

Waitin' on the railroad



Stacy Gills and Henrietta Wolf take a break as they wait for an afternoon train to pass on Wellborn Road so they can ride home.

Although temperatures dropped to record-tying lows Monday around Texas, the low for Bryan/College Station was 44 degrees.

Photo by Mike C. Mulvey

Hussein agrees to free captives

Associated Press

Saddam Hussein has agreed to release some sick and elderly American captives, the leader of the Iraqi-American Foundation said today. The Iraqi leader also asked his parliament to consider letting all French hostages leave.

American and Australian sailors, meanwhile, halted and boarded an Iraqi freighter in the Gulf of Oman that over the weekend had ignored warning shots and defied orders to return to Iraq, a U.S. military spokesman said.

The 5,200-ton Iraqi vessel was stopped as it sailed toward the Arabian Sea. It had been shadowed during the night by U.S. and Italian warships, Cmdr. J.D. Van Sickle, a Navy spokesman, said.

The operation went smoothly with "no shots fired, no resistance met," Van Sickle said.

The Pentagon later said the Iraqi vessel was allowed to proceed after it was found to be empty. The Pentagon said in a statement that the ship had probably dumped overboard the cargo of steel pipes and plywood that it was carrying to Yemen in violation of the U.N. embargo.

The head of the Iraqi-American Foundation, Salim Mansour, leads a delegation that met with Saddam on Sunday night. He said today that he received a commitment from the Iraqi leader to release Americans.

"We don't want to talk about figures or names at the moment, but

I'm happy to announce that some good news will come up," Mansour said.

It was presumed Mansour spoke about Americans held in Iraq and Kuwait, which Saddam annexed after his Aug. 2 invasion of the emirate. Saddam considers Kuwait Iraq's 19th province.

About 700 Americans are being held in Kuwait, and more than 300 in Iraq, many at strategic sites to

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deter a possible attack by the multinational forces arrayed against Iraq in the Persian Gulf.

Western diplomatic sources said on condition of anonymity they had no independent confirmation of Mansour's claims, but added: "We understand that what Mansour is saying could turn out to be true." They said they understood that the Americans released would be "sick or elderly."

Food services ads target faculty, staff

By JULIE HEDDERMAN
Of The Battalion Staff

Texas A&M's Food Services hopes a recent advertising campaign will encourage faculty and staff members to take advantage of Aggie Bucks.

Aggie Bucks, formerly known as Point Plan, have been available to faculty and staff for about three years, Lloyd Smith, director of Food Services, says.

His department, however, has not advertised the service before to faculty and staff.

Smith says Food Services also has used Aggie Bucks for conferences and groups visiting A&M.

"We just thought we would let the rest of the folks know about it," he says.

Smith says Aggie Bucks first were made available to faculty and staff because many expressed interest in using the service.

Two accounts are available to faculty and staff — Aggie Buck 100s

and Aggie Express — which are similar to student accounts.

The Aggie Buck 100s plan must be opened with \$100 and can be increased in \$50 increments. The Aggie Express account is set up with \$275 and also can be increased in \$50 increments.

Aggie Bucks cards issued to faculty and staff are similar to student identification cards, Smith says.

The bucks are accepted at Sbis, the Commons and MSC dining centers as well as at food court cafeterias, snack bars and markets on campus.

The A&M Bookstore and Billy Mac's restaurant and lounge at the McKenzie Terminal of Easterwood Airport also accept Aggie Bucks.

Even alcoholic drinks can be purchased at Billy Mac's with Aggie Bucks, Smith says, though identification is required.

Aggie Bucks can be purchased at the MSC dining center, the Common Market in the Commons complex or at the Food Services office in the basement of Sbis Dining Hall.

'An all-out effort'

Sorority assembles care packages for soldiers stationed in Gulf

By BRIDGET HARROW
Of The Battalion Staff

Alpha Phi sorority is assembling care packages to send to U.S. soldiers stationed in Saudi Arabia.

Alpha Phi also has been giving yellow ribbons to other sororities to put on their cars and houses to show support for the soldiers.

"The yellow ribbons symbolize that we are continuously thinking about the American soldiers and their safety while they are in Saudi Arabia," says Brandi Smith, Alpha Phi member coordinating the care package program.

