

Texas A&M The Battalion

WEATHER

TOMORROW'S FORECAST:
Partly cloudy and humid.
HIGH: 78 LOW: 62

Vol. 89 No. 116 USPS 045360 10 Pages

College Station, Texas

Friday, March 23, 1990

Judge rules kidnap tale farfetched

MATAMOROS, Mexico (AP)—Kidnapping charges against three Mexicans were dropped Thursday after a judge ruled that the abduction story told by four trouble-prone Oklahomans "is not believable."

But two of the Matamoros residents remained in jail in connection with a separate drug investigation by Mexican federal authorities, officials said.

The Mexicans were jailed late last week after the Oklahoma City-area vacationers told police that the three abducted them near an international bridge.

The story brought back memories of the disappearance and murder of University of Texas student Mark Kilroy last year in Matamoros at the hands of a cult of drug traffickers.

The Mexicans were arrested outside a warehouse, where they had stopped with the Americans.

Judge Manuel Ceballos Jimenez said there were too many contradictions in the different versions of the alleged kidnapping.

"It is not believable what the North American students said," the judge said Thursday.

The Americans told police the abductions occurred late last Thursday and early Friday in this border city full of students, many of them drinking heavily, on spring break.

Nor did police in South Texas believe that George Marland Crabtree, 25; his brother, Darren Crabtree, 19; Jeff Jones, 21; and Kerry Ramsey, 19, were kidnapped. The four have since had a string of encounters with the law north of the border.

Two days after reporting the kidnapping, the same Oklahomans were jailed at South Padre Island and paid a total of more than \$500 in fines for public intoxication, disorderly conduct and damaging someone's car with a tire tool.

Then on Tuesday, the same four told police in Brownsville that someone fired gunshots at their car.

Later Tuesday, they reported at South Padre Island that 1,000 men tried to sexually molest Ramsey on the beach, police said.

Sgt. Homer Gonzalez with the island police department said an investigation showed that she was not molested, but that she had removed her swimsuit and started dancing naked on the beach.

"She took it off and was out there dancing and stuff, and some guys hid her bathing suit, so she had to walk to the car naked," Gonzalez said.

In the alleged kidnapping incident last week, three of the Oklahomans said the Mexicans saw them having trouble carrying the inebriated Jones to the Gateway International Bridge, and offered them a ride. Jones said he passed out after getting in the car, did not awaken until the next morning and did not remember being kidnapped.

The other three said the Mexicans took them in a direction away from the bridge, and held them at gunpoint as they sped around the city, fondled Ramsey and finally took them to a warehouse, where the Oklahomans thought they would be killed.

But the Mexicans arrested last Saturday at the warehouse, said the Oklahomans drove around with them for four hours drinking beer.

Regents budget for special events center

By JULIETTE RIZZO
Of The Battalion Staff

The Board of Regents will decide today how much money to appropriate for the preliminary design of the special events center, to be constructed on West Campus in the area of the Beef Cattle Center.

The new center will serve as a comparable but larger facility to G. Rollie White Coliseum, which after 36 years, no longer adequately serves the needs of the growing University community.

William A. McKenzie, chairman of the board, said in the Board's meeting Thursday that the University has outgrown the coliseum. He said that compared to other modern university arenas G. Rollie White is smaller and can no longer hold the capacity needed for large events.

McKenzie said other universities of the Southwest Athletic Conference have built larger basketball facilities and only Autry Court at Rice has a smaller seating capacity than G. Rollie. He said recruiting of outstanding high school players and leading performers has suffered in recent years, because those players and performers prefer newer arenas with better accommodations.

McKenzie said the larger center/arena will attract "big names" and also hold family shows such as circuses, ice shows and rodeos. The new center, he said, will be a "total University center," which will include 14,500 seats for basketball games and commencement exercises, meeting spaces for conferences and other student activities and banquet facilities.

Over the past year, the regents, President William H. Mobley and other University officials have looked into similar facilities at other universities trying to get design ideas and learn from others' mistakes.

The proposed center will be a double bowl structure made up of three levels. The primary level will

Board of Regents hears status of LoTrak Project to lower railroad tracks on west side of campus

By JULIETTE RIZZO
Of The Battalion Staff

Accessing campus via Wellborn Road may become safer and less of a hassle if the Texas A&M Board of Regents supports the adoption and acceptance of financial responsibility for the LoTrak Project today.

