

Hemp activists demonstrate at Olsen Field

By COURTNEY STELZEL
The Battalion

Hemp, weed, boo, marijuana, grass, Mary Jane, cannabis and mooch are all names associated with the illegal plant scientifically known as *pistillate hemp*, or *Cannabis sativa*, and it might be coming to a drug store near you, if a national group gets its wish.

Journey for Justice campaigned in the Bryan-College Station area Monday for support of its initiative to legalize marijuana for medical use, bring attention to the issue of for political debate and reduce the incarceration rate of nonviolent drug-related convicts. The group, en route to Austin where the members plan to march on the Capitol and present their case to the press, is composed of people who were convicted of marijuana use and possession, medical marijuana patients and citizens concerned about the issue.

They made a political statement at Olsen Field by placing someone in a cage to represent the injustice of convicting and imprisoning nonviolent people for marijuana possession.

Joe Ptak, a member of Journey for Justice, said the group is campaigning on the Texas A&M campus because of its extensive agricultural research facilities and large student population.

"Both of these factors can help to raise awareness with the possible commercial uses of marijuana," he said.

The group's goal is to encourage the agriculture department to find a way to extract THC (tetrahydrocannabinol), the illegal component in marijuana, to make it less harmful and more productive for consumer purposes. Hemp, the fiber produced from *Cannabis sativa*, can be used to produce clothing, paper, hair care products, and fuel, and for nutritional purposes, in addition to other uses.

Dr. Dennis Reardon, senior coordinator for alcohol and drug programs for the Department of Student Life, said extensive marijuana use can have many of the same side effects as alcohol use and the legal consequences are just as severe.

"Physicians should be allowed to use any substance proven in controlled studies to help with ailing patients and, whether that is marijuana or not, it doesn't matter," he said.

However, Reardon said in a survey of the A&M student body last year, only 7.4 percent of A&M students admitted to using the illegal substance within the last 30 days. Sixteen percent of students from other colleges around the country admitted to using it.

Sgt. Dan Jones, public relations officer for the College Station Police Department (CSPD) and a former member of the Brazos Valley Narcotics Task Force, said marijuana contains

more than 420 chemicals, and that 63 of them are considered mind-altering when heated. Therefore, he said all the side effects have yet to be discovered.

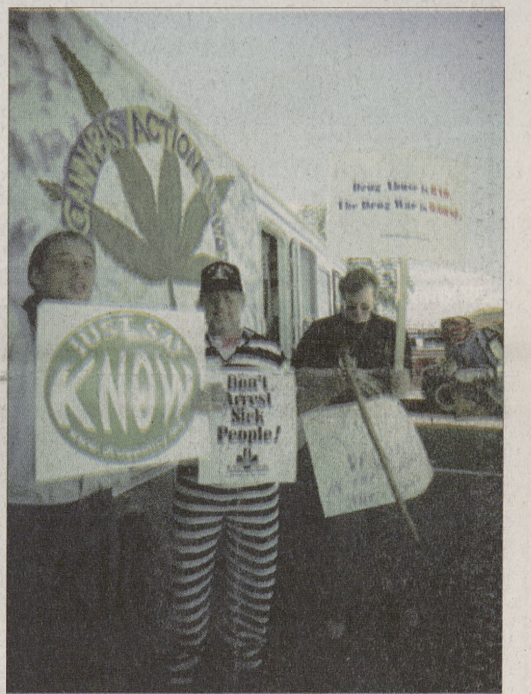
However Judy Jones, program coordinator for Journey to Justice, said that regardless of the misconceptions about the use of marijuana, the drug serves an important purpose for those with medical needs.

"We go out in a bold way and tell people we have patients on board that will die without marijuana and this gets our points across," she said.

Jones added that Texas is the No. 1 incarcerator in the United States for marijuana use.

"If Texas was a country it would be the No. 1 country for incarcerations," Jones said.

Journey for Justice concluded its campaign at A&M with a two-hour open



RYLA SKULL/THE BATTALION
Advocates for the legalization of marijuana for medicinal purposes rallied at Olsen Field Monday.



STUART VILLANUEVA/THE BATTALION

Investigators inspect the wreckage of a single-engine, two-seater plane that crashed in a pasture near Millican early Monday morning. The crash killed two people. The plane took off from Sugarland, Texas.

Cessna plane crashes, killing those on board

2 die when aircraft fails to reach Arlington, Texas

By BRADY CREEL
The Battalion

Two people died Monday morning when the airplane they were flying crashed south of the College Station.

One of the victims was identified as Joseph Riemi Putter, and the other victim, a Hispanic man, remains unidentified. Both men were middle-age.

The Cessna 142 single-engine airplane crashed in an open pasture about six miles south of the College Station city limits near Highway 6.

Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) spokeswoman Tela Mange said investigators have not yet determined a cause. The investigation may take several weeks.

Sgt. Jim Mann of the Brazos County Sheriff's office said the office received a call at approximately 2:30 a.m. Monday reporting a possible airplane crash.

