

Friday, April 7, 1989

Corps dorm key policy revised after attack

By Stephen Masters
 SENIOR STAFF WRITER

Corps of Cadets housing officials said security measures were increased in and around two residence halls less than one week after an attack on two female cadets.

Keys were issued to students in Dorm 5 for outer doors and lockable doors were added at the top of the stairwells of Dorm 2 on March 28, six days after a civilian entered the fourth floor room of two female cadets in Dorm 2, Jim Lane, assistant director of Corps Housing, said.

The assailant, whom police identified as Harry Louis Horak, entered the room of his ex-girlfriend with two rifles and a hunting knife. Horak is being held in Brazos County Jail on six felony counts. Bail has been set at \$100,000.

George Thomas, director of Corps housing, said other new security measures include allowing female members of the Aggie Band to lock their doors 24 hours a day.

Cadets normally are required to have their doors open or unlocked during preparation for formation in the morning and during call to quarters, a mandatory study time for cadets, from 7:30-10:30 p.m. Sunday through Thursday.

Thomas said the number and frequency of foot patrols through the Corps Quadrangle have been increased.

The doors added in Dorm 2 are at the top of each stairwell, Thomas said. The doors are locked from 11 p.m. to 6 a.m. and are equipped with a one-way mirror for residents to see out. Dorm 5 is also locked from 11 p.m. to 6 a.m.

Outer doors of civilian residence halls are locked from 7 p.m. to 10 a.m. Residence hall officials Wednesday approved a policy of locking outer doors of all air-conditioned civilian halls 24 hours a day next fall.

Thomas said officials are "looking into" having all Corps dorms locked beginning in the fall semester, but said it wasn't likely.

"We're already starting to order keys so that that system can be implemented in the fall," he said. "Hopefully all of (the dorms) can be locked, but that's not that feasible because the ones being renovated at the moment don't have the panic-bar setup and that's what we're having to look into."

Thomas said the "panic-bar system" is a release for the door lock similar to that used in civilian Corps-style dorms.

House speaker blames news reports for charges against TP&W director

AUSTIN (AP) — House Speaker Gib Lewis on Thursday blamed news reports for criminal charges being brought in New Mexico against Charles Allen, who has been fired as wildlife director of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

Lewis, an avid outdoorsman and big game hunter, voiced sadness over the firing and said the controversy surrounding the department in recent weeks was unwarranted.

"It says we've got a pretty sorry system," Lewis said. "I do have some friends around the country, and I called them to find out." Lewis said. The only reason that there was any cases brought (is) because of the press play that this has received back in Austin."

Allen, charged in New Mexico last week over an antelope-trapping mission, was fired Wednesday night by Charles D. Travis, the department's executive director. Travis was unavailable for comment Thursday, his secretary said, and he didn't immediately return a call from the Associated Press.

In a brief written statement, Travis gave no reason for firing Allen, wildlife director for the past two years.

"Employees serve at the will of the executive director," Travis said. He also said that after reviewing a continuing internal investigation of the New Mexico incident, "It is my opinion that Mr. Allen did not knowingly violate any criminal statute."

Allen said earlier he was innocent of three felony and six misdemeanor charges brought against him last week in Alamogordo, N.M. Allen had been net gunner in a helicopter mission Jan. 30, which authorities allege strayed over New Mexico.

In a related development, the Senate on Thursday confirmed four appointees to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission. But Sen. Chet Edwards said the department has a "serious public perception problem — at the least it has a public perception problem, at the most it needs to deal with clarifying, to deal with its policies."

"I think it's critical that the citizens of this state recognize and believe that anyone is going to be treated equally by any state agency," Edwards of Duncanville said.

The controversy over that helicopter flight is only one of several questions raised about the department since February.

News stories have disclosed that Parks and Wildlife employees stocked various animals — including antelope, elk, deer, wild turkeys and game fish — on private lands belonging to a number of politically powerful Texans.

Lewis was among those who had animals stocked on their land, as were a University of Texas regent and the father-in-law of a state legislator.

Lewis has been highly critical of the news reports about those stock-

ings, saying the animals remain public property and that any citizen could take part in the programs.

The speaker said the firing of Allen, 40, threatens destruction of "one of the best parks and wildlife departments in the country."

