

# S. Texas universities won't meet advised cut

By Ben Goodwin  
STAFF WRITER

KINGSVILLE - The three universities of the University System of South Texas won't meet a 13-percent annual cut in annual spending ordered by Gov. Mark White, the system chancellor said yesterday.

However, the presidents of Corpus Christi State University, Texas A&I University and Laredo State University won't fire any faculty members or cut courses, and all will have summer schools this year, said Lawrence Pettit, university system chancellor.

Pettit yesterday approved fund-saving recommendations from Alan Sugg, CCSU president; Steven Altman, A&I president; and Manuel Pacheco, LSU president. The recommendations will be sent to White's office, said Pettit, and what happens then is anybody's guess.

CCSU is planning a four-day-week schedule this summer, but that move will not be reflected in the university's savings, according to the chancellor's office.

The system will be able to cut expenses by slightly more than \$1 million this year and more than \$1.5 million next year.

Overall, A&I will cut expenses \$555,000 this year, or

4.5 percent, and \$920,00 in 1987, a decrease of 7.6 percent.

CCSU will cut \$335,000 this year, or 4.2 percent, and \$465,000 in 1987, or 5.9 percent.

Laredo State will cut \$90,700, or 3.6 percent this year, and \$155,800 next year, or 6.3 percent.

The chancellor's office will cut its budget \$22,435, or 6.4 percent this year, and \$22,179, or 6.3 percent, next year.

"We don't have the capacity of larger university systems to offset the cuts through other revenues," said Pettit. "But most other universities in the state also are ranging between 4 percent and 7 percent in planned decreases."

Pettit said the South Texas university system was hurting before White's order.

"We started with shortfalls because the Legislature overestimated our enrollment and tuition income," said Pettit. "The Legislature didn't appropriate enough money."

A&I started with a shortfall of \$447,532; Laredo State, \$213,000; and CCSU, \$89,724, because of the enrollment miscalculations.

Pettit said the decrease in enrollments probably was

caused by an increase in tuition for all students and by concern that the Reagan administration would cut student loans.

"We don't know how many students decided not to attend college because of money," he said.

In addition, Pettit said, the Legislature mandated a 3-percent pay increase for faculty members, but only appropriated money for 2 percent for the salary increase.

"We had to make up the difference from other funds," said Pettit.

At CCSU this meant \$156,000; \$88,000 at A&I; and \$18,141 at Laredo State.

Under White's orders, faculty salaries cannot be cut. The three universities will effect salary savings through faculty attrition and a hiring freeze.

Pettit, in a cover letter that will accompany the report to White, said the state has a historical pattern of underfunding higher education in South Texas.

He said underfunding is hurting the system's efforts to meet the special needs of South Texas in providing educational opportunity and addressing the special needs of Mexican-Americans, developing educational

manpower and research capability.

In his report, Sugg said during 1986-87 CCSU will cut utilities by \$550,000, salary savings \$90,000, faculty and staff travel, \$55,000, and supplies and equipment, \$105,000.

Altman reported A&I during 1986-87 will cut \$600,000 in utility spending, \$205,000 in custodial and grounds maintenance, \$300,000 in library materials, \$300,000 in salary savings, \$40,000 in maintenance costs and \$30,000 at the A&I Citrus Center at Weslaco. Altman said studies will continue on other cost-cutting measures.

Those include a four-day work week and class scheduling, cutting of summer school to a single semester and closing the campus for longer time periods, the closing of one dormitory and limited sabbatical leave programs for departments overstaffed with tenured faculty members.

Pacheco reported Laredo State will cut \$74,000 in administration salaries, \$32,000 in staff salaries, \$40,000 in library materials, \$24,000 in utilities and \$52,000 in summer school through the reduction of courses and/or salaries.

## Teachers tuning in to bone up

Teachers needing a cram course for Monday's competency test are turning to television.

Programs to help teachers prepare for the Texas Examination of Current Administrators and Teachers (TECAT) began airing yesterday and will continue through Sunday.

The programs on the public broadcasting channel KEDT-TV, Channel 16, and the Higher Education Access Channel (cable Channel 19) are sponsored by Del Mar College and the Corpus Christi Independent School District.

"Intensive TECAT Preparation," designed by the University of Texas at Austin, began airing yesterday on KEDT-TV and is scheduled to continue from 3 to 4 p.m. today and Friday. The program will also be shown from 11 a.m. to noon Saturday.

On Sunday from 6 to 10 p.m., review materials in 12 segments will be aired on cable Channel 19. The reviews were authored by CCISD, Del Mar and Corpus Christi State University and will cover grammar, English usage, writing samples and reading skills.



GEORGE GONGORA/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

## The many faces of chili judging

Chili appreciation shows many faces yesterday at Weldon A Smith Elementary School. Amy De Los Santos, 7, (left to right) is immersed; Shane Ganschow, 7, is ecstatic. Jeffrey Hunt, 6, is dubious;

and Lauren Mehne, 6, is contemplative. It's all part of Public Schools Week. Teachers at Smith made the chili for sampling by their pupils, obviously, with mixed results.

## Woman is swindled out of \$10,000

By Sandra Forero  
STAFF WRITER

A 72-year-old Corpus Christi woman told police she was swindled out of \$10,000 by a woman who said the deposited money would give her a return of \$32,000.

According to police reports, the elderly woman was approached by a woman outside a Southside bank around 11 a.m. Tuesday.

The victim was shown a large yellow envelope and was asked if she had lost it, according to the report.

The swindler then opened the envelope, said it contained \$78,000, and showed the victim a note which read, "Dear Breth, I'm sending you these \$78,000 so that you can have it rather than the government." The note was closed with a foreign phrase.