Mann said authorities believed the phone

call came from air traffic controllers in Houston who had lost communication with the aircraft at 1:38 a.m., but it was possible the call came from Easterwood Airport.

"Some airport was in contact and lost communications," he said.

Mann said sheriff's deputies searched county roads immediately after the report, but were unable to perform an effective search because of the stormy weather conditions.

The search resumed at 7:30 a.m., and the wreckage was found one hour later. A DPS helicopter equipped with a searchlight was used before daybreak, but nothing could be found until after sunrise.

The victims were students of the Airline Training Academy at Arlington, said Brazos County Sheriff Chris Kirk.

Mann said the plane flew to Sugarland from Arlington and was on its way back when poor weather conditions forced the plane to land temporarily at Easterwood Airport.

Mann said the geography of the area the plane crashed in was "typical of southern Brazos County." He said the crash site was far from any residential areas — the only house around was a small farmhouse several hundred yards from the site.

"The only people in danger were those in the aircraft," Mann said. "No one saw or heard anything."

The farmhouse residents did not hear the crash because of the stormy weather and the small size of the airplane.

The crash left a trail of wreckage in a north-south general direction from the point of impact.

"Everything was thrown pretty much in a line," Mann said.

The bodies of the victims were found just beyond the wreckage, Mann said. The plane did not catch on fire — it was just a "broken aircraft," he said.

The victims were two of a group of four

See CRASH on Page 7A.

Corps study habits re-evaluated

Academic Operations Committee suggestions will take time to implement

By COURTNEY STELZEL
The Battalion

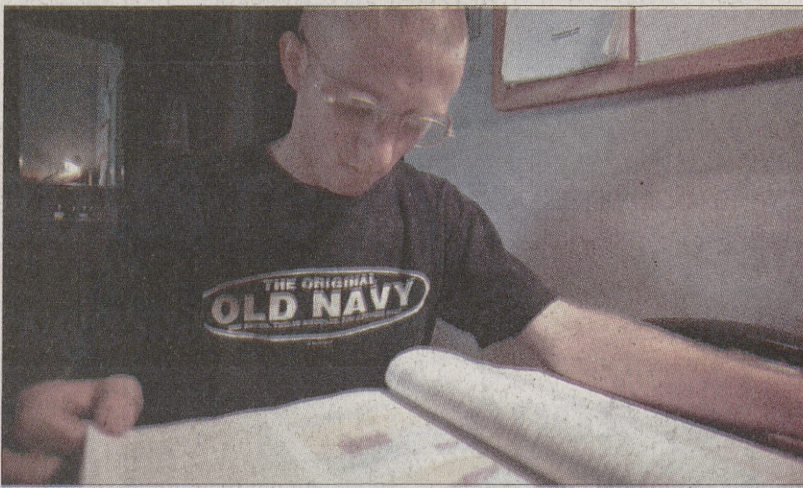
Changes in the scholastic policy of the Corps of Cadets, in response to an Aug. 29 forum among the Academic Operations Committee (AOC), the Corps unit commanders and their scholastic personnel, may be slow and minimal. The meeting opened up a line of discussion, comments and suggestions for the way study time is handled in the Corps. However, suggestions that were made have yet to result in change.

Philip Carson, Corps scholastic officer and a senior economics major, said the idea for a meeting between the AOC and the Corps came last spring.

"The Corps wanted to get their opinions and suggestions on how we run our study program," Carson said.

The Corps has invited the associate deans from each college, one by one, to observe and walk through the Corps residence halls during Call to Quarters (CQ).

"We hope to dispel any negative connotations," Carson said, "that the AOC deans might have about the Corps and their study



STUART VILLANUEVA/THE BATTALION

See CORPS on Page 7A. Clay Jacobson, a freshman history major in company G-1, hits the books.

3 professors receive \$1.2 million for technology research

By RICH BRAY
The Battalion

A day in a person's life can equal a month in the life of a computer and fast-growing technology. In an attempt to help researchers gain a stronger footing in this field, the National Science Foundation (NSF) granted more than \$1.2 million to

three Texas A&M professors to enable them to continue their technological research.

Richard Gibson, an associate professor of geology and geophysics, was awarded \$437,927; Richard Furuta, an associate professor in the Department of Computer Science, was awarded \$498,207; and Wei Zhao, a

professor and head of the Department of Computer Science, was awarded \$343,806.

The money comes from a new NSF program that will award \$90 million in grants for technological research in the United States, Gibson said.

"It's a new program called Infor-

mation Technology Research (ITR)," he said. "The key idea is to try to fund some new research in several different areas. They're looking for new kinds of software — things related to education programs, human-computer interfaces, information management, advanced computational science and the social and economic

implications of information technology," he said.

Gibson said the program was created to assist research in technological advances.

"It's a fairly broad program, but with everyone talking about the Internet and how computers are changing our lives, they wanted to sink

some money into this area to make some big steps forward," he said.

Gibson said the grant money awarded to him will be used to develop a program to speed up computers used to find oil.

"One of the most challenging

See NSF on Page 4B.