

State and Local

Authorities test videotaping of DWI cases

By Richard Tijerina
Staff Writer

To determine whether the use of a videotape showing drivers suspected of being intoxicated as they take sobriety tests could be used successfully as evidence in court, Brazos County law enforcement authorities implemented a short-term videotaping program during the summer.

The program, coordinated by the County Attorney's office, was funded by a state grant of \$10,000 which provided overtime pay for the police officers using the cameras.

The DWI videotaping program called for two cameras to be used in Brazos County by field officers.

The cameras, which were not provided in the grant, were purchased by the County Attorney's office.

The period of overtime funding provided for by the grant lasted from June 9 to

August 31, although the Bryan police department had been using a camera since last December.

Because of the success of the videotaping program, Kristi Matthews, coordinator of the Brazos County Anti-DWI program, said she sought state funding for the purchase of more cameras.

She found support through the traffic safety funds of the State Highway Department.

"The grant provided for us to implement a planned mobile DWI videotaping program involving the making of a visual record with mobile oversight," she said. "We could videotape those persons detected and apprehended who had been driving while intoxicated."

The immediate results of the program were encouraging, Matthews said.

"We have gotten some very good results from the program," she said. "The tapes



we've gotten have been really productive because it's making an actual record of the subject on film."

Of the 236 DWI misdemeanor arrests made in Brazos County during June, July and August by the Department of Public Safety and the Bryan, College Station and University police departments, 50 were re-

corded on videotape.

Misdemeanor arrests are classified as the suspect's first or second offense. Subsequent offenses are considered felonies.

The number of felony arrests for DWI in June, July and August is not yet available from the District Attorney's office.

So far, only one videotaped suspect has taken his case to court. That case, according to the County Attorney's office, begins Monday and is being handled by assistant County Attorney Sandra Dent.

Dent said that the defendant already had filed a motion with the court to suppress the audio portions of the videotape on the basis that he had not been read his Miranda rights before he unknowingly spoke while on videotape.

The court denied the motion, however, saying that the field officer had acted properly at the scene.

Because of its potential for success, Dent and Matthews agreed that the program would be useful in court.

"The program should provide information to the prosecution," Matthews said. "Right now, we're looking at it as more of a prosecuting tool than an enforcing tool. It can be so effective in court because it shows what the officer has seen, along with his first contact with the suspect."

Matthews said that videotaping always has been used at the county jail, but that actual videotaping at the scene on the field would be more accurate because the suspect's performance in jail is significantly different from his performance on the road.

Brazos County is the first Texas county to receive a videotaping grant. Although all of the funds allotted for officers' overtime pay has been spent, Matthews said that police will continue to use the cameras.

Group sponsors political events for A&M students

MSC Political Forum hopes to educate its audience

By Kelly S. Brown
Staff Writer

Elephants, donkeys and those without a political preference all consolidate — forming somewhat of an ideological melting pot — in the MSC Political Forum.

Political Forum is a non-partisan political programming committee with a goal of educating its audience by presenting a wide spectrum of views from lobbyists, media and single-issue advocates and major political figures, Ana deCardenas, Political Forum chairman, said.

"We don't care what political views a student has," deCardenas said. "The program, which is open to all students and does not require an interview or dues, stresses leadership, organization and especially student development."

Student committees in Political Forum choose issues they want to deal with, research the topics, find the names of those involved, and

find speakers who will interest the Texas A&M audience, she said.

Sometimes the group approaches prospective speakers in person.

"We go to Washington D.C. and Austin once a year, not only to tour the government buildings, but to make contact with embassies, candidates and other prospective speakers," deCardenas said.

Previous topics that Political Forum has covered include "Vietnam Today," the Soviet space program, "The Religion," U.S.-Soviet relations, mock elections and the E.L. Miller Lecture Series.

Public Forum also sponsors Election Awareness Day in the fall and Political Awareness Day in the spring.

During the year, Political Forum invites political candidates from the presidential, senatorial, congressional and state races to speak at A&M, but it is not always possible for all of those invited to accept.

In 1986, Political Forum invited

gubernatorial candidates Bill Clements and Mark White to a debate. Clements accepted, but White declined.

Because Clements would be the only candidate attending, the group decided that it would be unfair to present only his views. Rather than cancel the program, they changed its orientation to "The Panorama of Republican Perspectives." Vice President George Bush, U.S. Sen. Phil Gramm and U.S. Rep. Joe Barton also attended with Clements.

