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New computer facilities remedy congestion

By Melissa Jacobs
The Battalion

Texas A&M University is doing everything it can to stay ahead in the computer age, University officials said.

James G. Baker, Computing and Information Services project director of customer help and training, said A&M, which has about 400 computers now available to students, has a rich computing environment.

"Computing is going to be the predominant feature of tomorrow's workplace," he said. "We have gone from terminals to microcomputers to networks, which allow students to print anywhere on campus."

In addition to the on-going process of modernizing and updating computer labs, the CIS has plans for new facilities.

The West Campus Library Facility, which opens in September, will mainly serve the College of Agriculture and the College of Business.

"Half of the equipment will be there in September and the other half in December, since the College of Business has delayed its move to west campus until December," Baker said. "Therefore, full utilization of the facility will not be until December."

There will be about 150 seats in the new facility. The facility will have a retractable wall behind which will be a training room. When no training classes are being conducted, the area will be open for all users. It also will have a full time help desk.

"We will largely duplicate the exotic graphics

lab that is now in the Teague Building," he said.

There will also be 10 machines with multi-media facilities.

Another new facility will be located near the Evans Library and will have a bridge connecting to the library.

"In two to three years this will be a premier microcomputer lab on campus," Baker said.

Architects are now working on the project and the money is there, Baker said.

"We also have the money to update the computers in the new facility as needed, whereas we now only replace about one-third of our computers a year, and have to keep using the outdated ones," he said.

The Teague Building, which has a lab facility with a graphics lab and help desk, will purchase new machinery in the summer.

A&M currently uses Internet, a global computer network.

"We can do a lot of powerful things with Internet," he said. "It is our role to support it. It is the information highway."

A&M also uses gopher, a networking system created at the University of Minnesota and named after the school's mascot.

"It can access libraries around the world, has electronic books, and connects to the Library of Congress," he said. "You can access the Vatican and even see all the paintings that hang there."

Users can hook into other university's gophers, allowing the user to find out what is going on there and what athletic events are coming up.

The different departments on campus here also have gophers.

"They list faculty members, exam schedules, and other things," Baker said. "We encourage people to put things up and to keep the calendars updated."

Despite all the new facilities, there is no plan to increase the student computer use fee.

Nancy Weise, computer operator at the academic computing center, said the computer center stays busy.

"It's busiest when assignments are due, but it is always busy," she said.

The academic computing center has over 140 computers.

"There really are not enough computers to accommodate students," she said. "When all the terminals are full, we still have students standing around waiting."

Robert Abt, a salesman for Microage, a local computer dealer, said they get a lot of business from A&M students.

"I think the University computer labs have a positive effect on our business," he said. "Students do stuff on campus and there aren't always enough computers. Rather than wait around, they get personal computers and modems so they can hook up to us."

Abt said he is seeing a difference in computer sales recently.

"I definitely think there has been an increase in the number of students buying personal computers in the last few years," he said.

Parking

Continued from Page 1

to utilize New Street.

From June 9 through June 24, Parking Areas 2 and 3 will be closed.

On June 21, Asbury will reopen and Houston will close up to Hogg Street, with plans to reopen in early July.

"Getting people adjusted to the change is the biggest problem," Holbrook said. "We've posted signs but people don't take notice. They think since they've always parked there they can continue to do so."

He said he received a call from a student's mother who was upset about the changes.

"She wanted to know why we started the construction now, but PTTS didn't start the construction," Holbrook said. "We're just trying to accommodate the situation and find spaces for everyone."

Holbrook said the changes shouldn't cause problems when students move out at the end of the semester.

"If everything works as planned it shouldn't be a problem," he said. "At that time there will also be parking in Parking Areas 2 and 3 which are nearby."

Forest

Continued from Page 1

concerning the disease of oak wilt which affects live oaks. The disease is transported through the root system of the tree and by the live beetle. Methods, such as trenching and chemical injection, often solves the problem before it spreads to other trees.

"A lot of research is being done here at A&M and at the University of Texas and also at the National Forest Service concerning this problem," Miles said.

The Texas Forest Service also op-

erates under a statewide mandate to assist firefighters in emergencies of wild range and brush fires.

"We have 90 fire fighting units scattered throughout East Texas," Miles said.

The Department of Emergency Management, which is part of the Department of Public Safety, must issue a declaration before the Forest Service becomes involved in any firefighting efforts.

As well as bringing in equipment and providing their expertise in emergencies, the Texas Forest Service also trains and helps to equip rural fire departments to deal with brush and wild range fires.

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