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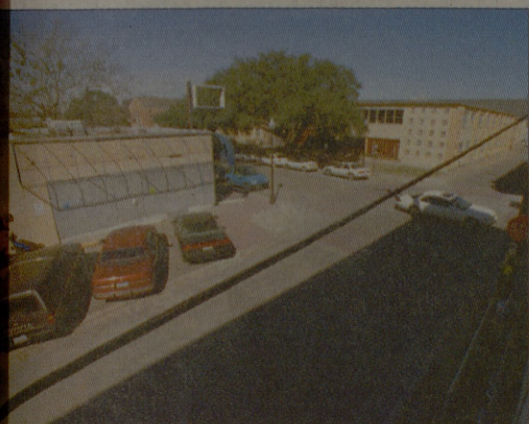
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Thursday, February 6, 1997

Restaurant gets license despite church protests

BY LAURA OLIVEIRA
THE BATTALION



Stew Milne, THE BATTALION

The future site of Texadelphia Sandwiches is located across the street from the Texas A&M Methodist Church.

The question of what constitutes the front door of a church was answered when Texadelphia Sandwiches was issued its beer and wine license despite protests from the Texas A&M Methodist Church and the Baptist Student Ministry.

The city ordinance on which the decision was based says alcohol cannot be served within 300 feet of the front door of a church. The proprietor of the bar must meet certain legal requirements. The license must be in the best interest of the public and the proprietor must be over the age of 21.

Randy Field of the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission

measured the distance between the church and the restaurant. Field said the distance from the front door of the Methodist Church to the front door of Texadelphia Sandwiches was about 200 feet.

The measurements did not meet the 300-foot requirement, but the city waived the ordinance. County Judge Al Jones found all other legal requirements were met and issued the license on Jan. 22, 1997.

The Baptist Student Center and the preschool of the Methodist Church are in closer proximity to the restaurant than the front door of the Methodist Church, but were not regarded as main places of worship.

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CAMAC focuses on Latino issues

BY BENJAMIN CHENG
THE BATTALION

The Memorial Student Center Committee for the Awareness of Mexican-American Culture will 'break the silence' as they host the 10th Annual Southwest Student Conference on Latino Affairs today through Saturday.

The theme for this year's conference is "Breaking the Silence: Stepping Out of the Shadows."

Lorena Raya, vice president of the committee and a senior biology major, said the theme reflects the Latino students' need to speak out and voice their opinions.

"We're challenging our delegates to be educated about their culture and the issues that face them," Raya said.

Sarah Aguirre, the conference speaker coordinator and a senior international studies major, said the conference addresses issues

close to the Latino community but is not exclusive to Spanish speakers.

"We're trying to emphasize that it's not just for Latinos," Aguirre said. "We're an education committee, so we're trying to educate about the Latino community."

The conference will include workshops covering such topics as Mexican-American music and the economic impact of Latinos.

Vincent Lazaro, the General Consul for the Hispanic Association for Colleges and Universities, will discuss the Hopwood decision and its impact on the Latino community.

Raya said the Hopwood decision will hurt minority enrollment because it places more obstacles in front of minorities who want to attend college.

"It's going to discourage a lot of [minority] students from submitting applications," Raya said.

See CAMAC, Page 6

Access Challenge raises awareness

BY MARISSA ALANIS
THE BATTALION

Students experienced simulated hearing loss, visual impairment and speech impediments Wednesday during the fifth annual Access Challenge, an event to raise awareness of individuals with disabilities at Texas A&M University.

Participants wore sunglasses smeared with petroleum jelly to simulate vision impairment or tried to communicate with a mouthful of marshmallows to simulate a speech impediment.

Eight tables educating visitors on disabilities, from learning disorders to hearing loss, were set up in the MSC Bagroom from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The event was sponsored by the Department of Student Life Services for Students with Disabilities and Networks, a student organization committed to raising awareness of students with disabilities.

Dr. Jo Hudson, A&M coordinator of the Department of Student Life Services for Students with Disabilities, said one of the goals of Access Challenge is to reduce anxiety of interaction with disabled people.

"The main thing is to help them understand that people with disabilities are people first," Hudson said.

Attention-deficit learning disorder was added to the list of simulation tables this year because of its rising rate of diagnosis and increased recognition in the medical field.

Hudson said students need to realize attention-deficit disorder is a disability and not something people create.

"There's talk of it now being the disability of the 1990s," Hudson said.

She said students would see how difficult it is to understand lip reading after visiting the hearing impairment table. Hearing impaired students can sometimes miss the context or whole idea of a lecture critical to their class, Hudson said.

Volunteers were stationed at the simulation tables to assist with the activities and answer questions students might have about the nature of disability.

Sara Wilson, a volunteer and a

sophomore elementary education major, said as an elementary school student she and her classmates participated in disability awareness activities, such as being blindfolded or mute.

Wilson said because she and her classmates were educated at a young age about the issue, misconceptions about people with disabilities were avoided.

"From my standpoint, we are not susceptible to act out the stereotypical perceptions [toward disabled people]," Wilson said.

Walsiejean Hughes, former president of Networks and a former A&M student, said it is good people are curious about disabilities and should approach disabled people with questions.