James Reynolds, director of the Memorial Student Center, said, "Of course it was not possible to spread the word that the program had changed, so some people became frustrated thinking Political Forum was favoring the Republican Party."

"The Faculty Senate announced that they were going to investigate the situation and we told them they didn't have the authority to do so. There were some sincere questions brought up and they were answered.

Political Forum was not favoring any candidate, they changed the program and, unfortunately, a misunderstanding emerged."

In this election year, multitudes of endorsers want to speak on behalf of their candidates.

DeCardenas said Political Forum does not actively seek endorsements, but in order to provide a balanced view of the presidential race, the group has agreed to present endorsements according to Political Forum's established goals and guidelines.

One of the guidelines states, "Because of the high number of programs presented by Political Forum, only two endorsements will be allowed per party. Selection of the endorsers will be handled through these offices in the following order: State Party Office, U.S. Senator's Office or U.S. Congressman's Office."

Political Forum will not present any single candidate or endorser after Oct. 31.

Luke Altendorf, an MSC staff adviser for Political Forum, said the organization encourages the participation of all students and political candidates.

"However, I would like to stress that Aggie GOP and Aggie Democrats are in no way connected with Political Forum," Altendorf said. "We are here to educate the public on the issues, so as voters, they can make a responsible decision."

Because Political Forum does not endorse specific parties or candidates, the group does not participate in political rallies, deCardenas said.

"We will not sponsor any type of political rally, particularly on University property, and we don't allow banners, flyers, posters, any propaganda or yelling in the auditorium," she said.

Political Forum is trying to organize a debate between presidential candidates George Bush and Michael Dukakis before the November election.

The group will sponsor a presentation by Col. Charles Scott, a former Iranian hostage and military intelligence expert, in Rudder Theater on Sept. 21. Scott will speak about "Terrorism and the Persian Gulf."

Correction

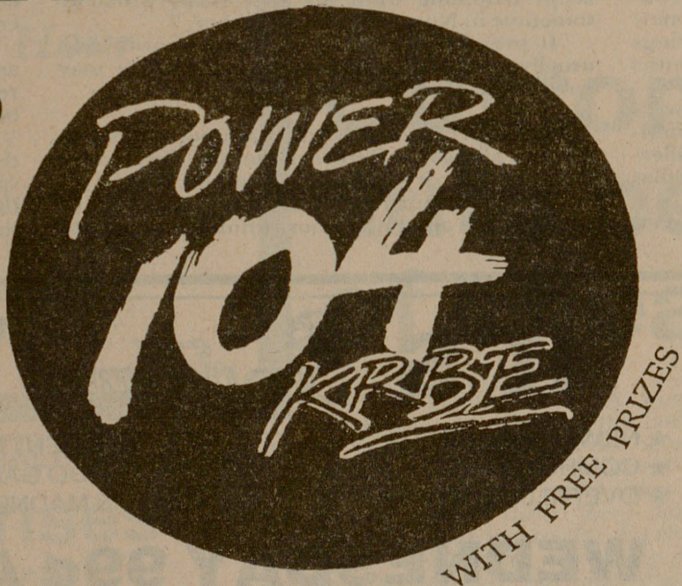
An article in Thursday's *Battalion* incorrectly listed the deadline for December graduates to file for degrees.

Seniors and graduate students who will graduate in December must fill out a degree request form before 5 p.m. Sept. 16.

Seniors should go to Heaton Hall for their forms. Graduate students are instructed to go to the office of graduate students at the Olin Teague Research Center.