"We are trying to make an all-out effort, not just within our sorority, but within the entire Greek system and other organizations that may be interested," she says.

Smith says other sororities have been receptive to the program and the ribbon-displaying ideas.

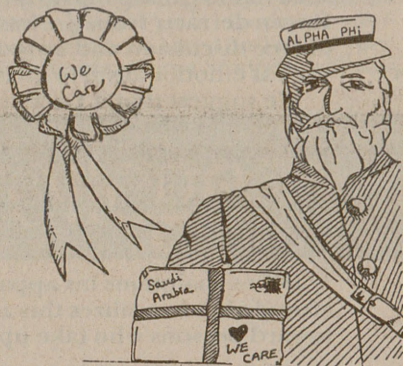
One sorority, Pi Beta Phi, has put up yellow ribbons on its sorority house, she says.

Smith says she had the idea because several community organizations in her hometown Mexia also sent care packages to soldiers.

"In my hometown we had a lot of boys and girls that went over to Saudi Arabia," she says. "And you do not realize the impact of it all until some of your friends and family leave. It really touches home."

The care packages will be sent to different outfits stationed in Saudi Arabia. The packages will not be sent at one certain time, but at different times through Christmas, Smith says.

"Everyone was excited about making pen pals and sending care packages when the soldiers first arrived in Saudi Arabia, but we want to make sure the soldiers know they are not forgotten," Smith says. "That is why we want



Graphic by Eric Wong

to send care packages periodically."

The care packages will include basic items like razors, soap, shampoo, stationery and combs. Smith also says many people forget to include items like hair clips and makeup for female soldiers.

Smith says a special recipe must be used for cookies to stay fresh when shipped to the sol-

diers. She says they also will make a banner and try to get many signatures on it to show support to the soldiers and their efforts.

Alpha Phi encourages everyone to show support for U.S. soldiers in Saudi Arabia whether it is giving time or money to the care package program or just displaying yellow ribbons on cars, Smith says.

If yellow ribbons cannot be found, Smith says they encourage using red, white and blue ribbons.

"We want it to be a good gesture overall and try to get as many people as possible involved," she says. "We want the soldiers to know we're behind them, and we want to see their safe return home."

Those interested in sending care packages to soldiers in Saudi Arabia can contact Smith at the Alpha Phi sorority house at 693-8775.

Rainforest week raises awareness of rare environment's destruction

By SEAN FRERKING
Of The Battalion Staff

Students and environmental groups around the world are trying to raise funds and awareness this week to save one of the Earth's richest and rarest environments.

International Rainforest Week, which has been an annual event for more than 15 years, focuses on what some environmentalists consider the world's biggest man-made problem — the clearing of tropical rainforests.

According to the Encyclopedia Britannica, more than

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3,000 animal and plant life species typically fill these natural climates and are home to more than 5 million people.

Major rainforests are found in the Philippines, Central America, Brazil and Central Africa.

Many rainforests, however, are destroyed by governments and companies looking for cheap natural resources.

J.D. Haber, co-chairman for the Texas Environmental Action Coalition's forest committee, says he is opposed to rampant logging and land clearings that destroy rainforests.

"Once you destroy these rainforests, you can never replace them," Haber says. "People need to start thinking about what is going on."

He says Texas A&M students and organizations have joined other groups to help prevent the destruction of some of the Earth's most precious resources and to promote their natural beauty.

"Rainforests are an area of incredible biodiversity," Haber says. "If you destroy them, you kill thousands of animals, not to mention the tremendous variety of plant life."

International Rainforest Week events began Saturday with a "Run for the Rainforests."

Haber says about 80 people showed up at 9 a.m. to

run five kilometers (3.1 miles) to promote preservation of the dwindling tropical environments.

Haber says contestants received a free T-shirt for contributions to help save rainforests.

Another member of TEAC also says International Rainforest Week plays an important part in saving rainforests.

Chris Carter, TEAC's media representative, says other events are planned this week to inform the public, and especially A&M students, about deforestation.

