

THE BATTALION

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Wednesday, March 26, 1997

Company restricts use of trademark

BY BENJAMIN CHENG
THE BATTALION

Selling a T-shirt with "Class of 2000" on it may be hazardous to your legal bill. Class of 2000 Inc., a company in San Diego, Calif., has trademarked the phrase "Class of 2000" as a descriptive mark for licensing and the selling of apparel such as T-shirts, caps and sweatshirts.

"Please don't mess with our registered trademark, or you could end up behind bars beyond the year 2000," one of their advertisements reads.

Rich Soergel, marketing director for Class of 2000 Inc., said his company plans to prevent their trademark from appearing in products at retail stores.

"No one will be in retail stores with a 'Class of 2000' product," Soergel said. "We're going to prevent that."

Soergel companies already violating the trademark will receive cease and desist letters warning them of the infringement.

"Our legal bills are going to be phenomenal," he said.



James Vineyard, THE BATTALION

Soergel said Class of 2000 Inc. does not plan on preventing schools from selling apparel with their trademark on it. Instead, he said his company wants to work with schools in selling products with "Class of 2000" on it.

The U.S. Patent and Trademark Office granted the trademark to Class of 2000 Inc. on Nov. 19, 1996. Class of 2000 Inc. is applying to expand the trademarks to other consumer goods such as backpacks, candy bars and beverages and also has applied for the trademark in Europe and Japan.

See **TRADEMARK**, Page 12

Seminar focuses on diversity

Guest speakers led discussions on gender, family issues and society

BY LAURA OLIVEIRA
THE BATTALION

Through activities and guest speakers, professionals from Texas were invited to break down barriers to communication between culturally diverse groups at the Cross-Cultural Communication seminar Tuesday.

The seminar, hosted by Texas A&M University's Race and Ethnic Studies Institute, included sessions on gender, family issues and on understanding biases and assumptions made in society.

Dr. Woodrow Jones, Jr., dean of Liberal Arts, said the seminar focused on the similarities that groups share.

"Anytime you have an 'us' and a 'them,' you are going to be frustrated because you will not be able to communicate effectively," he said.

Christina Morse, a representative from Triangle AIDS Network in Beaumont, said the conference was effective.

"We are always working with different cultures and we need to be aware of them," she said.

Dr. Sheila Ramsey, an intercultural relations consultant and keynote speaker, led the closing seminar. Three activities involving perception, fundamental assumptions and role expectations were presented.

Ramsey demonstrated how cultures develop assumptions about simple everyday activities by pretending not to know how to put on a coat. The participants were asked to explain the process step by step.

Ramsey said people of other cultures may be completely clueless to issues other cultures take for granted.

She said cultures should be seen as a whole, but individuals within the culture also should be recognized.

"One of those ways is to drop the stereotype, invite them into your home, and get to know the person,"



Robert McKay, THE BATTALION

Myra Winters and Sambra Davis take notes at a cultural workshop hosted by Dr. Sheila Ramsey in Rudder tower Tuesday.

she said.

The second activity involved illustrating a pattern that participants tried to identify.

See **SEMINAR**, Page 12

Nye aims for high-quality education

BY REBECCA TORRELLAS
THE BATTALION

Erle A. Nye chairs the executive board of Texas Utility Electric, serves as president

▶ PART THREE IN A FOUR-PART SERIES.

of three major Texas utility companies and works on his Model A Ford in his free time.

He also will be joining the Texas A&M University System Board of Regents today.

Born in 1940 in Fort Worth, Nye graduated from A&M in 1959 with a bachelor of science in electrical engineering and received a doctor of jurisprudence from Southern Methodist University.

"I am pursuing excellence, accessibility of the System, to continue to provide high-quality education, and to celebrate the quality of education and the staff," Nye said.

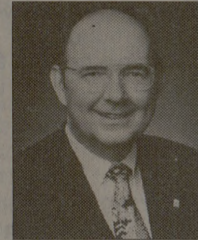
Nye said his connection to A&M is

emotional as well as intellectual. His father graduated from A&M in 1939, his father-in-law graduated in 1932, as a member of the cavalry, and two of his five children are former students.

Jim Ashlock, executive director of University Relations, said Nye, as president of Texas Utilities Company and Texas Utility Fuel Company, is one of the most prominent figures in the state.

"He is distinct by achievement and dedicated to students and the System," Ashlock said.

Chancellor Barry Thompson said Nye is an excellent addition to the Board of Regents because he pursues problems and solves them in an effective way.



Nye

"He is very analytical and intense when it comes to solving a problem," Thompson said. "He has a good understanding of how the world is changing."

Janice Wallace, Nye's senior executive secretary, said although he is serious about his work, working with him is enjoyable because of his wonderful sense of humor.

Nye also serves as president of Texas Utility Mining Company, chairs the College Of Engineering External Advisory and Development Council and is a member of the Development Advisory Committee of the Texas A&M Development Foundation.

His concern for students also extends to his hometown of Dallas.

Nye serves as chair of the Superintendent's Advisory Committee of Dallas Public Schools and is on the boards of The Dallas Foundation and the Boys' and Girls' Clubs of America.

Cable company works to cut down on theft with marketing campaign

BY KATHLEEN STRICKLAND
THE BATTALION

Beginning April 4, TCA Cable TV will crack down on cable theft by leaving hangtags on the doors of Bryan and College Station residents who are stealing cable.

Jacqui Rapacki, marketing coordinator for TCA Cable, said the main purpose of the campaign is to inform residents that cable theft is a misdemeanor.