The LoTrak project, whose planning stages were adopted by the Regents in January 1989, was created by the Texas Department of Highways and Public Transportation (SDHPT) to lower the railroad tracks west of campus in order to separate them from bicycle, vehicle and pedestrian traffic.

Byron Blaschke, representative of the SDHPT, briefed the Regent's Planning and Building Com-

mittee chaired by Regent Royce E. Weisenbaker on the status of the project Thursday and presented a model of the concept.

Blaschke said that the increasing traffic volume on Wellborn Road has made the project all the more necessary.

"Something definitely needs to be done to address the mobility needs of pedestrians and vehicles," he said. "As far as mobility is concerned, the increasing volume of traffic on Wellborn Road needs to be addressed, especially with the growing population of the Bryan-College Station area and the campus. We're concerned with pedestrian, bicycle and traffic safety within the campus area."

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include seating. Another level will include the playing floor, support facilities, storage, food services and meeting facilities. The intermediate level will include box office areas and appropriate security areas. Sky boxes are included in the plans and will be located around the perimeter of the back lower bowl, which is a key visual area.

John David Crow, A&M athletic director, said that the athletic department supports the facility wholeheartedly and hopes it will bring positive attributes to the bas-

ketball program. Mayor Larry Ringer of College Station said the city's Capital Improvement Control Committee will propose a bond election during the summer to raise money for the project.

"The center is a real benefit to the community as well as the University, and it is our privilege to share it with the University," he said.

Robert Smith, vice president for finance and administration, said the \$35 million project project also will be funded by private gifts. The big-

A&M health department receives \$500,000 donation Matching funds create endowed chair

By Stacy E. Allen
Of The Battalion Staff

The Texas A&M Department of Health and Physical Education is \$1 million richer thanks to the generosity of Thomas A. Read.

Read gave \$500,000 to the department and matching funds from the University created a \$1 million endowed chair in Read's name.

The chair, titled the Thomas A. and Joan Read Chair for Disadvantaged Youth, is one of many philanthropic activities Read has engaged in during the years.

On the A&M campus today, more than 70 students are receiving about \$1,000 a year in scholarship funds because of Read, Dr. Leonard Ponder, head of the

"Mr. Read is an unusually generous person, especially to Texas A&M when you consider the fact that he nor any of his children are Aggies. He is also very generous in that his commitment to disadvantaged youth is very real and he puts his money where his mouth is."

— Dr. Leonard Ponder,
department head

health and physical education department, said.

Ponder said the scholarships are given to health and physical education majors, industrial distribution majors and members of the Corps of Cadets.

This is somewhat surprising considering that Read never attended A&M.

"When it came time for me to decide where to give scholarships, I looked at many schools and decided A&M was the best choice," Read said. "I was always impressed with the A&M spirit and the Corps of Cadets."

Ponder said scholarship money and other gifts Read previously has given A&M prompted the University to name the health and physical education building after him. Prior to the endowed chair, Read had given A&M almost \$1 million.

Read's generosity, however, does not end with A&M. Ponder said Read attempted to start a summer sports camp three different times for disadvantaged youth be-

fore he succeeded in setting up the camp in Magnolia 12 years ago.

A&M now supplies the camp directors and counselors and Read pays for staff members' salaries and four weeks of free fun for 88 disadvantaged campers who normally would not attend because of financial constraints.

"The whole idea of the camp is to let the kids know there is more to life than becoming a streetwalker," Ponder said.

Once the kids leave camp, they are not forgotten by Read.

Former campers are given first priority in receiving A&M scholarships as an incentive to encourage the campers to go to college, Ponder said. The campers share the top-priority status with survivors of slain Houston police officers who would like to attend A&M.

Ponder said the first camper to attend A&M will do so next fall with the help of the scholarship money.

Read said because most children who attend his camp are from ghettos and can't afford to pay for a college education, full scholarships probably will be offered to campers.

Less fortunate children have been a concern of Read's since the 1970s when he said he realized they couldn't be ignored.

"They were there, and they weren't going to go anywhere, and someone had to do something," Read said. "Someone has to help them because otherwise, they don't have much of a chance."

One incentive for donating the money for the endowed chair for disadvantaged youth was to ensure camp operations always are taken care of, Read said.

"I want to ensure it will be around when I'm gone."

Ponder said the person to have the chair should be appointed by September. He said the chair-holder will teach undergraduate and/or graduate level classes at A&M as well as conduct research, preferably about disadvantaged youth. The appointee also will oversee the camp in the summers.