PHI KAPPA TAU

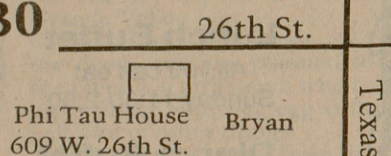
AND



AGAIN FEATURING
**THE PHI TAU
LUAU**

ANNUAL BLOWOUT

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 10 8:30
AT PHI TAU HOUSE



ΦKT

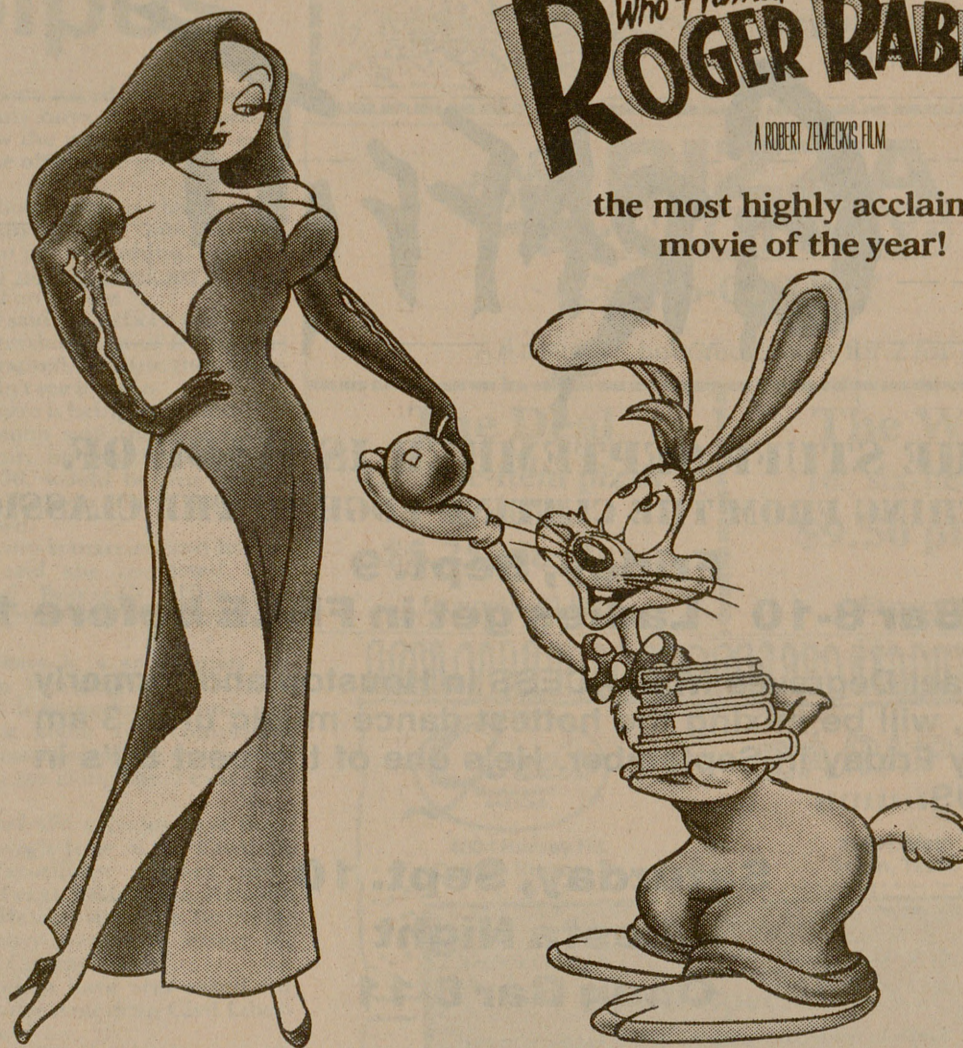
PHI TAU FALL RUSH '88
FOR MORE INFO CALL PHI TAU HOUSE AT 822-7837

REMEMBER THE THREE R's: READIN', 'RITIN', AND RABBITS!

TOUCHSTONE PICTURES • STEVEN SPIELBERG PRESENTS

Who Framed
ROGER RABBIT
A ROBERT ZEMMEKIS FILM

the most highly acclaimed
movie of the year!



TOUCHSTONE PICTURES • STEVEN SPIELBERG PRESENTS • ROBERT ZEMMEKIS FILM
BOB HOSKINS CHRISTOPHER LLOYD WHO FRAMED ROGER RABBIT JOANNA CASSIDY
Produced by SILVER SCREEN PARTNERS III Directed by ALAN SILVESTRI Edited by STEVEN SPIELBERG KATHLEEN KENNEDY
Music by JEFFREY PRICE & PETER SEAMAN Story by ROBERT WATTS & FRANK MARSHALL Screenplay by ROBERT ZEMMEKIS
PG PARENTAL GUIDANCE SUGGESTED
SOME MATERIAL MAY NOT BE SUITABLE FOR CHILDREN
© 1988 Touchstone Pictures Inc. All Rights Reserved

NOW SHOWING AT THEATRES EVERYWHERE