

Thursday, October 11, 1990

## Problems plague state nuclear plant

GLEN ROSE (AP) — The problem-plagued Comanche Peak nuclear power plant, completed years late and billions of dollars over budget, has had nine unplanned shutdowns in its first six months of operation.

Despite problems with pumps, instruments, sensors and even a lightning strike, Comanche Peak's Unit 1 reactor doesn't stand out as a lemon among the country's commercial reactors, some experts say.

The first six months' record for the plant reflects problems that appear common to new plants. Nearly all of the eight reactors opened since January 1988 have stumbled, frequently worrying critics and perplexing utility managers.

The U.S. Supreme Court Tuesday dealt a blow to some of those critics when the court declined to review an appeal by Citizens for Fair Utility Regulations, the Dallas Times Herald reported.

The Fort Worth citizens group was seeking to intervene in the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's licensing deliberations about TU Electric's \$10 billion nuclear power plant which they

accused of numerous safety violations.

Nuclear experts have come to expect more problems and less reliability from plants with less than two years of operating experience, with problems arising from operator's errors, design flaws, inadequate procedures and equipment failure.

Comanche Peak has had more equipment failures than human errors, and none of the problems has jeopardized plant safety, regulators say.

The plant took a little more than four months from its first nuclear reaction until it became a source of electricity — putting it in the midrange area of performance among the eight newest reactors.

In the number of foreseen problems forcing plant shutdowns, Comanche Peak did well during its start-up period but not so well after starting commercial operations Aug. 13 with four "trips," or shutdowns, before commercial operations and five since.

A 1987 NRC study said the plant needs big improvements.

## Scholarship fundraiser

RHA, Aggie Professional Forum sponsor casino at Houston bar

By ELIZABETH TISCH  
Of The Battalion Staff

Texas A&M football players are not the only ones hoping to be dealt a good hand in Houston this week-end.

A&M's Residence Hall Association and the Aggie Professional Forum are sponsoring a casino in Houston where Aggies from all over can try their luck at winning hands.

The casino will start at 7 p.m. Friday in Johnny B. Dalton's Country-Western Night Club in Houston.

Tents will be set up outside where

games like Black Jack and Roulette will be available for those wanting to

try their luck.

Pseudo-money won during the games can be spent later at an auction scheduled for 11:15 p.m.

The Aggie Professional Forum, a non-profit organization outside of Houston, donated items to be auctioned.

"Some items that they have gotten for the auction are a cellular phone and a 10-point diamond for an Aggie Ring," says Julie Dillman, RHA Casino '91 director.

In addition to the casino games,

there will be a live DJ providing music for a dance and a free food buffet from 7 to 9 p.m.

Tickets are being sold at Rudder Box Office, on the Corps of Cadets Quadrangle, at the MSC and in the Commons for \$5. The cost will be \$6 at the door.

Dillman stresses that those 21 and older who want to drink alcohol should be prepared for a \$2 cover charge after 8 p.m.

The yell leaders will have yell practice immediately following the casino.

Dillman encourages all Aggies

and Houstonians to attend the casino.

"It is going to be a lot of fun, and it's for a good cause too," she says. Profits from the casino will be donated to A&M scholarships.

Johnny B. Dalton's is on 13101 Kuykendahl, three miles south of FM 1960 and a half-mile north of Rankin Road.

The management welcomes any calls for information or directions at (713) 873-2120.

More information concerning the casino can be obtained by calling the RHA office at 845-0689.

## October declared National Energy Awareness Month

By JULIE HEDDERMAN  
Of The Battalion Staff

Bryan and College Station mayors will recognize October as National Energy Awareness Month in an effort to promote energy conservation.

Bryan Mayor Marvin Tate signed a proclamation Monday, and College Station Mayor Larry Ringer will sign it tonight during the College Station City Council meeting.

The purpose of Energy Awareness Month is to

get people to think about energy use, how it influences their lives, where energy comes from and how it can be used more effectively.

The Texas Energy Extension Service, local coordinator of the observance, is a program under the Governor's Energy Management Center.

The service provides publications, presentations and workshops on energy efficiency for homeowners and small businesses.

Nancy Sawtelle of the Texas Energy Extension Service encourages A&M students to use common sense in their energy use.

She suggests students carpool to football games and class and use "old-fashioned methods" like walking or biking.

Sawtelle also says when the weather is cooler, open windows and electric fans are effective for conserving energy during the day. At night, however, she says it is safer to run the air conditioner on a high temperature and use electric fans.

