

State and Local

Food services at A&M recognized nationwide

By Shannon O'Neal
Reporter

While students often file through cafeteria lines scoffing at college food and service, few realize that Texas A&M's Food Services Department is recognized nationwide as a leader of quality food and service.

Running one of the most diverse food services programs anywhere, the department has over 20 dining facilities on campus that serve 55,000 meals a day, says Lloyd Smith, director of Food Services.

The department dishes out 275,000 pounds of beef chuck, 200,000 pounds of hamburger patties, 200,000 pounds of french fries and 30,000 gallons of frozen concentrated orange juice annually, Smith says, and serves about 1,000 gallons of milk daily.

The meals served are chosen by student menu boards that meet monthly to review meals and sample new selections, Smith says.

Each of the three main dining halls — the Commons, Duncan and Sbisá — has a board of five or six students that handles that hall's particular service style and seasoning.

The boards also hold a joint meeting every month to try 10 to 25 new items presented by the department, he says.

The board may indicate that more than one brand of an item is acceptable and the department then will buy the cheapest one.

Although the department has veto power over the board's recommendations, it has never been used, Smith says.

The department buys most of its food directly from contracted producers and all food is inspected either by the federal or state government, he says.

Milk is the only item produced at A&M that is used by Food Services, Smith says, but the department bakes its own bread, buns and pastries in the Duncan Dining Hall bakery.

The department's supplies are stored on the west campus in the Food Services warehouse until a computer forecasting system that plans campus meals prints out a list of the required items for the week.

The program used to predict the demand for meals combines an "acceptability factor" for each menu se-

lection with the predicted student traffic and 10 hours later prints out a master menu for the entire campus, Smith says.

All menus are planned three weeks in advance, he says.

Smith says A&M is respected not only for the quality of its food but for the quality of its service.

The transition of the Corps of Cadets' meals from family to cafeteria style has received national attention in food-service circles, he says.

But even a prestigious program like A&M's has obstacles to overcome.

The closing of Duncan, where the Corps eats, for renovations has caused some problems, Smith says, but they are worth the outcome.

The remodeled dining hall will be a radical new design in cafeterias with the capability to serve the 2,300-member Corps in 10 to 12 minutes, he says.

After eating, the cadets will place their trays in a tray accumulator almost simultaneously because of what Smith describes as an engineering feat — a single conveyor which can accept 2,200 trays.

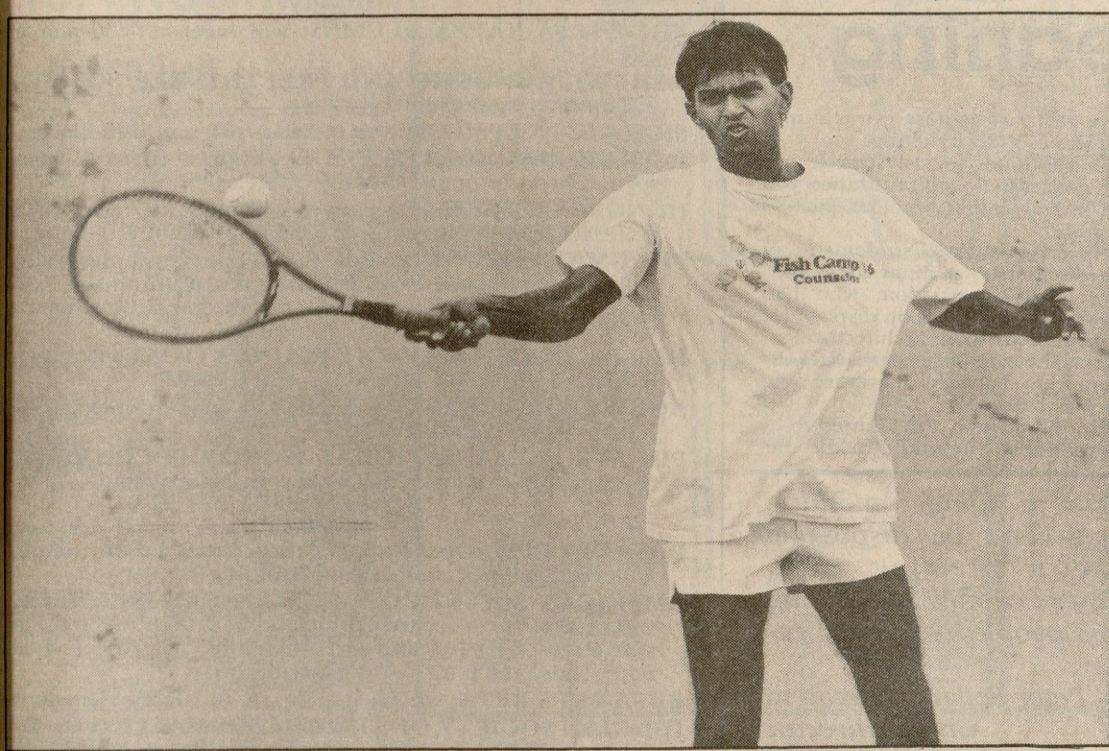


Photo by Jay Janner

Taking advantage

India's Ramesh Krishnan, a junior biochemistry major, competes in the men's tennis semifinals of

the International Students Association mini olympics held Saturday afternoon.

