

A&M officials concerned; student contracts measles

By TODD L. CONNELLEY
Of The Battalion Staff

The first case of measles at Texas A&M since 1971 has been diagnosed.

Dr. Kenneth Dirks, director of the A.P. Beutel Health Center, said the health center on Wednesday received positive results of the laboratory test. The lab test was sent to Austin for analysis and confirmation.

A&M sophomore accounting and finance major John E. Carroll II, who works at Duddley's Draw, apparently contracted the disease from his children, Dirks said.

He said health center officials believe Carroll, 20, has had contact with about 600 A&M students with whom he attends classes.

Dirks said the Texas Department of Health is sending the University 600 doses of measles vaccine that will be administered, at no cost to those who have class with Carroll.

His classes are: Act 230-501, Introduction to Accounting; Econ 203-507, Principles of Economics; Soci 205-506, Introduction to Sociology; Anth 201-502, Introduction to Anthropology; Thar 101-501, Introduction to Theater; and Kine 199-216, Archery.

Dirks also said the Brazos County Health Department is looking into providing vaccinations for those who might have come into contact with the virus at Duddley's.

The regular vaccinations are MMR vaccines, for measles, mumps and rubella, and usually are available at the health center for \$26. However, Dirks said, the center is trying to obtain vaccines for measles alone, which could be administered for a lower cost.

Students who come to the health center for a vaccine should bring their immunization records.

Students should consider measles immunizations

Measles, known as rubella, red measles, big measles or 10-day measles, is present on the Texas A&M campus, according to a memo distributed by officials at the A.P. Beutel Health Center.

The immunization schedule for measles prevention is a two-dose regimen with the first vaccine administered at age 15 months and the second dose between ages 4 to 6.

This immunization is recommended by the Immunization Practices Advisory Committee as published by the Centers for Disease Control of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the Texas State Department of Health.

If you have had the measles and recovered, you generally are considered to be immune to this disease for life. If you were born before 1957, you are probably immune.

Persons born in or after 1957 who received a measles vaccine prior to 1968, and those born in

or after 1957 who do not have documentation of immunity to measles should be immunized.

If you never have had the measles or have not had a second dose of measles vaccine since 1980, you are strongly advised to come to the health center or see another physician for consideration for a dose of the measles vaccine as soon as possible.

If you are not sure of your immunity to this disease or think you might have been exposed to someone with the measles, you should receive a vaccine within 72 hours of such exposure.

The vaccine is offered for \$26 by the health center.

Special note: A woman who thinks she might be pregnant should consult her physician regarding the type of measles vaccine preparation she should receive. She should not receive a preparation containing rubella, also known as German measles or three-day measles.

Dirks said Carroll, who is from Troup, first developed measles symptoms on Valentine's Day. He went to the health center Saturday.

Sandra Juarez, director of personal health at the Brazos County Health Department, said measles is a very contagious disease.

"A person is contagious five days before the rash breaks out and five days after it goes away," Juarez said.

The symptoms for measles are deceptively similar to flu symptoms.

"You will experience a runny nose, fever and a headache," Juarez said. "What happens is people think they have the flu and go about their business. In doing so they expose many people to the disease."

Along with the flu-like symptoms comes the appearance of a red pinpoint-like rash.

"Most people will not recognize the rash because there are so many kinds of rashes you can contract," she said. "It's very easy to confuse it

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Born to shop



Photo by Fredrick D. Joe

Carol Augustine, a freshman education major from Austin (left), and Matori Jones, a freshman journalism major from San Antonio, exit The Underground. The two live in Davis-Gary Hall.

Racist letter upsets, shocks A&M student

By SUZANNE CALDERON
Of The Battalion Staff

A letter containing derogatory racial statements was mailed Saturday to a Texas A&M student.

After hanging pictures of famous African-American leaders on her residence hall door under the heading, "It's a black thing ... you wouldn't understand," an A&M student received an anonymous letter titled, "It's a White Thing You Just Wouldn't Understand."

The student, who wishes to remain anonymous, said she decorated her door with pictures of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and other prominent African-American leaders in honor of Black History Month.

"This is my way of celebrating Black History Month, honoring the people who came before me and paved the way," she said.

The racist remarks in the letter the student received included statements such as: "The KKK will never be destroyed!"; "Mandela should burn"; "What color were Adam and Eve?"; "Who was freed by the white man?"; and "What color is the bad guy portrayed in?"

Dr. John Koldus, vice president for student services, said he has a tough time dealing with that type of correspondence.

