

Graduate assistants seek equity

Group of A&M students wants equal employee health benefits

By JULIE MYERS
Of The Battalion Staff

Texas A&M graduate assistants have formed Aggies for Equity to inform the "legislative powers that be" of their rights to equal employee health benefits.

A law passed by the Texas Legislature in 1988 will extend health benefits on Sept. 1, 1991, to full-time graduate assistants in public universities.

"It's all a matter of funding," says Brad Rickelman, a logic teaching assistant in the philosophy department. "It's one thing to pass a law, and quite another to provide funding to carry the law out."

Texas A&M employees working 20 hours a week are eligible for some health benefits and Rickelman estimates 90 percent of graduate assistants work more than 20 hours a week.

Rickelman says this legislation heightened graduate assistants' awareness about their lack of health benefits and led to the creation of Aggies for Equity. Rickelman is secretary of the organization.

"Graduate assistants realize they are the backbone of this University, and the number of undergraduate courses taught by graduate assistants has increased steadily," Rickelman says.

"We are entitled to these benefits like A&M faculty and staff. This (health care benefits) also helps attract better graduate assistants."

Rickelman says Aggies for Equity also reflects the growing number of non-traditional graduate students: women, older students and those who are married and/or support families.

This is a big change from five or 10 years ago, Rickelman says.

The days of "cradle to grave" insurance for dependents are over, Rickelman says. Students as young as 21 are being dropped from their parents' insurance policies, and they need cheap, extensive coverage that A&M's student health care coverage

does not provide, he says.

"Health care can be expensive especially when you only get paid once a month," Rickelman says.

Elizabeth Porter, a secretary in the chemistry department who works part time, says she turned down a graduate assistantship in the educational psychology department because she would have lost her health benefits.

"Losing my benefits was too high a price to pay even though the assistantship would have been very much to my benefit since it is directly related to the graduate degree I'm pursuing," Porter says.

"I'm not bitter, just puzzled and hopeful. I've seen real strides toward more humane treatment by this University. I would like to see a change."

Greg Moses, a lecturer in the philosophy department, helped Rickelman and Porter form Aggies for Equity after leaving the University of Texas at Austin to fill a lecturer position in A&M's philosophy department.

While at UT, Moses says he was active in an organization similar to Aggies for Equity which helped convince the UT System Board of Regents to reinstate graduate assistant health benefits after they had been cut off.

Until Sept. 1, 1991, individual universities can decide whether they want to provide this coverage to graduate students.

The University of Texas extends coverage while A&M does not.

Aggies for Equity has about 20 members, and Rickelman says the organization wants to include graduate assistants from all colleges.

Porter says the group plans to vocalize its concerns by addressing the Legislature and will work with its counterpart at UT to accomplish its goals.

For further information about Aggies for Equity, call Rickelman at 845-5660.

Hussein visits Kuwait to meet with military

NICOSIA, Cyprus (AP) — President Saddam Hussein of Iraq visited Kuwait on Wednesday, meeting with military commanders and officials appointed by Baghdad to govern the occupied emirate, the Iraqi News Agency said. It was the Iraqi leader's first reported visit to what Baghdad now calls Iraq's 19th province since the Aug. 2 invasion.

Saddam also met with Iraqi troops "and talked to the fighters who confirmed their ever-readiness to sacrifice for Iraq and the Arab nation and defeat all evil attempts to desecrate our sacred land," INA reported.

The news agency said Saddam toured the streets of Kuwait, which "appeared flourishing after its return to the mother homeland."

Refugees fleeing Kuwait have said that stores and shops have been pillaged, and that Iraq is doing its best to dismantle Kuwaiti institutions. They have reported summary executions of resistance fighters, and many have said they feared to leave their homes before fleeing.

The London-based Amnesty International, meanwhile, issued a report saying that Iraqi troops occupying Kuwait have tortured and executed scores of people, some for refusing to display pictures of Saddam.

Iraqi News Agency reported: "On his arrival at the center of the city of Kuwait, the president presided over two meetings of the military commanders and a number of officials attended by Mr. Ali Hassan Al-Majeed, minister of the local administration."

"His excellency the president then made a tour during which he met a number of units of the Iraqi brave armed forces and talked to the fighters."