Company runs into snags trying to open new nightclub

By Elisa Hutchins
Staff Writer

The College Station Zoning Board of adjustment on Tuesday denied a request to allow a former College Station restaurant to become a nightclub.

A variance for parking requirements for the building, formerly Ira's Place, was denied without prejudice because the applicant, Paul Winston, a representative of Brazos Valley Entertainment Inc., wasn't prepared to present his case, Jane Kee, a College Station zoning official, said.

Ira's Place, formerly owned by Ira Hoake and located at 1804 Valley View Drive, was foreclosed on by the Federal Savings and Loan Insurance Corp. after an out-of-state

bank failed. The site has 23 parking spaces, but College Station ordinances specify that the 10,500-square-foot building must have at least one parking space for every 50 square feet, or 210 spaces, if it is to be used as a nightclub.

Winston said the FSLIC agreed in April to sell the property to JDCL Inc., which put Brazos Valley Entertainment in charge of the details. He would not disclose the purchase price, but said the deal is pending until extra parking space is acquired.

Kee said the original request for the variance was made in August. The five-member board has tabled the request twice in a two-month period.

"At the last meeting (Tuesday) it was taken off the agenda and denied without

prejudice," she said. "That means that the applicant will have to reapply by Friday so it can be put on the agenda in time for the next meeting, Nov. 17. Our office also has to notify everyone within 200 feet of the property of the request."

Winston, owner of Contract Interiors, a firm that works for Brazos Valley Entertainment, said he has been trying to get a letter of permission from K-Mart Corp. to lease about 200 of its parking spaces. The cost hasn't been decided.

Winston said he won't need a variance if he gets the letter of permission.

"There are more than enough spaces to accommodate both of our businesses," he said. "We have agreed to repave and maintain the area if they let us use them, but if

we get turned down, we already have some alternate locations for the nightclub."

He said the K-Mart at 2700 S. Texas Ave., adjacent to Ira's Place, has about 500 parking spaces.

John Valenti, regional manager of K-Mart, said it is company policy to not let outside businesses use its parking facilities.

"It is not my decision, but corporate policy at our headquarters in Troy, Mich., and I will do whatever that policy dictates," Valenti said.

Winston said the decision has been turned over to K-Mart's regional office from its national headquarters and he expects an answer by Friday.

"I'm optimistic because we have offered to lease and maintain the area," he said. "In the past, other people have also asked permission to use the spaces but not to maintain or lease them."

Contract Interiors has designed and remodeled Roxz nightclubs statewide, the old Edge, which was on F.M. 2818, and several restaurants in the Bryan-College Station area.

Winston said if he gets permission from K-Mart for the extra parking, the interior of Ira's Place will be remodeled. He said it will not open until the beginning of 1988. The name of the new nightclub will be decided later, he said.

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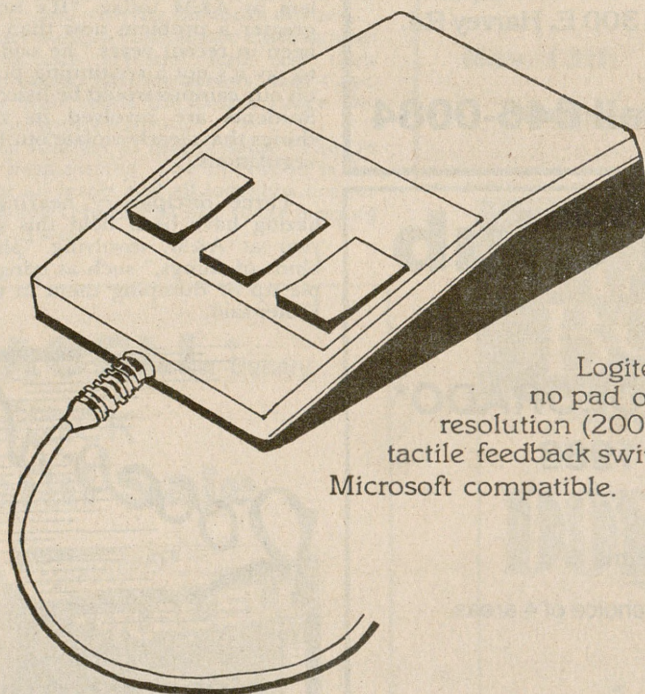
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