The Texas EES also offers a toll-free Energy Hotline number to provide answers to energy-related questions. The number is 1-800-643-SAVE.

## RHA votes against change to honors hall

By ELIZABETH TISCH  
Of The Battalion Staff

Texas A&M's Residence Hall Association voted to support the residents of McFadden Hall in their fight to prevent the hall from changing to an honors hall.

The vote took place at the RHA general assembly meeting Wednesday night where RHA Bill F9005 was opposed by one vote.

One of the main arguments of the Bill was that it said the conversion of McFadden to an honors hall would be an act of "segregation of students and unequal, preferential treatment of supposedly equal students."

The Bill also recognized Lechner Hall, the only honors hall on campus, as a very valuable and integral part of RHA and that it should remain. It stated, however, that "any justification for expansion of honors housing based on supposed benefits of an honors community is an insult to residents of other halls that have equally enriching hall communities."

The RHA general assembly questioned the honors housing success. Bill F9005 stated that the University Honors Program has only measured the honors housing success rate by the improved recruitment. The McFadden Hall residents argue that this should not be the only convincing reason for the takeover of another hall.

Although the RHA assembly has voted in McFadden's favor, the written proposal will be sent to Tom Murray, associate director of student affairs and residence life, to be looked over for any further drafting or revising. The University Honors Program also will write a proposal stating their position. The two proposals then will reach President Mobley's office for the final decision of the fate of McFadden Hall.

## Killeen schools receive money from Senate

WASHINGTON (AP) — A Senate panel awarded \$1 million to the Killeen Independent School District, where an influx of students from military families has strained resources.

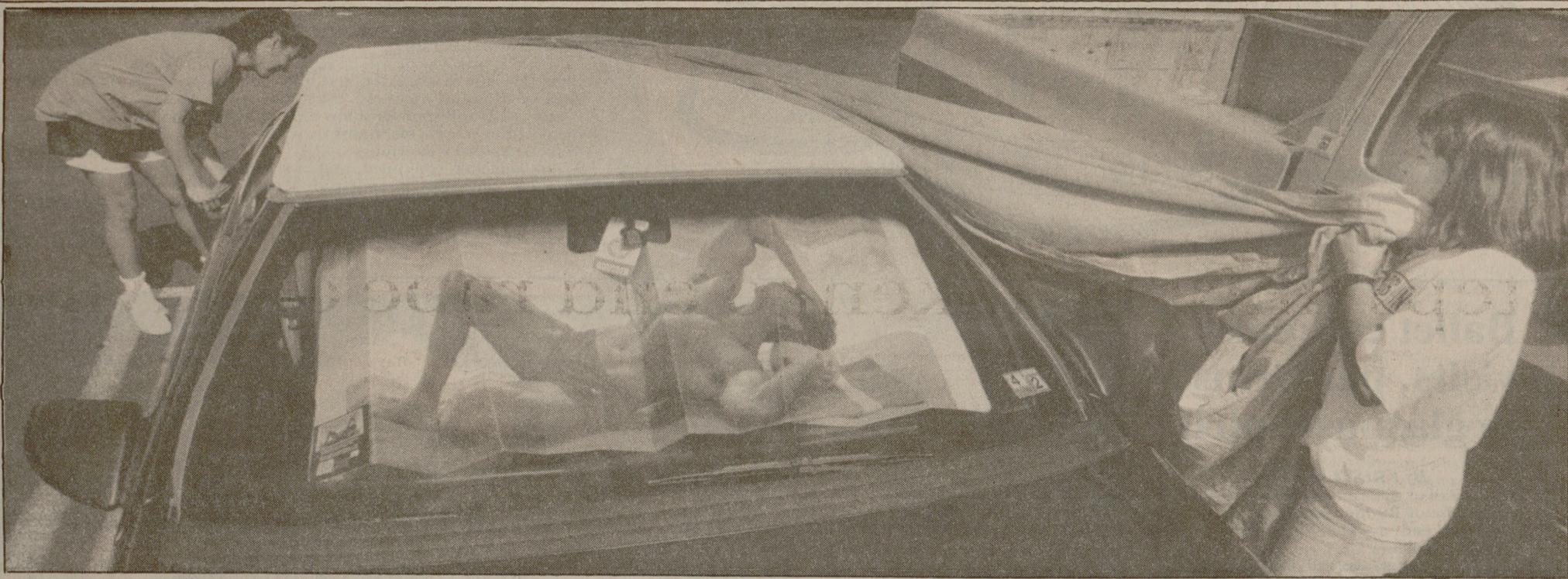
The district's aid was one of several Texas projects that cleared hurdles on the congressional budget track Wednesday.

