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STATE & LOCAL

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The Battalion

Wednesday, June 16, 1994

'Aggie Brigade' prepares Bryan prison site Army Reserve engineers use A&M housing, services while clearing terrain

By JAMES BERNSEN

The Battalion

The "Aggie Brigade" is preparing a site in Bryan for a new 1000-bed drug rehabilitation prison, and is utilizing Texas A&M services, including on-campus housing and meals.

Reservists in the 420th Engineer Brigade, U.S. Army Reserve, started work on the prison site May 17, clearing land and leveling the terrain.

The work was scheduled to be completed by June 25, but has been plagued by bad weather.

Chief Warrant Officer Robert Thurman said the reservists have been working in two-week rotations of 30 to 40 workers.

During the project, the reservists have been staying on the A&M campus in Corps of Cadets residence halls 2 and 8, and eating at the Commons Dining hall.

"The treatment has been excellent and outstanding for us," Thurman said.

In addition, A&M shuttle buses transport the reservists to and from the job site.

Ed Ilschner, public works director for the City of Bryan, said the use of A&M services is being paid for by the city and was used as an incentive to bring the prison to Bryan, which would profit economically.

"There will be additional jobs at the prison, as well as expert type services to staff it," he said. "Every dollar the prison spends in Bryan-College Station should turn over seven times in the local economy."

Maj. Will Hagood, task force commander, said the arrangement is mutually beneficial to the city and the 420th Brigade, which is based in Bryan.

"We're getting our training operating the heavy equipment as well as working on an important project," he said.

Hagood said to his knowledge this is the first time U.S. Army reservists have helped the Texas Department of Corrections build a prison.

Army reserve units are required to spend two weeks on active duty training in a year, he said.

The reservists are mostly from the 420th Engineer Group from Dallas, but additional support units are from across the state. The 420th is the parent unit of all the support units.

Ilschner said the land is owned by the City of Bryan and will be given, upon completion of the reservists work, to the Texas Department of Corrections, who will begin construction on the prison in about 12 to 15 months.

Police Beat

The following incidents were reported to University Police Department between June 3-11.

Aggravated Assault

Between McInnis and Walton Hall- The victim reported she was grabbed by an unknown male who put one hand over her mouth and the other around her arms and chest. He forced her to the ground and put some glass in her right hand and forced her to cut herself on the inner side of her left arm. He also forced her to pound her right hand on the concrete. He then instructed the victim to leave a note written in blood on the door of a close friend.

South Bizzell St. - The victim encountered a cyclist who tried to initiate a conversation with her. When she did not respond, the subject threw her to the ground and struck her in the right eye. A second subject pulled the attacker off of the victim.

Driving While Intoxicated

Ireland St.- A motorist driving the wrong way on a one way street was found to be intoxicated. The subject was arrested and incarcerated.

Criminal Mischief

Systems Loop- Occupants in the bed of a truck threw raw dough and egg at an unattended vehicle.

Dormitory 10- A security officer noticed the glass was broken from a third floor men's room.

Burglary of Coin-Operated Machine

Schuhmacher Hall Breezeway- A security officer noted someone had broken the covering over the coin intake mechanism on a Coca-Cola Company drink dispenser.

Burglary of Motor Vehicle

Parking Area 26- The victim reported someone entered his 1979 Pontiac Grand Prix and removed a Zenith central processing unit.

Harassment

University Owned Apartments- Victim reported she has been receiving annoying phone calls since Dec. 25.

Misdemeanor Theft

North Side of Spence Hall- A black Trek 830 bicycle frame was stolen. Academic Building- The victim reported \$303 in cash was removed from her desk.

Assault by Threat

East Parking Lot Landscape Maintenance- Victim stated that a female friend of her ex-husband had threatened to kill her and her children.

Fugitive pleads guilty to charge after 17 years

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

SAN ANTONIO — A Communist Party member who was a fugitive for 17 years and spent part of that time in Mexico has pleaded guilty to a federal court to a marijuana conspiracy that occurred two decades ago.

Richard Arturo Saenz, 45, entered the plea Monday before U.S. District Judge Ed Prado, who is sentencing for Aug. 17. Saenz was arrested Feb. 2 in Katy by deputy U.S. marshals from San Antonio and Houston.

Saenz was among 11 defendants named in an indictment returned by a San Antonio federal grand jury accusing them of importing 20 tons of marijuana into Texas from Mexico between March 1972 and March 1974.

Saenz pleaded guilty to conspiracy to possess marijuana with the intent to distribute. As part of a plea agreement, Saenz said he will accept a maximum five-year sentence and \$5,000 fine.

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