"The letter is rude, crude and most inappropriate," Koldus said. "I don't see how any human being can find it in their heart to write that kind of letter to someone."

"It's the kind of letter that reaches down and grabs you. It gets you in your heart as to how can people take skin color, or anything for that matter, and put people down."

The student who received the letter said she was shocked when she read it.

"When I first got it I was upset," she said. "Whoever wrote it knows who I am. But if they felt so strongly about what they wrote — what they wrote were very strong words — at least they could have had enough respect to confront me face to face. Mailing it shows cowardice on their part."

She said she has no idea who sent her the letter and has no knowledge of anyone else receiving a copy.

The student said she reported the incident to the Department of Student Services, and Koldus said there will be an investigation.

The student said her only clue for the investigation is the postmark on the letter. The letter is postmarked Friday, she said.

She said Friday was the day a letter to the editor in The Battalion discussed a T-shirt bearing the same slogan as the one on her door: "It's A Black Thing ... You Just Wouldn't Understand."

Roland Martin, junior journalism major and vice president of the National Association of Black Journalists, said the slogan is not meant to be racist.

"Whites can empathize with blacks" See Letter/Page 12

Regents, voters consider plans to lower roads, tracks

By JILL BUTLER
Of The Battalion Staff

If the plan to lower four miles of Wellborn Road and the adjacent railroad is approved by the Board of Regents and College Station voters, a mile of road and track in Bryan will be lowered and added to the original plan.

A four-mile stretch from Villa Maria Road to Farm-to-Market Road 2818 is under consideration to be lowered.

For almost 12 years, the State Department of Highways and Public Transportation has been studying ways to deal with problems created by the existence of Wellborn Road and the adjacent railroad, said Carol D. Zeigler, district engineer at the State Department of Highways and Public Transportation in Bryan.

"Anytime you have a high-volume road, such as Wellborn Road, and a railroad, plus a large number of pedestrians crossing the

street, you have a potentially dangerous situation," Zeigler said.

He said Texas A&M officials see Wellborn Road and the railroad as barriers to campus development.

The highway department also studied the possibility of raising the railroad tracks or moving the tracks farther west. Now, however, lowering the tracks is seen as the best alternative.

Lowering the tracks and the road would create a tunnel without a top, for cars and rail traffic.

If the tracks and the road are lowered, walkways will be built across the gap created on campus.

However, before construction begins, the City of Bryan, the City of College Station, A&M and the highway department must approve the project.

The highway department has approved its part of the project and so has the City of Bryan.

In 1984, the City of Bryan approved a bond issue to create a grade separation, raising the road over the tracks at Villa Maria to help facilitate traffic flow.

However, the plan was put on hold when the State Highway Commission began studying the possibility of lowering the railroad tracks in College Station, Bryan Mayor Marvin Tate said.

"We asked the State Highway Commission to extend the low-track project from F&B Road to past Villa Maria Road (in Bryan)," Tate said. "This will help traffic flow in Bryan, enhance the overall low-track project and we get two grade separations instead of one."

The commission approved the addition, and the City of Bryan agreed to apply the money authorized to be spent on one grade

separation toward the overall low-track project, if the project is approved.

The regents must approve the project and appropriate funds for A&M.

Zeigler said members of the Board seem to support the project. He said that in January 1989 the regents named the low-track project as their preferred alternative to solve the problems created by the railroad tracks and Wellborn Road.

However, College Station Mayor Larry Ringer said he is not sure College Station voters will support the low-track project.

The City of College Station must sell bonds to raise money for the project, Ringer said. Voters must approve the sale of bonds.

A committee is putting together a capital improvements program so voters can choose how money should be spent. Other programs See Tracks/Page 12

Students debate Greeks at A&M

Society sponsors discussion of University recognition

By SELINA GONZALEZ
Of The Battalion Staff

"No frats" may be considered an Aggie tradition since 1876 by some, but many Texas A&M students believe that the University is right in recognizing fraternities and sororities.

At a debate sponsored by the A&M Debate Society Wednesday, the advantages and disadvantages of University recognition of fraternities and sororities were discussed.

Brock Nelson, who spoke against the University recognition of the Greek system, asked students to judge each Greek organization on its individual merits to decide if it should be University-recognized. Terris Burton, speaker for the recognition of the A&M Greek system, said fraternities and sororities allow for diversity, which is important at this traditionally conservative University.

Nelson said some Greek organizations do not abide by all University regulations.

