

Co-ed housing comes to campus

By Juliette Rizzo
Staff Writer

Students living on campus in Fall 1989 will have the option of living in a residence hall shared by the opposite sex.

Shortly before Christmas, Texas A&M President William H. Mobley passed a bill that will establish two co-ed modular residence halls on the south side of campus.

"Co-ed housing is not new in terms of concept, but never before has it been implemented into mainstream housing," Tom Murray, assistant director of student affairs, said.

Presently, males and females in the Corps of Cadets are living in the same dormitories, and males and females always have lived in co-ed residence halls during summer sessions.

In 1972, Krueger Hall also was operated, for economic reasons, in such a manner because there were not enough women to fill the hall.

The possibility of co-ed housing surfaced again in 1987, because of the renovation of women's Corps-style halls Briggs, Spence and Gainer.

"We were losing three women's halls and we found ourselves with a shortage of women's housing," Murray said. "Since the main on-campus demand for housing falls in the category of affordable housing for women, we found the need to suggest co-ed housing."

The request, however, was denied by former A&M President Frank E. Vandiver.

In the fall of 1987, the Residence Hall Association's Co-ed Housing Ad Hoc Committee, chaired by 1987-88 RHA President

David McDowell, decided to prepare and resubmit a proposal to the president's office for the establishment of co-ed halls.

To see if there was an interest in co-ed housing on campus, several surveys were dispersed by Student Government, Student Affairs and RHA. Over the past three years, the percentage of those interested increased steadily from 65 percent to more than 70 percent. The latest survey, taken in Spring 1987, revealed that 75 percent of the student body was in favor of the proposition.

McDowell said, "With a number that high, the University couldn't possibly turn its eyes from the students."

The survey was targeted at getting feedback from those students who were likely to move off campus the following semester.

"By merely having the option to live in a co-ed hall, we found that approximately 2,000 students would be more motivated to remain on campus," McDowell said. "Even though A&M is a conservative school and we're trying to maintain that image, the surveys showed a definite interest."

McDowell said the committee also surveyed 25 other schools in the Southwest including those in Arkansas, Louisiana and Oklahoma.

"Studies show that housing professionals advocate co-ed housing," he said. "On a nationwide basis, it appears that men and women are a lot safer living in a co-ed environment and, given the heightened safety awareness on campus, this is simply an advantage you don't get in a single-sex hall."

The studies also showed that vandalism in such halls is decreased by almost 100 percent, and the hall programming tends to be

Students react to new co-ed dorms

By Juliette Rizzo
Staff Writer

Sophomores, juniors and seniors will be able to apply for residence in new co-ed halls for the first time in Texas A&M's history starting in the fall of 1989.

Co-ed housing, recently approved by Texas A&M President William H. Mobley, will be an option for students that is favored by some and opposed by others.

Some students support the option, because it enhances social interaction between males and females.

"I've been at other universities where they have co-ed housing, and I think it's good," said Javier Fernandez, junior journalism major. "It's a great way to meet people if you do not know too many people on campus. You could even meet a member of the opposite sex while doing your laundry."

Christi Schultz, a junior elementary education major, also favors co-ed housing.

"I'm for it unless they have co-ed bathrooms," she said.

Another student feels it is a notable advancement for the University.

"Co-ed housing is awesome," Debbie Quintero, a freshman general studies major and longtime resident of Bryan said. "What took so long? We finally broke the conservative cloud that has lingered above A&M for a long time."

The conservative image, though, is one that some do not want lifted from A&M.

Deana Calmes, a senior accounting major, said, "I'm against it basically for religious reasons, I just don't agree with it. I don't think it will be good for A&M."

of greater quality with greater hall unity and spirit.

Trey Jacobsen, 1988-89 RHA president, said that since there will be males and females in the halls, it will allow for co-ed hall programming on campus. The halls will integrate their programming with other halls and co-ed hall councils will be implemented.

The co-ed facilities will not be open to freshmen.

Jacobsen said staffing of the halls will be left up to Student Affairs.

The residence halls chosen for the co-ed living arrangement will be two of the five new residence halls being completed on

campus. One of the halls will be designated as the primary hall to be filled first.