Fans 'ripped off' A&M loses ticket income to scalpers

By ISSELLE MCALLISTER
Of The Battalion Staff

Ticket scalpers, some earning up to \$5,000 per game, are stealing income from Texas A&M's athletic department and blatantly "ripping off" Aggie football fans, says Ty Clevenger, student body president.

University officials will combat the illicit profiteering through awareness and education, he says.

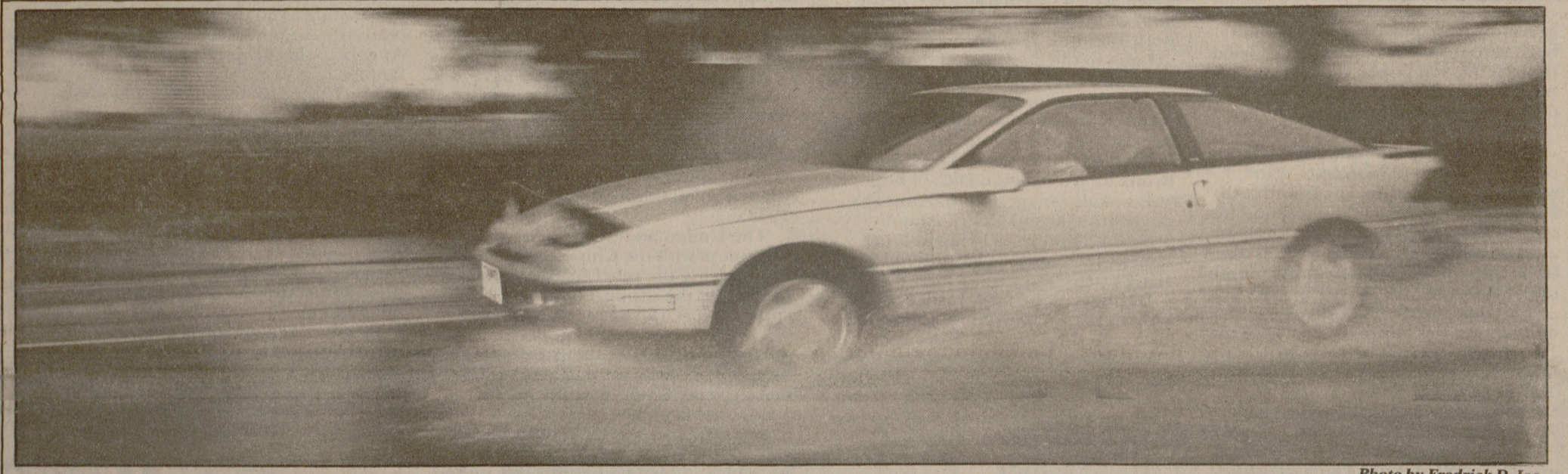
Although Texas law does not prohibit scalping, University policy does not allow it.

"The University Police Department does not want to have a ticket scalper bust," Clevenger says. "We just want them to know what the policy is."

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— Ty Clevenger, student body president

Go, Speed Racer



Rains began early yesterday evening. This car entered campus at the east gate and was headed toward the Systems Building. Photo by Fredrick D. Joe

A&M faculty member named likely Nobel Prize candidate

By STACY ALLEN
Of The Battalion Staff

The Texas A&M physics department soon might have a Nobel Prize winner in its midst.

Dr. Dimitri Nanopoulos, an A&M professor of physics, was named by The Scientist as a likely contender for a 1990 Nobel Prize.

He is one of 12 candidates based on a review of the 1,000 scientists most frequently quoted between 1981 and 1988.

Nanopoulos is being considered as a result of his study of the constituents of matter and how each interacts with the others. This research, conducted in 1977, resulted in the prediction of the number of neutrino species.

Neutrinos are elementary particles with basically no mass that play an important role in the sun's nuclear reactions.

With the cooperation of other scientists, Nanopoulos predicted in two papers that there are three neutrino types.

It was not until 1989 at the European Center for Nuclear Research in Switzerland that the type of high-tech machinery necessary to test his theory was designed.

The result was positive, resulting in his consideration as a contender.