The so-called Emergency Impact Aid will help Killeen schools through a desperate time, said district Superintendent Charles Patterson. More than \$4.5 million was trimmed from the district's \$69.2 million budget last year and 175 of its 2,500 jobs were eliminated.

The district, like many others, is reimbursed by the federal government for educating children of active military personnel, who don't pay local property taxes. The government's assistance has been steady while Killeen's schools have burgeoned with the growth of Fort Hood, Patterson said.

"Our military children are getting cheated ... they're not getting the same quality education," he said.

## A clever cover



A&M sophomore Kimberly Haynes and freshman Teresa Silva cover up Haynes' car and windshield man to protect them both from the burning sun. Photo by Mike C. Mulvey

### RE-ELECT

W. T. (TOM) McDONALD, JR.

#### PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- District Judge, 85th Judicial District, 1978-present.
- District Attorney of Brazos County, 1973-1977.
- County Attorney of Brazos County, 1968-1972.

#### EDUCATION

- Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and History, Randolph-Macon Men's College, 1962.
- Doctor of Jurisprudence, University of Texas Law School, 1966.

#### PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES AND RECOGNITION

- Judicial Advisory Council, Texas Department of Criminal Justice, appointed by Chief Justice Thomas R. Phillips, 1990.
- Chairman, Criminal Justice Section, State Bar of Texas, 1990.
- Chairman, Crime Victims and Witness Committee, State Bar of Texas, 1990.
- Faculty, Texas College for New Judges.
- Silver Good Citizenship Award, Sons of the American Revolution, 1989.
- National Organization for Victim Assistance.
- Advisory/Editorial Committee, *Texas' War on Drugs: Judge's Benchbook: A Resource for Drug Abuse Prevention*, published by Governor's Criminal Justice Division and the Texas Commission on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse, 1988.
- Outstanding Jurist of the Year, Criminal Justice Section, State Bar of Texas, 1987.
- State Judicial Budget Board, appointed by Chief Justice Jack Pope, 1985-1987.
- Chairman, Legislative Committee, Judicial Section, State Bar of Texas, 1984-1985.
- Special Interim Committee on the Criminal Justice System of Texas, appointed by Lieutenant Governor Bill Hobby, 1981.
- President, Brazos County Bar Association, 1975.



Tom and his wife, Caroline, were married in 1965; they have two sons, Scott, age 15, and Don, age 13. The McDonalds are members of St. Andrew's Episcopal Church. The McDonald family has resided in Brazos County for over 70 years. Tom's father (TAMU '33) was a lawyer, legislator and judge. The Reed McDonald Building on the TAMU campus is named in memory of Tom's uncle.

Paid for by Committee to Re-Elect Judge W. T. (Tom) McDonald, Jr. Caroline McDonald, Treasurer, Box 1085, Bryan, TX 77806



## A DOZEN GOOD REASONS TO RE-ELECT JUDGE W. T. (TOM) McDONALD, JR.

	McDonald	Opponent
1. Cases resolved as District Judge (Civil, Criminal and Family Law)	Over 9,000	None
2. Jury trials as District Judge (Civil, Criminal and Family Law)	Over 400 (252) <sup>1</sup>	None
3. Death penalty cases tried	7	None
4. Disposition rate of District Court cases	97% (46%) <sup>2</sup>	None
5. District Court jury trial conviction rate	93% <sup>3</sup>	None
6. Defendants sentenced to penitentiary	Over 800	None
7. Years defendants sentenced to the penitentiary	Over 10,500	None
8. Of the over 9,000 cases resolved, only 102 appealed	a. Affirmed 83 b. Reversed 19	None
9. Publications	14	Not Known
10. Judicial experience	Over 12 years	Over 4 years
11. Prosecutorial experience	Over 11 years	Less than 2 years
12. Licensed to practice law	25 years	8 years

### EXPERIENCE IS THE DIFFERENCE.

<sup>1</sup>Statewide average for same time period. Source: Texas Judicial Council, Austin.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Highest of Brazos County District Courts for 1988 and 89. Source: Figures compiled by the Brazos County District Attorney's Office, 1990.