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Traffic fines in construction areas doubled

By JENNIFER WILSON
Staff writer

Motorists traveling through College Station may want to be more cautious when driving on Texas Avenue. A new state law mandates that drivers violating traffic laws in construction zones will have their fines doubled.

Ron Pigott, assistant general counsel of the Department of Public Safety in Austin, said the law, effective since January 1998, is de-

signed to make construction zones safer for traffic and construction workers.

Pigott said the law applies to all public roads, not just major roads or highways. The fines are only doubled if the construction workers are present when the violation occurs.

"In marked construction areas the standard maximum \$200 fine will be increased to \$400 if a violation occurs," Pigott said.

Lieutenant Robert Meyer of the University Police Department

(UPD) said because the law is new the department has received a handbook stating the law, but the law will not be ignored.

"If a person is stopped in a traffic violation we will mark on the ticket if it occurred in a construction zone," Meyer said. "It is up to the judge and the court to handle it from there."

Julie Kuder, court administrator for College Station Municipal Court, said the law is not only to protect the workers' safety, but

drivers' safety as well.

Kuder said when a case reaches the court the fine will always be doubled.

"Violations can include a court cost and a fine, but only the fine is doubled, not the entire cost of the ticket," Kuder said.

Pigott said the Department of Public Safety has placed signs in major construction zones on heavy traffic highways and roads warning drivers of the doubled fine.

Shelley Smith, a junior business major, said she thinks the new law

will not only benefit the safety of construction workers but the safety of drivers also.

"I think it will help people to slow down and be more cautious drivers," she said. "Sometimes it is hard to see the construction workers if you are driving on the highway, and the new signs help drivers be aware that they are about to drive into construction."

Pigott said that all Texas courts will be fully prosecuting violators of the new law.



Miss Greek A&M pageant to raise money for charity

By AMANDA SMITH
Staff writer

The second annual Miss Greek pageant will kick off tonight at 8 in the Auditorium. The pageant, cosponsored by Delta Sigma Phi fraternity, will include 15 contestants from 15 Texas A&M sororities and feature music performed by the Music Factory.

Tori Geva, Miss Greek A&M director and a senior computer science major, said the pageant raises money for two charities, Phoebe's Home and the March of Dimes.

"We are estimating that donations will run into the five-digit numbers," Geva said. "We hope to raise about \$10,000. We have been working on the pageant since the early fall. It is a really fun event."

Hannon Enson, a Miss Greek A&M contestant and a sophomore psychology major, said she had to represent Alpha Chi Omega sorority and to help raise money for charity.

"I have already gotten so much out of becoming involved in Miss Greek A&M," Enson said. "Phoebe's Home is our sorority's philanthropy. I think the pageant is a good cause and it is going to be fun."

Geva said that Delta Sigma Phi contacted all Texas A&M sororities, some of which then

selected contestant representatives for the pageant. Geva said contestant selection



was partly based on the contestants' academic achievements and

their contribution to sororities.

Student judges will include Student Body President Curtis Childers, Corps Commander Danny Feather, Pan-Hellenic President Michael Stewart, MSC President Nellson Burns and Interfraternity Council President Scott Lovejoy.

The winner of the pageant will receive \$800 and the runner-up will receive \$400.

Geva said the pageant has grown since its start last year.

"My goal of setting the pageant is to come back in 20 years with my family and to see my fraternity brothers running the Miss Greek A&M," Geva said.

A post-pageant party, featuring Tone Loc and C+C Music Factory, will start at 10 p.m. at the Texas Hall of Fame. Advance tickets are available for \$10 at Marooned Records and at the Rother's Bookstore on Harvey Road. Tickets are \$15 at the door, which will open at 8 p.m.

"The post-pageant party is not a Greek event," Geva said. "Students should buy tickets in advance and enjoy the pageant and then the party afterwards. (The pageant and party) combine music, comedy and entertainment."

Advance tickets are available for \$6 at the Greek Boutique and the MSC Hallway and will be sold for \$8 at the door.

Paint by number



NICK RODNICKI/SPECIAL TO THE BATTALION

Jhony Langer, a paint specialist with Local Color Studios in Houston, works on reproducing the original 1932 stenciling work in the reading room of the Cushing Library.

Home sweet home

Reed Arena prepares to open to Aggie fans with April Muster

By KELLY HACKWORTH
Staff writer

The April 21 opening of Reed Arena will give the Texas A&M Muster Ceremony a new home, and will lead to more commuter parking on campus.

The opening of Reed Arena, originally scheduled for Fall 1997, was delayed by an incident in which a crane fell on the structure, causing it to collapse and injuring three workers.

Stuart Taylor, Special Event Facilities manager, said the accident helped determine Reed's first event. "Since that happened, we said Muster would be our first event," Taylor said.

After Muster, Reed will host the graduation ceremonies in May.

