

## I Got the Hook Up

### New computer resources await students at the Library Annex's Student Computing Facility

By GRAY WHITTEN  
Staff Writer

When Aggies start fall classes, they will find new professors, new schedules and a massive new computing facility in the center of campus. The Student Computing Facility (SCF) will not be a part of the Sterling C. Evans Library as some may think, but part of a "library village" that will include the Evans Library, the new Library Annex and the SCF. Evans and the Annex will be connected by the fourth or sky walk, and the new addition will feature primarily electronic resources. Electronic Reserves will occupy the first floor and the Learning Resources Department (LRD) will be on the fourth. The LRD, formerly located on the sixth floor of Evans, will become more focused on the tasks of information retrieval and multimedia work. Dr. Charlene Clark, public relations officer for the Evans Library, said, "with 18 multimedia PCs and seven to nine search PCs, there will be no general purpose machines, and the lab will become more focused. The SCF will change its focus." The new library Annex itself also will feature extended group study areas and extended service hours, Clark said. For general purpose computing like that available in other on-campus labs, the Student Computing Facility is being adjacent to the Library Annex will provide the best and most modern facilities that the University has to offer. Pierce Cantrell, associate provost for information technology said that he is anticipating seeing the completed facility. "I think it will be a wonderful facility," Cantrell said. He said the two-story Student Computing Facility will feature 600 Pentium II PCs with 233 or 266 mhz processors and several high output printers. Cantrell said Ethernet connections will be available for students with network-equipped laptop computers in the study areas of the facility, and there will be modular classrooms around the perimeter of the lab.

"I think it's a very nice feature," Cantrell said, "If the students have an Ethernet connection in their dorm, they may already be equipped to use this."

All of the dorms will be wired by the end of the summer, so that will become more common.

Cantrell said the new lab will contain approximately the same number of computers as all other on-campus labs combined.

Some students feel that the new Student Computing Facility will be a great advantage to the student body.

Stephanie Smith, a CIS student worker at the Blocker lab, said that with the ever-increasing population of the student body, the new lab only will help lessen the traffic that often bogs down other labs on busy days.

"Given the size of the incoming freshman class, I thank God that we will have it," Smith said.

While some students have, in the past, expressed the desire for increased library facilities where the focus was not entirely on newer, faster computers, most students today seem to like the idea of the new facility and the convenience it will bring.

CIS student worker Sarah Schroeder feels that the new lab will be an advantage to many classes.

"It will provide a study area near computers, and no other facility really does that. The West Campus Library is the closest thing," Schroeder said. "It is moving in the direction that classes are moving."

"The new facility will provide a totally new environment," Schroeder said. "It will allow for more group projects to be done with access to computers."

Schroeder said she will miss seeing the same group of users on a regular basis if the Student Computing Facility has a large impact on the clientele of the Blocker lab.

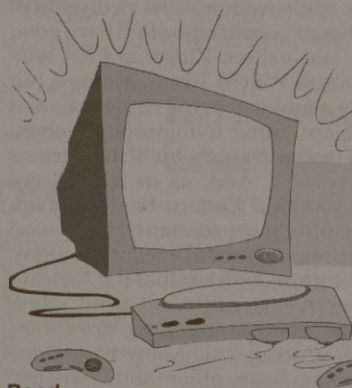
Other students simply like the new addition to campus. "I like the guard tower thing," chemical engineering senior Stephen Keen said.

Computing facilities are one of the most sought-after resources among new students at A&M today, and the new lab and library facilities only can help to make a better impression on the classes of the future as they visit and attend the University for the first time.



PHOTO BY JAKE SCHRIKLING / THE BATTALION

Blocker computer lab patrons Cami Young, a junior community health major, and Angie Georgelas, a senior landscape design major, plan their weekend travel arrangements with the help of the Internet on Monday.



## PIXEL PICKS

by Gray Whitten

### Blasto

Sony Playstation

With the exception of *Small Soldiers*, which will appear in theaters next month, this third-person, comedic action game may be the last representation of the late Phil Hartman. Hartman does not disappoint, delivering the voice of Captain Blasto as only he can.

While the graphics are unique and fun to watch, the gameplay itself is nothing new.

There are some funny jokes scattered throughout, and the opening scenes of aliens planning domination are worth watching a couple of times, but players hoping for an heir to the *Tomb Raider* throne in this genre should look elsewhere. (B-)

### Need For Speed III: Hot Pursuit

Sony Playstation

*Gran Turismo* is — for the time being — the greatest racing game for the Sony Playstation.

*Need For Speed III* is not *Gran Turismo*, but it is a fun racing game with several unique game variations.

The "hot pursuit" mode, when played on the Redrock Ridge track, is the equivalent of *Cannonball Run 2: The Home Game*.

Tracks have nice scenery and offer chances for surprises like taking a side road and jumping over the competition from a cliff for Burt Reynolds wannabes.

Two-player mode sacrifices graphics quality. Check it out if you want less-than-realistic fun. (B)

### Road Rash 3-D

Sony Playstation

With greatly increased freedom of movement and great looking graphics, this sequel is everything one would expect from this family of motorcycle racing/fighting game hybrids.

While dodging trees and signposts and fending off opponents with a bat or boot may not be the safest practice, it is great fun, especially when it doesn't hurt to smack a speeding Mustang and fly over the handlebars at 90 mph. (A)

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