"We are happy about being considered, and it certainly makes us work harder for the future," he says.



Dr. Dimitri Nanopoulos Photo by Mike C. Mulvey

Although Nanopoulos is excited about the prospect of being a Nobel Prize winner, he says he has kept it in perspective and is honored to be considered.

"It would be great to win, but I'm not losing sleep over it," he says. "If it doesn't come this year, maybe another year."

Nanopoulos works at the Texas Accelerator Center in The Woodlands in addition to teaching at A&M. At the center, he heads an astroparticle group dealing with the

Royce Wisenbaker Regent actively creates scholarships for students

Editor's note: The Battalion has focused on members of the Texas A&M University System Board of Regents to better acquaint students and faculty members with the System's leaders.

By BILL HETHCOCK
Of The Battalion Staff

Regent Royce Wisenbaker of Tyler was president of the Texas A&M Association of Former Students in 1966 and president of the Aggie Club in 1970, making him the only person to head both groups.

Wisenbaker played a big part in establishing the President's Scholarship program for the Association of Former Students in 1968. He gave the first President's Endowed Scholarship in honor of the late-General Earl Rudder, former president of A&M.

Recently, Wisenbaker endowed a chair in engineering and established two permanently endowed graduate fellowships for the College of Engineering. He also has been a major contributor to the Aggie Club.

Wisenbaker is an independent oil and gas producer. He received a bachelor's degree in engineering in 1939, and a master's degree in engineering in 1940, both from A&M.

In 1973, he received Texas



Royce Wisenbaker

A&M University's Distinguished Alumnus Award, the school's highest honor.

Gov. Dolph Briscoe appointed Wisenbaker to the Board of Regents in 1979. He was reappointed in 1985 by Gov. Mark White. He is chairman of the Planning and Building Committee and a member of the Audit Committee and several ad hoc committees.

Wisenbaker serves as trustee for Austin College and is a member of the Chancellor's Council for The University of Texas System. He is a board member of the development foundations of both The University of Texas at Tyler and The University of Texas Health Center at Tyler, and is a director of the Tyler Junior College Foundation.

Student Government investigates need for child care

By LIBBY KURTZ
Of The Battalion Staff

Texas A&M's Student Government is investigating the need for an on-campus child care facility since a council appointed in 1989 does not plan to research the care center's feasibility.

Student Body President Ty Clevenger says the TAMUS/B-CS Child Care Providers Council has made it clear that it is not going to look into the possibility of opening a day care center on A&M's campus despite recent concerns of students.

"I've heard a lot of sentiments from students who want a day care center on campus," Clevenger says. "I've also seen the need for such a facility. Yet, that alone isn't conclusive. We need to determine if a facility would be practical for A&M."

Clevenger says Student Government plans on measuring students' needs for a child care facility through another survey and an open hearing.

A March 1988 survey from a Child Care Facilities Study Committee determined an on-campus day care center was not needed.

The committee, appointed by Deputy Chancellor Eddie J. Davis, examined child

care needs of A&M employees and students.

The survey of 214 randomly selected A&M employees and students revealed:

- 55.2 percent of respondents reported both parents work outside the home.
- 45.3 percent said they only had one child enrolled in day care.
- Parents primarily were interested in a day care facility close to home.
- Most respondents were reasonably satisfied with rates of day care.
- A large percentage of respondents was interested in an A&M-sponsored day care facility only if it would be of excellent quality and inexpensive.

Of 214 respondents, 7.5 percent were graduate students and 8.9 percent were undergraduates. The rest were faculty members and staff.

Those surveyed were asked to answer even if they did not have children.

The committee also sent surveys to 164 licensed or registered child care providers in the Bryan-College Station area. Of the surveys mailed, 57 responded.

Their responses included:

- An excess capacity in most facilities exists.
- 65 percent of providers indicated an interest in opening a facility exclusively for the University System.
- 80.7 percent expressed willingness to join an A&M Child Care Council.
- 59.8 percent reported no waiting lists in their day care centers.
- 52.8 percent said they provided care to between one and five A&M employees or students' children.

In conclusion, the committee said it seemed Bryan-College Station offered adequate and generally affordable child care to its citizens.

The committee said an on-campus day