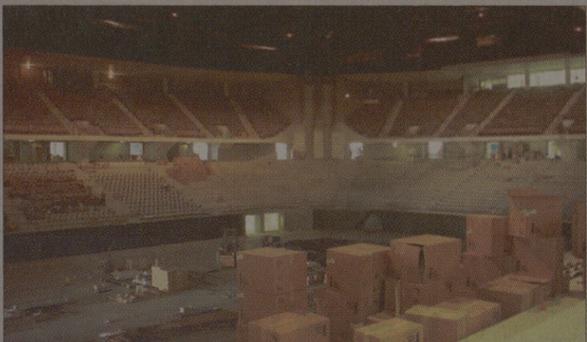
Taylor said the arena's 12,500 capacity should eliminate the limited ticket system that was required for graduation ceremonies in G. Rollie White Coliseum. Each student was limited to 10 tickets at graduation ceremonies in the coliseum.

Steven Hodge, head of Reed Arena activities, said that there will be a ticket system for the May graduation ceremonies, but he does not anticipate having a limit after this semester.

"We're afraid people will want to see the new building and that will take away from the families here for graduation," he said.

Other activities planned at Reed Arena this semester include A&M consolidated and Bryan High School graduation ceremonies.

Hodge said planning is underway for family shows, such as a circus during the summer, and concerts are expected to begin in the fall. Conferences, banquets and trade shows are being planned for the summer.



BRANDON BOLLUM/THE BATTALION

Texas A&M's Reed Arena will open April 21 for the Muster Ceremony. The building will also house graduation ceremonies as well as both men's and women's A&M basketball teams.

The 244,000 square-foot facility is eight stories high and has four levels.

It includes four 1,200 square-foot meeting rooms, a 6,000 square-foot meeting room, a 7,000 square-foot team practice area with a permanent wood floor and numerous dressing, locker, film, press and multipurpose rooms.

The 24,000 square-foot permanent concrete floor will allow Reed Arena to host dirt events, including rodeos. The 98-foot ceiling is designed to support 100,000 pounds of concert equipment.

Reed Arena is surrounded by four commuter parking lots with 1,500 spaces. The east end will also have 100 staff spaces. The new parking lot will leave Olsen Field parking open for spring events, including baseball, softball and track and field.

Tom Williams, director of Parking, Traffic and Transportation Services, said the new lot will be open April 1.

"My hope is those students

riding the bus will stay with the bus because it is a better option," he said. "It's always better to have 50 students in busses than 50 cars on the street."

Williams said more tags may be issued "if necessary," and bus stops may be adjusted to accommodate the demand.

The parking at Reed will be paid-parking during events and will be closed to A&M commuters during events.

"That shouldn't have an impact on students because at night not many students will be using that area to park," Williams said.

The funding for the \$36 million facility comes from two sources — \$34 million is from the revenue financing system of the University Authorized Fee, and \$1.5 million is from parking facility reserves.

The arena was named for Dr. Chester J. Reed, a Houston veterinarian and class of '47. Dr. Reed contributed \$10 million to an A&M endowment program.

Prosecutors reject offer for Lewinsky's testimony

WASHINGTON (AP) — Prosecutors investigating an alleged presidential affair and cover-up rejected a written offer from Monica Lewinsky to testify in exchange for immunity, individuals familiar with the negotiations said Wednesday.

Lewinsky's lawyers submitted the offer Monday night before the former White House intern left town for California, according to sources who spoke on condition of anonymity.

Independent counsel Kenneth Starr's office decided Wednesday to reject the offer, which came after two weeks of on-again, off-again negotiations designed to secure Lewinsky's cooperation.

Starr's office "is not interested in the offer at this time," as it accelerates its grand jury investigation, one source said.

Attorney William Ginsburg, who represents Lewinsky, said Wednesday he could not discuss his dealings with Starr's office. "It would be irresponsible to talk about the negotiations," he said.

Ginsburg would say only he was continuing to work on developing a criminal defense for his client, who has been informed by prosecutors she is a target likely to be indicted.

Starr's spokeswoman, Deborah Gershman, did not immediately return a call seeking comment.

The rejected offer does not necessarily mean that talks between the sides won't continue, but it signals that prosecutors are content to press ahead with their grand jury investigation in the absence of Lewinsky's cooperation.

Previously, Ms. Lewinsky had offered to testify that she had sex with Clinton, backing away from her affidavit in the Paula Jones lawsuit stating that she did not have an affair, according to a source familiar with the investigation.

Clinton has publicly denied having sexual relations with Lewinsky, who began as a White House intern in 1995, then moved to a paid White House job before being transferred to the Pentagon in 1996.

The White House said Wednesday that Clinton has "cleared the air" about the Lewinsky matter, but former senior adviser George Stephanopoulos said nagging questions remain.



Clinton

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