"Greek organizations are not like all other organizations," Nelson said. He cited discrimination as one difference.

At a Greek-sponsored softball tournament two years ago, Nelson said, he noticed a lack of minority participation.

"We noticed that there were two Blacks, one Hispanic and no Orientals — this is out of the 20 fraternities and sororities that were present," Nelson said.

Burton said African-American Greek organizations provide a needed cultural outlet for African-American students.

"African-American students, and other minorities as well, find that many of the traditions held at Texas A&M are not culturally relevant," Burton said, speaking on behalf of the African-American Greek letter organizations.

"As a result, we find ourselves culturally and socially isolated. African-American Greek letter organizations provide the resources through which they can eliminate this isolation."

Most of the social and cultural programs are sponsored by Greek organizations, Burton said.

Nelson said through a subjective selection process, fraternities and sororities discriminate by denying some the opportunity to join.

A Fall 1989 article in The Battalion about an African-American student pledging an Interfraternity Council organization indicated discrimination in the Greek system, Nelson said.

"How can this be big news if it is prominent and discrimination doesn't occur in the fraternities and sororities?" Nelson said.

Nelson said some Greek organizations violate University regulation regarding student organizations in their adherence to the alcohol policy.

According to the Policy and Procedure Manual, recognized student organizations can hold events involving alcoholic beverages only if non-alcoholic beverages and adequate food are available at the same place.

Nelson said he remembers seeing only beer at

the fraternity rush parties before the fraternities elected to have a dry rush policy.

Burton, however, said that Greek organizations have aspects that are beneficial to the campus and community.

"All five of the African-American Greek organizations participate in service projects that are aimed towards African-Americans that haven't achieved the high economic, social or political status," Burton said.

Nelson said the negative aspects of fraternities and sororities outweigh the positive ones. For example, although illegal, hazing still exists within the Greek system and therefore is in violation of University guidelines, Nelson said.

"I have a roommate who is currently pledging and I keep hearing about black marks," he said. "He has to work off the black marks."

Still, Burton said, participation in Greek organizations might prepare students to meet the demands of the future.

"Students should be exposed to as many facets of life as possible," Burton said. "By participating in a fraternity or sorority, one may attain some valuable interpersonal and organizational skills."

It would be unfair for A&M to deny these students the resources that the University has to offer, Burton said.

Burton said advantages of Greek membership are the business contacts that are met and the support group the brotherhood provides.

"I realize that this type of support group may not fit into the traditions of Texas A&M but I pose this question: What does one call it when those in power object to the coming of a new group of individuals simply because that group is not like the status quo?" Burton said. "I see this as nothing more than a manifestation of prejudice."

ATM greek ORGANIZATIONS

COSGA '90 delegates arrive for annual meeting

By JILL BUTLER
Of The Battalion Staff

Texas A&M's 10th annual Conference on Student Government Associations will be Saturday to Tuesday and include 375 delegates from 84 universities around the world.

Delegates from universities in Greece, Switzerland and Canada will attend the conference this year.

Each university, including A&M, is represented by four to 10 delegates who are involved in some form of student government, Wendy Turk, director of COSGA '90, said.

"We don't tell other schools how to choose their delegates," Turk said. "But usually the student body president is a delegate, along with a few other student government officers."

Although other universities have similar student government conferences, Turk said, A&M's student-run COSGA is unique.

"About 10 years ago, some student government officers were tired of going to conferences organized by other universities," Turk said. "They decided that a conference run by students could give student government leaders a better perspective on the problems faced by students, and COSGA was created."

COSGA is run by six executive officers, who serve as committee

heads. Forty-three committee members and five hosts and hostesses, none of whom have to be involved in student government to have a position, also participate.

COSGA's purpose is to give student leaders at different universities a chance to share ideas, experiences and areas of strength, Turk said.

"We hope the people who come to COSGA will leave feeling they had fun and that they learned something new from other delegates," she said.

Speakers at COSGA will include Robert Goodwin, executive director of the White House Initiative on Historically Black Colleges and Universities; Lt. Gen. Peter T. Kempf, commander of the 12th Air Force; and Logan Hampton, coordinator of Minority Affairs at Texas Christian University.

A wide range of topics will be discussed, including on-campus prejudice, responsibilities of student government leaders, Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) and student drug abuse.

COSGA presentations are not open to the public.

Delegates who attend COSGA must pay \$120, which includes some meals, a T-shirt, conference materials and ground transportation from airports in major cities to A&M.