"These events hopefully will add to the understanding people have for this horrible problem," Carter says. "We are having International Rainforest Week here to inform people about which companies and nations are destroying one of our most important natural resources."

Carter also says TEAC will sponsor several events throughout the week to educate and entertain students.

Tracey Brong, TEAC vice chairwoman for public relations, says the events also will emphasize the beauty of rainforests.

"We are trying to show A&M students how wonderful the rainforests really are," Brong says. "Once people realize what they are losing, they won't want anyone to destroy the rainforests."

Haber says A&M's TEAC chapter requests all the money made at A&M during International Rainforest Week go toward a special goal.

"We're requesting that the money we make this week go to environmentalist groups in Hawaii," Haber says. "We think we should try to save the rainforest on the big island of Hawaii along with the other rainforests."

Haber says a proposed geothermal plant would destroy the Wao Kele O Puna rainforest and kill thousands of rare plant and animal species.

He says besides the loss of life, many scientific and medical discoveries could be lost because of rainforest destruction.

"You never know, a cure for AIDS could be found," he continues. "Cures for malaria and forms of birth control have been found in some rainforests."

"It would be disastrous to continue the deforestation of these areas."

Clean-air bill meets approval

WASHINGTON (AP) — House and Senate negotiators approved a clean-air bill Monday that is expected to eventually cost the economy \$22 billion a year and affect most of American society by toughening pollution controls on automobiles, factories and power plants.

The bargainers worked out the final details before dawn, ending more than a year of bargaining between the two chambers. Late Monday afternoon, the conference committee gave the measure formal endorsement, with only Rep. William Dannemeyer, R-Calif., opposing it.

Under the legislation, there would be drastic reductions in emissions of acid rain pollutants and toxic industrial chemicals. In addition, more than 100 cities would be given five to 15 years to bring their air quality up to federal standards, mainly by controlling pollutants that cause smog.

Final approval from both chambers is expected by week's end.

Bush, meanwhile, noted that tougher clean-air legislation "has been 13 years in coming" and said that "no American should have to wait another day for clean air."

But White House press secretary Marlin Fitzwater said the administration still opposes a program to retrain displaced workers and was continuing to make its opposition known on Capitol Hill.

Yet, he added that the administration "has not signaled a veto."

FACES eases transition Service assigns mentors to minority freshmen

By ELIZABETH TISCH
Of The Battalion Staff

The Office of Student Development and the Multicultural Services Center joined forces to design a new student service called Freshman Adjusting to College Experiences (FACES) targeted toward minority freshmen.

"We want to provide mentors to help you adjust to your freshman year and to stay here past your freshman year," Pam Osby, chairwoman for FACES, said to a group of freshmen at the first meeting Monday night.

Co-chairman for FACES recruitment Jose Martinez said that he wishes he had this service opportunity when he was a freshman minority student.

"I came from San Antonio, and I didn't feel like a minority," he said. "But when I came here to Texas A&M, it was a culture shock. It would have been nice to talk to somebody about that."

Because of the newness of this program, the committee decided to target minorities living only on campus. Osby said, however, that if FACES is a success, the service will be offered to all minority freshmen.

According to the official enrollment figures, the 1990 fall semester holds the record for the highest minority enrollment. Out of the 41,171 registered students at Texas A&M,

the two largest minority groups consist of 1,202 African-American students and 3,078 Hispanic students. There are 394 minorities living on campus this fall.

Cartell Cross, a junior FACES mentor, said freshmen interested in the program do not have to be a minority.

"All freshmen should have a mentor that they can look up to so they can stay in the University," he said. "We put out so much money here to bring in students; we need a program to keep them here and help them out socially and academically."

Dr. John Koldus, vice president for student services, was the guest speaker. He urged the freshmen to take advantage of the services because if they did not, they would be doing themselves a misdeed.

"All of the people in this program are going to be here to help all of you, and you need to call upon them," he said. "They are here to help you to be successful and get a degree from Texas A&M and hopefully to have a great future."

The FACES committee is still asking for applications for interested mentors. The applications are due Tuesday at 5 p.m. The applications can be obtained in the Office of Student Development in the A-2 Lounge. Freshmen interested in the program must also complete an application to be turned in Tuesday at 5 p.m.