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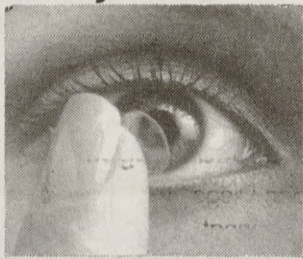
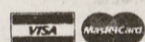
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The Battalion

Thursday, July 8, 1993

Special needs center to be built in B-CS

By CARRIE MIURA

The Battalion

The Bryan Community Development Committee passed a proposal on Tuesday that will bring Bryan-College Station residents one step closer to having a special needs center that would provide "transitional housing" to people with special needs.

The Resolution Trust Corporation made a property donation in September 1991 to the city of Bryan, and the Brazos Valley Community Action Agency (BVCAA) made a proposal for the property to be used to help establish a special needs center.

After reviewing the proposal, the Bryan Community Development Committee decided by a consensus vote to give the property to the BVCAA.

The BVCAA is in the process of beginning a special needs center that will be open to "long term chronically ill or terminally ill" persons who are "displaced from their current living situation," said Eric Todd, associate ad-

ministrator for the BVCAA.

People with special needs may also include, the homeless, battered spouses, abused children, the handicapped and the elderly.

Joe Brown, public information officer for the city of Bryan, said AIDS patients will also be included and not discriminated against.

"The goal is to try and provide people with a home setting that is peaceful and that restores the dignity that's taken away from them," he said.

Todd said only two or three people at a time will be residing on the property.

A special committee will be formed of nurses, doctors and social workers who will determine the eligibility of each person who qualifies for the special needs program under a first-come first-serve and an economic eligibility basis, he said.

The center will be staffed with people trained to tailor care for individual needs.

Todd said the house will provide these people with a family oriented setting in the combination of hospice care and primary home care.

"It's a small step to providing for the community," he said.

The donated property for the center is located in the north central Bryan neighborhood, but the specific address of this property will not be disclosed to the public because of the confidentiality of the BVCAA clients.

Community participation at the public hearing to announce the committee's decision on the special needs program was low.

"We had felt that if it was a concern to the public that they would have shown up to the public hearing," said JoAnn Powell, committee development project coordinator for the city of Bryan.

The proposal for the special needs center will be reviewed by the Bryan City Council and is scheduled to be on the next council agenda on Tuesday, July 27. If passed, the property will be transferred to the BVCAA by mid-August.

The BVCAA has been serving the Bryan community for over 21 years and operates special agencies including the Family Planning Program and the WIC program.

Disadvantaged businesses train to compete

By GENEEN PIPHER

The Battalion

The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) will be in the Bryan-College Station area on July 13 to recruit businesses owned by women and minorities for its Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program.

Division Head of the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program at the Texas Engineering Extension Service (TEEX), Philip Parker, said the program is designed to recruit and train small businesses to be more competitive.

"We train these disadvantaged businesses in a way that will make them better qualified to compete for TxDOT work," Parker said. "We teach them anything ranging from bookkeeping to estimating to project scheduling and accounting."

He said the need for such a program was defined in the U.S. Congress with the passage of the Service Transportation Assistant

Transportation department supplies minority business enterprise system

Act of 1982.

"They noted the need, in that law, to recruit and train minority (owned) businesses and women (owned) businesses," he said. "The need was reiterated in the Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991."

Parker said a disadvantaged business has many different characteristics, but the 1982 legislation defined them as any business owned 51 percent or more by a minority or woman.

"By virtue of the fact that they are a minority or a woman, that puts them at a disadvantage," he said. "Women and minorities have been historically discriminated against and under utilized."

The Owner of Los Nortenos Cafe, Patsy C. Espinoza said she believes it is harder for a minority or a woman to start up a new business and hard work is the

only way to achieve success.

"There may be some people that say you're too dumb to start a business," Espinoza said. "Some people may think they know better than you do. If I listened to them I wouldn't have been in business for 12 years. I just say to them, 'you don't have a business, so hush!'"

Dawn Jefferson, an academic business administrator in the Texas A&M University department of business said women and minorities in businesses often have to work harder to achieve the same success as other businesses.

"People have to work a little harder," Jefferson said. "Persevere and show that it can be done. I think women have shown they can make it and are showing it right now, with achievements like Ann Richards, the first woman

governor in the state of Texas."

Racial and gender prejudice are the biggest obstacles facing minorities and women Parker said.

"Before people thought there was man's work and then there was woman's work," he said. "But there is no such thing as men's and women's work. There is no difference."

Parker said he sees a day when there will be no need for a program such as the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program.

"I absolutely believe the situation is improving," he said. "I see a time when women and minorities won't be discriminated against. I see this happening in the very near future."

"As more and more minorities and women start becoming successful, those people will see that it (race and gender) is no reason to exclude them from business endeavors," Parker said.

"Hopefully everybody will see that there was no reason to exclude them in the first place."

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