The halls, both modular dorms on Southside, are conducive for co-ed living, because they are self-contained and similar to apartment living off-campus.

Students will be assigned by floors, with two floors for males and two for females. Separate floors will be accessible only by key after visitation hours.

With one exception, all University and housing regulations will apply to the new halls. The television lounge, the laundry room and the stairwells will be open on a 24-hour basis to all hall residents and their guests.

The halls together have a capacity of 478

residents. If the demand is greater than the space available, a lottery system will go into effect.

The halls will be monitored on a one-year trial basis by various oversight committees.

McDowell said, "The students will be under a microscope. Whether it works, is up to them."

Murray said, "The co-ed housing option is not going to be for everybody, but we think it will be for a specific number of students."

"If it looks like it is very popular and will be positive and productive. We may think of expanding it to other halls in the future."

Freight train hits student's car stuck near tracks

By Richard Tijerina
Staff Writer

A Texas A&M student's car was hit by a Union Pacific train about 10 a.m. Wednesday on the railroad tracks across from Kyle Field.

The car, a 1985 Buick Regal, was stuck in wet gravel less than a foot from the train tracks.

There were no injuries in the collision.

Dana Miller, a sophomore elementary education major, had parked in an unauthorized space between Wellborn Road and the train tracks. Miller was attempting to leave when her car became stuck in the wet gravel.

Miller said she got out of the car and walked to the University Police Headquarters, where a dispatcher called A-1 Wrecker Service to tow the car away from the tracks.

However, a train ran into the rear end of the car before the wrecker arrived at the scene.

Bob Wiatt, Director of Security and University Police, said Miller had initially gone to the station and asked for help, and the University Police had to call a tow truck. On her way to meet the wrecker at the scene, she saw the train coming from a distance and ran back to the station.

However, Wiatt said it was too late to stop the collision by the time she told the dispatcher about the approaching train.

"She gave no impression to our dispatcher (the initial time) that the car was that close to the tracks," he said. "If there had been any sense of urgency, we would have asked A-1 to get out there right away, or we would have called the railroad and told them there was a car on the tracks and to stop it."

Miller said the dispatcher told her to hurry to the scene to meet the wrecker before the train arrived.

"I saw the train and started getting hysterical," Miller said. "I told the dispatcher the train was coming and she said 'Hurry.' It was raining outside and I had to run the whole way. By the time I got up to cross the street, I saw the trunk fly up. All my worldly possessions were in the trunk."

Miller said all her belongings were in the car because she had not moved into a dormitory room yet. She said she had been planning to move into a room later in the day after her classes.

Miller said there was extensive damage to the rear of the car, but that it was still driveable. A worker at A-1 Wrecker Service said she drove the car back to a friend's apartment.

Miller said the conductor of the train told her the railroad company might be able to pay for any damage that occurred, but *The Battalion* was unable to reach Union Pacific Railroad for comment.

Wiatt said the space where Miller's car was parked is reserved for cars of construction workers only, and that University Police have had problems in the past with students parking in the unauthorized area.

"There's a sign that says 'Construction Workers Only,'" Wiatt said. "I know a lot of students slip in there. Because of the other problems on lots in campus, we don't have the manpower to make sure it's a student or a construction worker. We don't get out there on the assumption it's all construction workers unless we get a complaint."



Photo by Jay Janner

Dana Miller, a sophomore elementary education major, stands by Wednesday as Mike Ruesink, an employee of A-1 Wrecker Service, examines the damage to her car after it was hit by a Union Pacific

freight train. Miller's car was stuck in the gravel near the tracks alongside Wellborn Road. The gravel was wet because of rains Wednesday morning.

Miami riots continue into day 3, officials attempt to quell violence

MIAMI (AP) — Sporadic gunfire and rock throwing broke out again in two black neighborhoods Wednesday and spread to a third, but as night fell police said the city's riot-torn areas seemed calmer than on the two previous nights.

City commissioners, meeting in emergency session, appointed a panel to investigate the police shooting of a black motorcyclist that sparked two days of racial violence. And, a sister of the motorcyclist's passenger, who died after the vehicle crashed, made a televised plea for an end to the violence.