"Mr. Read is an unusually generous person, especially to Texas A&M when you consider the fact that he nor any of his children are Aggies," Ponder said. "He is also very generous in that his commitment to disadvantaged youth is very real and he puts his money where his mouth is."

A luncheon honoring Read for his contributions was held Thursday in the Board of Regents boardroom. A reception followed at A&M President William Mobley's home.

Case closed



Photo by Mike C. Mulvey

A County Attorney official leads Dewy Montgomery, 40, and Gulamali S. Faizullah, 43, both of College Station, out of the Student Korner Store at 1882 Welsh Ave. Both were arrested in connection with renting obscene videos in a joint investigation between TABC agents and the County Attorney's office.

Health center director prescribes re-examination of \$15 fee

By SUZANNE CALDERON
Of The Battalion Staff

Texas A&M's A.P. Beutel Health Center is one of the top health centers in the nation in terms of physical facilities, but lacking in staff support to fully utilize these assets. Student Body President Kevin Buchman said.

An evaluation team of top health center directors from around the nation came to A&M in April to evaluate the health center and found the physical facilities excellent, Buchman said.

"Their report was that we have the physical capability to be the best in the nation," Buchman said. "They said we are already one of the top three in the nation in terms of diagnostic equipment, the size of the building and examining rooms — we clearly have the potential; what we lack is staff support."

A shortage of physicians and other support staff at the health center is the center's main weakness, Buchman said.

Additionally, he said doctors at the health center are not being paid competitive salaries because of a lack of funds.

Buchman said if this continues, the health center could lose them to private practice.

In order to make these improvements at the health center, Student Government has proposed health center fees be raised from \$15 a semester to \$25 a semester.

Students will vote on the referendum March 29 during general student body elections.

David Wieland, senate finance chairman, said that compared to other universities, A&M's present health center fee is one of the lowest in the nation.

For example, students at the University of Texas at Austin pay \$40.60 a semester in health center fees. University of Georgia at Athens pay \$106 a semester. Louisiana State University pay \$40 a semester and students at Texas Tech pay \$25 a semester.

"If we can convince people that, yes, it's an extra \$10, but for the extra \$10 you are going to see a substantial change in the quality of your health center," Wieland said.

Buchman agreed with Wieland and said that increasing the health center fee is a positive move.

"I understand students being skeptical about fee increases, but this is a very legiti-

mate fee increase — unquestionably with tremendous benefit to the student body," Buchman said.

Dr. Kenneth Dirks, health center director, said that with the increase the center could hire three more physicians, two registered nurses, two nurses' assistants and two clerical support staff.

"I understand students being skeptical about fee increases, but this is a very legitimate fee increase." — Kevin Buchman, student body president

The health center fee has been \$15 since 1973, and is due for a re-examination, he said.

Dirks said the health center has eight doctors who see an average of 300 to 400 patients daily.

"If you work that out, it averages to where the doctors have to see a patient a little more frequently than once every 10 minutes, which doesn't allow very much

time to spend with any given patient," Dirks said.

He said the time each doctor can spend with his patients will increase to approximately 15 minutes with the hiring of more doctors.

Dirks said if the referendum is passed the new doctors and other personnel would be hired as soon as possible.

Wieland said passage of the referendum would help alleviate common complaints from students about the health center: their time with the doctors is short and the waiting times to see the doctors are long.

Dirks agreed that although the doctors are working rapidly, patients often have to wait longer than they would like. He guessed that the average time a patient has to wait to see a doctor is an hour and 15 minutes.

"But, some people are waiting up to three and a half hours and that is way too long," he said.

Besides covering the cost of seeing a doctor, Dirks said the health center fee always has and will continue to cover routine laboratory and X-ray work, and up to 10 days of hospitalization in the health center's 22-bed

infirmary.

Dirks also said a general surgeon, orthopedic surgeon, urologist, dermatologist, gynecologist, obstetrician and ear, nose and throat doctor are at the health center for half a day once a week to see patients.

These additional consultations are covered in the health center fee, he said.

Paying \$25 a semester for all those benefits is a pretty good deal, Dirks said, considering that a routine office visit with a doctor in private practice would cost much more.

Additionally, students can visit the health center an unlimited amount of times a semester for that amount of money.

Wieland said students need to stop and look at what the health center fee covers, how much the health center can help them, and how beneficial an increase in fees would be.

"Look at it like an investment — a wise investment," Wieland said.

Dirks agreed.

"We are providing very high quality service right now, but there is an opportunity for improvement, particularly if we had more physicians, more nurses, so more time could be spent with the patients."