

State and Local

A&M students offer time, help to local mental health facility

By Alan Sembera
Reporter

Texas A&M student volunteers make large contributions to the improvement of the services and facilities of the Brazos Valley Mental Health and Mental Retardation Authority, said Janie Velasquez, the authority's public information director.

Velasquez said many A&M students do volunteer work at the facilities, which include halfway houses, hospitals for long-term patients, vocational workshops and an administration office.

The students come from a wide variety of backgrounds, Velasquez said. About 25 of the volunteers are psychology majors who work from about two to 18 hours a week. Other volunteers are from fraternities and other campus organizations.

The psychology students do different things for the centers, she said; some work as big brothers or big sisters for residents, while others work as assistants at the center's

medical clinic or do clerical work. Students also assist psychologists and sociologists, and help teach MHMR clients cooking skills, office skills and cleaning skills at the workshops.

Other students take on special projects, Velasquez said, which include adopting a Christmas or Thanksgiving dinner or a Halloween party. There is a need for sponsors at each facility on these occasions, she said, because they are at different locations.

D'Ana Howard, a junior psychology major who has worked at MHMR for three weeks as a therapist-technician, said she originally intended to work as a volunteer, but ended up taking a part-time job.

Howard said she first found out what kind of volunteer work was available at MHMR three weeks ago when she went on a tour of the facilities as president of the Psychology Club with other officers. After the tour, she said, they told about 120 students at the next club meeting about the volunteer opportunities.

This prompted many of them to take advantage of the opportunity to get clinical experience, she said.

Howard said clinical experience is valuable for students who plan to go into graduate school and study clinical psychology, but this isn't the major motivation for the students, she added.

"I honestly think Aggies really care," she said, adding that the work also is enjoyable. "I had a few fears and anxieties about it, but they were all unfounded. It's more like fun than work, but it's hard to keep good grades and work."

Students in the A&M chapter of Associated General Contractors, a national organization dedicated to community service, also have volunteered to do a lot of work at the centers, Velasquez said.

Mark Grosskopf, a construction management graduate student and organization member, said the

group plans to have about 20 people out at one of the workshops Oct. 24. They plan to build a wood frame for fire escapes, do renovation work on the front porch and build a wheelchair ramp in the back.

Velasquez said MHMR also has received help from the service fraternity Alpha Phi Omega. She said members helped paint some of the buildings in Bryan.

Horticulture students also helped, she said. They solicited plants for the facilities and even drove to Houston and San Antonio to get donated plants, she said. They also donated some of the plants, she added.

Velasquez said the MHMR is always in need of volunteers. She said they need people to work on projects such as constructing storage buildings, redoing kitchens and building kitchen tables. These projects would be perfect opportunities for organizations to do community service, she added.

A&M researcher calls 'beef' over red meat largely unfounded

By Kim File
Reporter

Red meat may not be the fatty, high-cholesterol nutrition foe it is believed to be. In fact, a Texas A&M researcher says beef is full of nutrients and doesn't deserve its bad reputation.

Dr. Ki S. Rhee, an A&M research scientist and lecturer who recently led research on beef fat here, says much current information about red-meat fat is based on various misconceptions.

Rhee says red meat is good for you if only the muscle portion, and not the seam fat, is consumed. She says red meat is considered to be "nutrient dense," which means the amount of nutrient value gained is high for the amount of calories consumed.

Beef also is an excellent source of iron for the body and contains high levels of vitamins B-6, B-12, niacin and riboflavin, she says.

"Cholesterol content is a subject which is very controversial and something that the general public is not correctly informed about," Rhee says. "Many people think that poultry meat is lower in cholesterol content than red meat and that's just not true."

Rhee says three ounces of cooked fat-trimmed beef and three ounces of cooked skinless chicken contain similar amounts of cholesterol.

But three ounces of cooked shrimp contain more cholesterol than three ounces of cooked beef or three ounces of cooked chicken, she says. However, finned fish, such as cod, usually contain the least amount of cholesterol when compared with the same amounts of beef, chicken or shrimp, she says.

In dietary terms, Rhee says, saturated fats may be more im-

portant than cholesterol because saturated fat converts to cholesterol in the body.

"Many people equate red meat fat with saturated fat and this is wrong," she says. "Meat contains saturated fatty acids as well as unsaturated fatty acids — vegetable oils also contain saturated fatty acids and unsaturated fatty acids."

"The unsaturated fatty acids are higher in vegetable oils."

Even if a person has cut down on his intake of beef or vegetable saturated fat, as many health professionals suggest, that alone may not help in reducing his cholesterol level, Rhee says.

"Many people think all the cholesterol you ingest is immediately converted into blood cholesterol, and that's not so," Rhee says.

"Only about 15 to 20 percent of the population will respond to lower levels of dietary cholesterol," she says.

Many factors besides diet are involved in measuring the amount of cholesterol in the body, such as genetic makeup, weight and whether or not a person smokes, she adds.

Rhee feels that misconceptions about red meat and cholesterol stem from doctors not being correctly informed about nutrition.

"I don't think the medical schools are doing a good job in terms of nutritional education," she says.

Also, Rhee says that there are many "self-proclaimed" nutritionists that are receiving a great deal of media attention.

"The consumers are confused," Rhee says. "They are worried about their health, so whenever they hear that something is not beneficial to their health, they tend to believe it without question."

Bentson reasserts goal to repeal windfall

WASHINGTON (AP) — Using a new Energy Department study as fresh ammunition, Sen. Lloyd Bentson of Texas on Thursday reasserted his goal of repealing the Windfall Profits Tax as part of the congressional trade bill.

The repeal provision, introduced as a floor amendment to the trade bill by Sen. Phil Gramm, R-Texas, won bipartisan Senate support but was not contained in the House version and could run into opposition in conference.

The tax was enacted in 1980 when analysts predicted oil prices would soar to the \$60 range by 1990. The tax was designed to capture some of the "windfall" profits that oil producers would gain because of this skyrocketing market.

But that's not what happened. While the tax brought in \$25 billion in 1981, it has generated little revenue in recent years following the collapse of oil prices, the study states.

Instead of rising, domestic oil prices bottomed out at \$9.39 per barrel last year, according to the American Petroleum Institute.

"Without the tax, it is estimated that domestic oil production today would have been almost 1 million barrels per day higher — a volume exceeding current U.S. imports from the Persian Gulf," Charles J. DiBona, president of API, said recently.

Bentson, chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, said he would use the DOE report to help convince skeptical House members of the wisdom in repealing the tax in the House-Senate trade conference.

"The Energy Department concludes this tax should be repealed now because it slows energy production in this country, produces scant revenues, reduces the competitiveness of the U.S. in the oil industry and is costly and burdensome to comply with," the Texas Democrat reported.

Citing API figures, the report estimates the industry spends \$100 million annually to cover paperwork costs associated with the tax. It also says

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1.23	\$4,888	.51		\$695
1.20	\$2,750	.45		\$325
1.20	\$3,200	.37		\$350
1.10	\$1,975	.31		\$245
1.01	\$1,175			
.93	\$2,585	1.52	OEVAL	\$5,275
.91	\$1,890	.83		\$1,350
.90	\$1,575	.71		\$1,495
.81	\$995	.48		\$375
.74	\$2,900			
.71	\$895			
.57	\$895	2.16	EMERALD CUT	\$6,295
.55	\$795	1.36		\$4,900
.54	\$695	.74		\$1,350
.47	\$626	.42		\$695
.47	\$425	.38		\$595
.35	\$425			
.31	\$435			
		.27	HEART	\$335
1.80	\$3,495	1.03	RADIANT	\$2,600
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