"It's the quietest night so far," Deputy Police Chief Walter Martinez said at 8 p.m. "We've got 250 men out," including field forces, which are small groups of officers equipped with riot gear that move in quickly to quell specific disturbances.

"We hope we can normalize and go back to routine patrolling," Martinez said. "We don't like being out here 12 hours and being shot at."

City commissioners unanimously approved the special panel amid warnings from black leaders that there will be more disturbances if authorities do not act quickly to ease tensions.

The rioting that followed the fatal shooting of

a 23-year-old, unarmed black motorcyclist by a Hispanic policeman has left one person dead, eight shot, about 20 buildings burned and numerous others looted in the black neighborhoods of Overtown and Liberty City.

The violence interrupted the city's preparations for a gala celebration as it plays host to Sunday's Super Bowl.

It was quiet Wednesday until late afternoon, when shots were fired at police in the Overtown section and rock throwing was reported in Liberty City, Miami police spokesman David Rivero said. Authorities again cordoned off Overtown.

"We had a few shots fired at us, but fortunately no one was hurt," Rivero said. Scores of Miami police squad cars and a state SWAT team went to the spot in a show of force aimed at heading off more violence.

Police spokesman Stephanie Gibbs said shots were also fired and rocks and bottles were being thrown in black sections of Coconut Grove, a neighborhood south of downtown that previously had not been affected seriously by the rioting.

In her televised appeal, Claudia Lubrin, the sister of the motorcycle driver, said, "I would like

to plead to the Overtown people that they stop the riots. Put down your weapons — I do not want my brother to be remembered with the riots." Her brother, Allen Blanchard, died in a hospital Tuesday.

Black leaders warned Mayor Xavier Suarez before the commission meeting that their community would no longer accept empty promises and business as usual.

"The word is out that there will be more disturbance," The Rev. William Washington said. "Now we've got to act and act quick."

City commissioners agreed Wednesday to create an independent panel to investigate the death of Clement Lloyd, shot in the head Monday night as he and Blanchard sped through Overtown.

After discussions, the commissioners approved a suggestion by Miller Dawkins, the lone black on the five-member commission, who wanted a board consisting of five policemen and five Overtown residents, with the mayor as chairman. The commission will have the power to subpoena witnesses.

Dawkins said the board will not satisfy the young people throwing rocks and bottles, and he appealed to them for time.

Children return to scene of tragedy

STOCKTON, Calif. (AP) — Children returned to class to confront their fears with help from psychologists Wednesday, just one day after a gunman fascinated by toy soldiers killed five youngsters at the school he attended as a boy.

Blood was washed from the pavement overnight and bullet holes were patched at Cleveland Elemen-

"Why he did this we may never know."

— Dennis Perry, police captain

tary School, where experts said it was important that pupils, mostly children of Southeast Asian refugees, deal with the trauma immediately.

"I still feel upset, but I have to bring my kid to see the teacher to let the teacher know my kid's all right," Brom Lee said in broken English.

His daughter, 7-year-old Nary, said she was scared to return because, "I saw blood." Holding tightly to her father's hand, she pointed to her leg and said, "I saw somebody get shot right here."

Police said Patrick Edward Purdy, wearing an olive-drab shirt bearing the Iranian battle cry "Death to the Great Satan," on Tuesday sprayed more than 100 shots from an assault rifle, killing five youngsters ages 6 to 9 and wounding 30 other people.

A drifter who police said was either 24 or 26, Purdy killed himself with a pistol shot to the head after the mute, methodical attack during recess.

"Why he did this we may never know," said Capt. Dennis Perry. "We can only assume that some problem came up in this guy that made him do it. Obviously, he had a military hangup."

Carved into the stock of Purdy's rifle was the word Hezbollah, Iranian for Party of God. Hezbollah is the name of a Shiite Moslem faction in Lebanon. Also carved into the rifle were the words "freedom" and "victory."

Perry said the man, in the days leading up to the bloodbath, lived in a motel room where officers found a broken rifle, about 100 toy soldiers scattered about and an olive drab cloth on which were drawn "three snarling-type faces."

Records indicate that a Patrick Edward Purdy attended Cleveland Elementary through third grade.