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## Puppy love at first sight for local students

Children learn about animals first-hand with A&M's agricultural and animal science club.

By Michelle Lyons  
 THE BATTALION

It was an animal lover's dream. Members of the Texas A&M University Saddle and Siroin Club, an agricultural and animal science organization, are currently hosting a community service project with nearby elementary schools.

More than 3,000 children have been visiting and playing with farm animals, ranging from puppies to pigs, at the Lewis Pearce Pavilion since Wednesday. The visits will continue through Friday.

Shane Pennington, Saddles and Siroins member and a junior animal science major, said the project is an excellent opportunity for children to see what the animals actually look like.

"It's more or less to let the kids who don't get to see farm animals experience what they are really like," he said. "They can actually see and touch the animal."

Holly Murphy, member of the club and a senior agricultural economics major, agreed that, for some children, this is a chance to see a farm animal up close and personal.

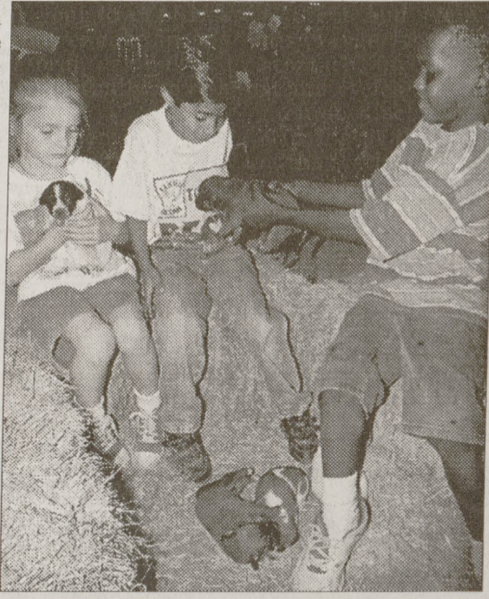
"There are quite a few children here who have never even really seen a farm animal," she said. "This is the first time some of them will see one in person."

Murphy said in addition to visiting with pigs and puppies, children were given the opportunity to visit A&M's horse center and the poultry center.

Mary Brown, a Fannin Elementary School teacher, said the children enjoyed the visit.

"I think this is a wonderful experience for the children because they are able to see first hand the animals that we talk about," she said. "They always enjoy it — they love the animals."

The program will continue today from 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. and Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Lewis Pearce Pavilion.



Stew Milne, THE BATTALION  
 School children pet puppies Wednesday morning at the Lewis Pearce Pavilion.

## A&M scientists work with government on new navigational equipment

The development of sensors and radio transmitters are hoped to reduce the number of vessel groundings in the Houston Ship Channel.

GALVESTON (AP) — Texas A&M and government scientists say a new system of sensors, transmitters and receivers could finally bring marine navigation along the Texas coast into the 20th century.

Researchers from Texas A&M-Galveston and the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration placed the first of several devices in the Houston Ship Channel last month that ultimately should make shipping safer there.

The instrument put into place is called an acoustic Doppler current profiler. Located underwater, the device measures the speed and direction of currents at various depths.

Working in concert with other sensors and radio transmitters, the system dubbed Physical Oceanographic Real-Time System, or FORTS, is designed to give ship captains up-to-the-minute information on Galveston Bay currents and tides.

Officials hope FORTS will reduce accidents in Galveston Bay, where more than 1,200 vessel groundings occurred between 1986 and 1991.

Even the nation's busiest

ports abound with underwater hazards. Channel American waters are still based on data gathered in 1940, when most depth measurements were made by men who lowered weighted knotted ropes overboard as they hit bottom.

According to U.S. Department of Commerce published, badly outdated sea charts, today's huge cargo and passenger ships vulnerable.

One good example is the 1992 grounding of the liner Queen Elizabeth II ship suffered \$45 million damage when it ran aground off Massachusetts in 1992.

"She found a rock that been there forever but was discovered by charting when they took the soundings," said Jim Baker, a member Port of Houston operations now working as a Texas A&M professor.

Besides helping ships out of harm's way, system backers say the new equipment will also be a better pollution fighters and marine scientists who study the fragile Galveston Bay ecosystem.

"It's an electronic buoy that shoots a beam to the seafloor from the bottom of Galveston Bay," said Capt. Stephen Ford, who directs A&M-Galveston's marine transportation department. "The beam bounces back from the different levels of water and tells the machine how fast the water's moving."

The system, which provides information on the Internet, went on-line Oct. 1.

## HEALTH TIPS

### Early testing for infection can lead to cure

By Stephanie Perez  
 A.P. BEUTEL HEALTH CENTER

Every year, an estimated 3 to 10 million people are infected with Chlamydia. Chlamydia is a bacterial infection which is curable with antibiotics. Unfortunately, this disease can go undetected and lead to some serious complications.

Because Chlamydia is the most common sexually transmitted disease on campus and in the general population, it is important that Texas A&M students are aware of the infection and its signs and symptoms.

Chlamydia is transmitted by direct contact with an infected partner. Any person who is sexually active is at risk for this disease. Therefore, knowing your level of risk is important. If you do not engage in any sexual activity including oral, vaginal and anal intercourse, you have virtually no risk of getting Chlamydia.

In 60 to 80 percent of women and 10 to 20 percent of men who are infected with Chlamydia there are no symptoms.

People unknowingly infected with

Chlamydia are at great risk. Without proper treatment, Chlamydia will continue to spread. In women, Chlamydia can cause pelvic inflammatory disease and sterility. In men, untreated Chlamydia has been attributed to infertility.

Anyone at risk or infected with Chlamydia should keep in mind that they may be at risk for other sexually transmitted diseases. For example, Gonorrhea has a high incident rate in conjunction with Chlamydia.

Women who may be at risk should be tested regularly because of the risk caused by the absence of symptoms.

Visible signs for Chlamydia can be noticed with in one to three weeks after contact with an infectious partner.

Signs and symptoms in women include discharge from the vagina, pain in the stomach, fever or bleeding between menstrual cycles. In men, signs and symptoms include discharge from the penis, slight crusting at the tip of the penis or swelling of the testicles. A painful or burning sensation when urinating can be present in men or women.

If you think you are at risk, the Beutel Health Center conducts Chlamydia screenings. The test consists of a lab test of fluid from the infected area. Chlamydia testing is recommended for women age 24, women who utilize oral contraceptives as their only birth control, and who has had a new sex partner within months and anyone with a history of STD.

Basically, anyone who has been sexually active should be tested. If the Chlamydia test is positive, it is necessary for partners to undergo antibiotic treatment to avoid re-infection. Sex should be avoided until treatment is complete.

It is possible to protect yourself from Chlamydia. The best way to protect yourself is to abstain from sexual activity. However, if you do choose to be sexually active, using a latex condom in addition to spermicide with nonoxonyl-9 is the most effective way to prevent Chlamydia.

For further information about STD prevention, students can contact the Health Education Center, 016 Beutel Health Center, at 845-1341.

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