"We have always had an ongoing auditing campaign," Rapacki said. "However, what we want to do is inform people that cable theft is against the law and give people the chance to become paying customers."

"We are always trying to gain customers. We are doing this to help in those efforts."

Rapacki said several methods exist to detect cable theft, but declined to comment on them.

Tom Way, assistant general manager of TCA Cable, said in a press release that ca-

ble thieves "have 10 days to become paying customers or risk being prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law."

Texas Penal Code states that cable theft is a Class B misdemeanor and illegally installing cable for someone else for money is a Class A misdemeanor.

Phillip Prasifka, a detective with the College Station Police Department, said cable theft is not a crime that is usually reported, but it is a frequent occurrence.

"For the Class B misdemeanor they can face up to 180 days in jail and/or a \$2,000 fine," Prasifka said. "For the Class A misdemeanor, they face up to a year in jail and/or a \$4,000 fine."

Rapacki said TCA Cable will not pursue prosecution immediately.

"We would like to give them a chance to hook up to cable services," Rapacki said.

"We will leave a note or tag on their door saying that we disconnected their service and explaining some of our cable deals."

"If it is hooked back up again, we will attempt to find the person at home and

give them another chance to hook up.

We also will request that they sign a paper stating that TCA Cable gave them notice that cable theft is a crime."

Way said, in the press release, that cable theft affects everyone.

"The cable company sees losses through decreased revenue," he said. "The cities see losses through the reduction of franchise fees (tax dollars)."

"Theft also undermines the value of the service in the mind of the paying customer and increases our costs, resulting in higher prices for honest consumers."

"We have always had an ongoing auditing campaign."

Jacqui Rapacki
Marketing coordinator,
TCA Cable



Pat James, THE BATTALION

Natural Selection

Jessica Allin, a sophomore environmental science major, picks snapdragons from the garden in front of the horticulture greenhouse.

Most homes suffer from faulty fire detectors, study says

BY MARISSA ALANIS
THE BATTALION

Inferior fire detectors are installed in the majority of homes, the study says.

Research conducted by Dr. B. Don Russell, associate dean of engineering and deputy director of

the Texas Engineering Experiment Station, indicates that about 90 percent of smoke detectors in homes sense fire and smoke by using an ionization chamber that may not detect certain types of fires quickly enough.

"Ionization detectors are faster than most other techniques on flaming fires," Russell said. "However, they are not as timely in detecting flameless combustion like smoldering fires caused by something like electrical shorts or cigarettes in upholstery."

Lt. Mike Ruesink, public education officer of the College Station Fire Department, said smoke causes more deaths than fire.

"Photoelectrics will work on a smoldering fire, where you have mass quantities of smoke," Ruesink said.

Two of the more dangerous factors with smoke are density and toxicity. Neither ionization chamber nor photoelectric smoke detectors sense toxic gasses carried by smoke.

Russell said the ionization chamber industry designed the detector to recognize a fire based on a minimum smoke level.

"They're not concerned that a fire could be burning for 30 or 40 minutes," Russell said. "They're only concerned when it's reached a certain level of smoke density."

Russell said ionization chamber detectors work better at preventing death from fire, but may not detect slowly burning or smoldering fires that give off toxic gasses.

Russell said a photoelectric smoke detector works much faster than an ionization chamber detector in wide-range types of smoke and smoldering fires, such as electrical shorts or cigarette burns in upholstery.

"Sometimes, types of fire and smoke in question would've been

detected with photoelectric detectors," Russell said.

Ruesink said he does not advocate one or the other but emphasizes fire safety first.

"We'd rather have people be fire safe than rely on a fire detector."

Lt. Mike Ruesink
Public education officer

one may detect the fire more easily and quickly than the other one," he said.

Ionization chamber smoke detectors house a tiny radiation element generating ions. Smoke invading the chamber attaches to the ions, triggering the alarm.

Photoelectric smoke detectors emit a beam of light, which is scattered in the presence of smoke. Pho-

toelectrics in the detector sense the reflected light and sound the alarm.

Ionization chamber smoke detectors are relatively inexpensive, which accounts for their high use in homes. However, photoelectric detectors cost between \$20 to \$30 and are not as widely used.

Russell said photoelectric detectors are produced in smaller quantities, which results in the higher cost.

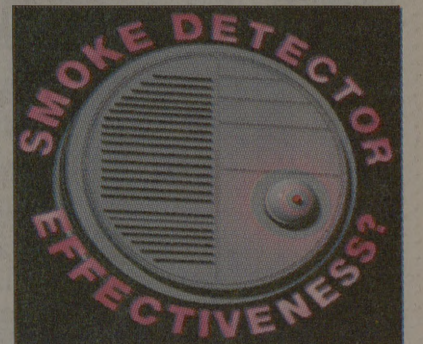
"The question today is 'Are they getting the best detector today for their money?'" he said.

"The answer is 'no.' The right answer would be to stop making inferior detectors."

Ruesink said a newer, dual smoke detector has been engineered which includes both the ionization chamber and photoelectric sensors, but the final product will be double the cost.

"Instead of having one for \$20, you'll have one for \$40," Ruesink said. "You won't have any better protection than you have now."

Russell said local, state and fed-



James Vineyard, THE BATTALION

eral regulations should be redesigned to increase standards for smoke detectors. Detectors are tested by Underwriters Laboratories, a company that conducts performance tests on different types of equipment.

"The Underwriters Laboratories tests smoke detectors to a minimum smoke detector capability," Russell said. "It's an inadequate test. It doesn't cover the broad range of smoke."

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VOTERS' GUIDE:

Candidates present platforms, statements for student body elections.

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