislature's 30-day special session half gone, the Senate Subcommittee on Tax Policy opened hearings on the House tax package that would raise approximately \$5.2 billion.

At the same time, a House-Senate conference committee began adjusting differences in two-year state budgets adopted by those bodies. The Senate appropriations bill would spend over \$39.5 billion, the House about \$1.1 billion less.

Clements, who returned to the Capitol for the first time after a long weekend, said a lot of things could happen in the 10-member conference committees that are writing the final spending and tax bills.

"I think the Senate is getting disturbed about what

the situation is on the revenue side, and I think there's more of a meeting of the minds indicated at this point than we have had in the past," he said.

Noting the state's shaky economy, he said, "Under those circumstances I think a lot of the Legislature, both in the House and Senate, are having some second thoughts about these increases in spending."

At the Senate tax committee hearings, much of the discussion focused on whether an insurance tax could cause other states to impose "retaliatory" taxes on Texas companies operating in their states.

State insurance commissioner Doyce Lee noted that the proposed Texas tax is directed at the policyholder — not the company or agent — "for the sole purpose of trying to avoid any successful retaliation against our domestic industry in other states."

John Melton, president of Blue Cross-Blue Shield of Texas, said more than 2½ million Texans have no health insurance coverage, and the 6 percent tax would cause employers "to discontinue providing health benefits for their employees altogether."

He suggested deleting health insurance and maintenance organizations from the bill.

## Prison escapee caught in Vidor; 1 still at large

HUNTSVILLE (AP) — One of two convicted robbers who escaped by crashing through prison gates in a stolen truck was captured Tuesday after he allegedly abducted three people and held up a restaurant, authorities said.

Jerry Wayne Ables, 28, and Carl Lang, 44, broke out of the Texas Department of Corrections' Wynne Unit Monday night, and Ables then launched a crime spree that spanned several Southeast Texas counties, authorities said.

Ables broke into a Huntsville home, stole a shirt, called a taxi and forced the cabbie at knifepoint to drive aimlessly for about four hours, Huntsville police spokesman Robert Reese said.

He then fled on foot, abducted a Huntsville woman and ordered her to drive him to Lumberton, Orange County Sheriff's Capt. Wayne Dial said. He abducted another woman at knifepoint in Hardin County and made her drive him to Vidor.

Neither the cab driver nor the two women was injured, Dial said.

A short time later, Vidor police were dispatched to a fast-food restaurant on a robbery call.

Ables was transferred to the Orange County Jail in Orange because Vidor does not have a jail.

The inmate was serving a life prison term from Taylor County for aggravated robbery with a deadly weapon and burglary of a habitation with a deadly weapon.

Lang, meanwhile, remained at large, prison spokesman David Nunnelee said and added that authorities believed the pair had split up because the older Lang was unable to keep up with Ables.

Lang was serving a 30-year prison sentence from Aransas County for aggravated robbery with a deadly weapon and aggravated kidnapping with a deadly weapon.

## Hundreds crowd steps at Capitol urging approval of higher taxes

AUSTIN (AP) — Hundreds of demonstrators chanting "tax, tax, tax" overflowed the Capitol steps Tuesday, urging legislators to approve higher taxes to avoid cuts in state services.

"The legacy that you leave should be greater than the heritage you receive," said Barry Jackson, a leader of Austin Interfaith. "We want them to be courageous. We're willing for them to tax us."

The rally, organized by the Texas Industrial Areas Foundation and other community groups, drew a crowd estimated by organizers at 3,000.

Speaker after speaker urged

lawmakers to pass, and Gov. Bill Clements to sign, a state budget that wouldn't cut public education, higher education, indigent health care programs, child protective services and human service programs.

"Thank God you're here because the cause is important," San Antonio Mayor Henry Cisneros told the crowd. "The next 10 days will decide whether we go backward or forward. I say let's go forward."

Also speaking to the rally were members of the Legislature, along with Lt. Gov. Bill Hobby and Attorney General Jim Mattox.

Rep. Larry Evans, D-Houston, chairman of the Legislative Black Caucus, said, "It's time to help the needy, not the greedy. Hell will freeze over before we go along with the cuts that have been proposed by our governor."

Rep. Al Luna, D-Houston, noted that Clements, a Republican, has been saying opinion polls show public opposition to higher taxes.

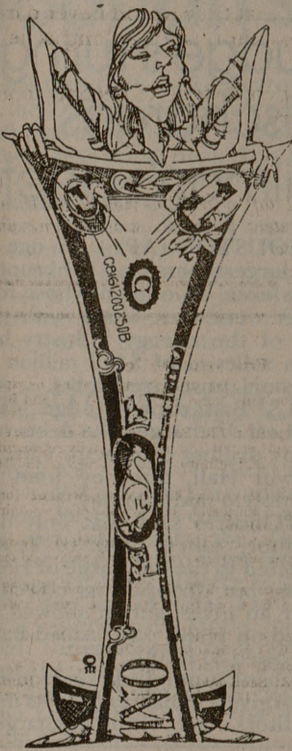
"Gov. Clements believes that most Texas citizens aren't willing to pay higher taxes," Luna said.

"Gov. Clements needs to look down here (from his second-floor Capitol office) and see another Texas poll."

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