"We want them to ask questions so they won't be afraid of it (the disability)," Hughes said. "With better education comes better understanding."

In 1991, at the age of 29, Hughes was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis. Her condition forced her to withdraw from A&M in February 1996, and she was unable to attend Access Challenge last year.

Hughes said events such as Access Challenge and Disabilities Awareness Week do not make her feel good about having a disability, but is happy to share her experiences and relieved the events help to educate people.

"Although you can never be proud to have a disease, what we are trying to get across is that you should never be ashamed of having one," Hughes said.

Hughes said her mother named her Walsiejean, or "stubborn fighter." She said the name holds true, especially now that she has been diagnosed with multiple sclerosis.

"For me, what is the point of life if I'm going to sit here and do nothing?" Hughes said.

Hughes said she participates in physical activities such as ice skating, even though she knows the result could be staying in bed for two days to recover.

"Disabled does not mean inability," Hughes said. "I feel proud to be able to show people that I can do things."



Tim Moog, THE BATTALION

We Got The Beat | Erin Cross, a junior accounting major, performs a timeout drill at the Lady Aggie basketball game against Oklahoma last night.

UPD works to eliminate misunderstandings

BY GRAHAM HARVEY
THE BATTALION



Dave House, THE BATTALION

Travis Lively, a three-year veteran of the University Police Department, is the department's field training specialist.

Consisting of 116 full-time employees, 44 of whom are sworn, armed officers with the power to arrest, the University Police Department wants Texas A&M students and faculty to know it is a bona fide law enforcement organization.

Bob Wiatt, director of University Police, said UPD is a professional police department.

"[UPD] is basically a pure law enforcement agency ... a professional organization always looking to improve," Wiatt said.

He said campus police officers are unique in that they protect an entirely "different clientele" than standard city officers.

Wiatt's chief concern is convincing the faculty and students of A&M to behave safely.

He said some crimes could be avoided if students would lock down bicycles, lock doors and walk across campus in groups at night.

"[We are forced] to protect people from their own naivete," Wiatt said. "[Some of them] totally disregard common sense."

To protect A&M, Wiatt said, UPD officers will go to such extents as observing the campus from rooftops at night watching for "cruisers" — thieves who comb the campus in vehicles.

To educate the University, UPD created the Crime Prevention Unit in 1985.

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Morales to public universities: use race-neutral policies only

AUSTIN (AP) — Attorney General Dan Morales late Wednesday told Texas colleges and universities to use only race-neutral policies in deciding such things as admissions, financial aid and scholarships.

Morales' opinion comes nearly a year after the U.S. Supreme Court let stand an appeals court decision to throw out the University of Texas Law School's former admissions policy, which was designed to increase minority enrollment.

The 5th U.S. Court of Appeals in New Orleans last year said the policy discriminated against whites, and the U.S. Supreme Court allowed the ruling to stand.

Since then, Texas universities have struggled to deal with the results of the lawsuit. It is known as the Hopwood case, after lead plaintiff Cheryl Hopwood, one of four white students who sued after not getting into the law school.

Morales, last year, issued guidelines saying that under the court ruling, race or ethnicity

should no longer be used as a standard in admissions or financial aid decisions in Texas. But he was reluctant to issue an opinion, which carries the force of law.

Morales had said each university's general counsel could use the guidelines in making decisions on the matter.

But the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board in August asked Morales for a formal legal opinion on state-funded scholarships and grants that provide for consideration of race or ethnicity.

"In essence, this opinion formalizes our legal advice submitted to you on Aug. 21, 1996, and, as such, should be considered legally binding," Morales wrote in a letter to all Texas universities. "I encourage your institution's general counsel to carefully examine this

opinion and ensure that your institution's internal policies are in compliance."

Ken Ashworth, Texas Higher Education Commissioner, said state colleges and universities now are in worse shape than before in their efforts to recruit, retain and graduate minority students.

"I think it puts everybody in the position now that you dare not not conform to the attorney general's advice because if we get into court, he's going to be our lawyer," Ashworth said.

Ashworth said the coordinating board asked for the opinion because it was caught between the legislature, which has previously instructed the agency to operate programs giving preferences to racial and ethnic minorities, and the attorney general, who said the programs were illegal under the Supreme Court's decision.

While the 5th Court of Appeals covers Texas, Louisiana and Mississippi, officials said those states are not under the same race-

neutral constraints as Texas because of a separate court case.

Outside the 5th Circuit, universities are under a previous U.S. Supreme Court ruling allowing race to be considered as a factor.

That has put Texas at a unique disadvantage in attracting minority students, which will last until another affirmative-action case levels the playing field nationwide, officials have said.

"Let us focus our time, energy and creativity on finding alternative ways to promote cultural diversity and equal opportunity in our universities instead of fighting a legal reality," Morales said.

He suggested school officials consider age, socioeconomic history, financial status, hometown, family background and personal talents as ways of maintaining and increasing diversity. "If crafted properly, consideration of these factors will not only comply with Hopwood, but should result in our state institutions matriculating and graduating a cross section of our state's population," Morales said.

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