"I've been very disappointed in this whole episode," he said. "I'm very saddened by what has developed in the last 30 days — or however long this has taken place — because, you know, it's really disturbing to see what has happened with so little issue there. I'm very saddened by the entire process."

Cadets raise \$47,000 with 'March to Brazos'

By Andrea Warrenburg
 REPORTER

Texas A&M's Corps of Cadets raised more than \$47,000 for the Brazos Valley March of Dimes April 1 with its 13th annual "March to the Brazos."

The money, representing about \$16,000 more than last year's total, will go to help the March of Dimes battle muscular dystrophy and other birth defects.

The Corps raised the money by asking area businesses, parents and former students for donations for the seven-mile march to the banks of the Brazos River. The total averages to more than \$22 per cadet.

"We really tried to stress the fund-raising this year," Robert McGee, subchairman of the "March to the

Brazos" committee, said. "There was a better understanding of where the money was going."

Originating in 1908, the march was a spring exercise. It has been a charity event for the past 12 years. During that time, the Corps has raised more than \$347,000 benefiting the March of Dimes.

Last year, cadets raised \$31,000. "The money-raising was definitely a wonderful success," McGee said.

The march began Saturday at 8 a.m. on the Corps Quadrangle and took about two and a half hours.

On the banks of the Brazos, cadets competed in athletic events such as tug-of-war and stretcher relays.

The new company leaders for 1989-90 had an opportunity to lead their units on the return home while the seniors rode in the back of trucks.

Senate backs bill to limit access to candidates names

By Stephen Masters
 SENIOR STAFF WRITER

A bill that recently passed the state Senate would allow government entities to avoid releasing candidates' names for some public offices.

If approved by the House and Gov. Bill Clements in its present form, the bill, with an amendment by Sen. Bob McFarland of Arlington would allow public officials to withhold the names of candidates for city manager, school superintendent and university chief executive officer until a list of finalists is compiled. The bill requires the release of lists of finalists at least seven days before any action is taken on the candidates.

A short list usually is only released if requested under the Texas Open Records Act.

McFarland said he wrote the amendment because he thinks the Open Records law is too lenient in allowing names of candidates to be released.

"Many applicants are not going to want their current employer to know of their interest in another position," he said, "especially if there is no assurance that they're going to be considered and/or extended opportunities and be on a short list."

The original version of the bill, sponsored by Sen. Don Henderson of Houston, exempts the college grades of public school officials. Henderson has been quoted as saying releasing the college records of

public school officials could constitute "unwarranted intrusion" into the privacy of officials.

Both the amendment and the bill passed the Senate. A similar bill has been proposed in the House and is currently in committee, McFarland said.

Spokesmen from the Freedom of Information Foundation in Dallas did not return calls Thursday.

McFarland said he thinks the three examples mentioned in the amendment warrant special consideration for exceptions under the Open Records law.

McFarland said, "(Suppose) suddenly a college president, a school superintendent or a city manager that would make a qualified candidate for Austin, Bryan, (Texas)

A&M, (Texas) Tech, Southwestern (University) or the Arlington Independent School District wants to at least apply but says, 'I can't do that because I don't want my board of regents, my trustees, my city council to know I'm looking.' It discourages job applications."

"To me, those situations are such that the job applicants most often do not want their identities disclosed until they reach a short list and as a result the public is getting short-changed."

A&M President William Mobley, named in July 1988 after a six-month presidential search, agreed with McFarland that the law as written can have a negative effect on applications.

"I can see how it could have a chil-

ing effect," Mobley said. "In many cases these candidates don't even know they've been nominated. To bring their name out in connection with a job somewhere can be of great detriment to them."

Mobley cited a case two or three years ago where then-President Frank Vandiver's name was brought out in a short list for the chancellor's position at the University of Houston.

The incident made headlines both locally and in Houston, he said.

"I think in (the case of the bill), you have to weigh the public's right to know with the public's need to know this early," Mobley said. "I feel the same way about the Open Records Law or any Sunshine Law."

Correction

A story in yesterday's *Battalion* incorrectly reported that the Century Singers would perform tonight at 8 as a part of Parents' Weekend activities. The Women's Chorus will perform tonight. The story also reported that Parsons Mounted Cavalry would perform on the Polo Field. The cavalry will perform on Simpson Drill Field. *The Battalion* regrets the errors.

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