Police reports said the swindler placed a phone call, convincing her victim that a bank officer confirmed the money was real. She told the elderly woman that she was going to leave the money with the banker.

Later, police said, a man pretending to be the banker assured the woman by phone that she could secure a share of the "found" money by posting \$10,000 of her own as a sign of good faith.

The woman withdrew \$5,000 from two separate bank accounts and gave the cash to the swindler, who told her to go home and wait 15 minutes and she would get \$32,000.

The woman told police she got suspicious when she had not heard from the swindler after waiting about 30 minutes. The woman drove to the bank, where she was informed that there was no employee matching the name she had been given by the pretender.

Lt. Albert Perez of the Criminal Investigation Division at the Corpus Christi Police Department said a second woman in her 60s also was approached earlier in the day.

"When she said she had to check with her husband, the suspect showed no more interest," Perez said. Perez said no arrests have been made.

## City man is charged in swindle

By Sandra Forero  
STAFF WRITER

A Corpus Christi man is being held at the Nueces County Jail, accused of promoting gambling in Corpus Christi and swindling more than 300 people out of more than \$10,000.

George R. Castro, 44, is alleged to have formed a "fellowship club" known as Coast to Coast 5000 Club, and used club funds for personal use, said Sgt. Jack Ford of the Criminal Investigation Division at the Corpus Christi Police Department.

Castro is charged with "promotional gambling." The club offered lifetime memberships for fees ranging from \$12.50 to \$24 and the option of up to eight additional shares in the club for \$30, according to police reports.

The members of the club were told the \$30 shares were going to be used to buy facilities for the club, said Flora.

The secretary of the club told police members also could purchase New York state lottery tickets. Texas law says it is illegal to possess, transfer or promote lotteries.

The secretary said she kept the club's books, including the membership roll and records of payments, shares and purchases of New York lottery tickets.

She told police she believes all the money collected from the club members was turned over to Castro, who was supposed to bank the money.

Flora said he had not calculated how much money is involved in the operation which started in October, but estimated it could be more than \$10,000.

"He started making trips to New York in November and would personally buy the members their lottery tickets. Not only was he doing illegal gambling," Flora said, "he apparently also was swindling these people out of their money."

## Aransas, Starr bees name top spellers

Students from Aransas and Starr counties spelled their way to championships in countywide bees Monday.

A fifth-grader at Rockport Elementary School won the Aransas bee by spelling "anticipation" and "dockhand."

Marivel Rodriguez, of Rockport Elementary School in the Aransas County school district, was one of four contestants in the Aransas County Spelling Bee sponsored by the Corpus Christi Caller-Times and the Region II Educational Services Center, headquartered in Corpus Christi.

In the 15th round, Marivel spelled the word Stephanie Casterline missed, "anticipation," then she spelled the word "dockhand" to capture the title.

Marivel is the daughter of Adelina Rodriguez.

Stephanie, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Leslie Casterline, an eighth-grader at Rockport-Fulton Junior High School, was the runner-up.

The spelling bee was held at the Rockport-Fulton Elementary School.

James Koonce, the elementary school's assistant principal, was chairman of the event.

The other two contestants were

Kathy Nguyen of Fulton Elementary and Tina Monroc of Live Oak Elementary.

Marivel received a Webster's Collegiate Dictionary.

In Starr County, 10-year-old Hilario Alvarado III, a fifth-grader at San Isidro Elementary School, won.

Hilario is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Hilario Alvarado Jr. of Santa Elena.

The runner-up and only other contestant was 14-year-old Nelda Elizondo, daughter of Mrs. Ruth Elizondo, an eighth-grader at Grulla Junior High School in the Rio Grande City School District.

Nelda came in second after she misspelled the word "plainspoken." Hilario spelled that word and the winning word, "obedient."

Nelda is the daughter of Ruth Elizondo of Grulla.

Both winners advance to the regional bee Saturday April 12 at the Harbor Playhouse in Corpus Christi.

The competition will include winners from 18 South Texas counties. Each of the participants in that competition will receive a trophy.

## Consultant urges private developer for garage

By Cindy Tumiel  
STAFF WRITER

Hiring a private developer to build a transit maintenance garage could knock as much as a year off the construction time, a consultant told the Corpus Christi Regional Transit Authority.

Richard Drake, an engineer with Fleet Management Consultants, said a new facility could be ready in a year if the authority uses a public-private approach to remodel an existing building.

It would take about two years to follow the traditional government approach, using competitive bidding and government regulation to build a facility from scratch, he said.

"If you can privatize this thing, in today's environment, you'd be a lot better off," Drake told the authority board.

Private sector involvement once was cumbersome because of government involvement, particularly in the transit industry, where many facilities are built with Urban Mass Transit Administration grants.

"With the new privatization push in the Reagan administration, this is becoming more popular," Drake said.

Drake's firm was hired by the authority to help evaluate sites for the maintenance garage and operations center, which is being planned to accommodate a fleet of at least 125 buses.

Two sites are still under consideration: Petco-Renken on Heinsohn Road and Highway 44, which would utilize a vacant oil-industry warehouse; and a vacant tract on Holly Road, currently owned by the city of Corpus Christi.

Drake's initial estimates indicated cost of the facility would be similar at either site, about \$3.04 million at Petco and \$2.98 million at Holly Road.

But he said those estimates were based on the asking price of the Petco landowners which, he said, could be negotiated downward.

"When you get appraisals and get into negotiations, I think the ultimate cost will be less" at

the Petco site, Drake said.

To use that site, the transit authority would have to pave a portion of Heinsohn Road, for access and spend an additional \$50,000 for site preparation, he said.

But the Holly Road site, which is currently under purchase option by the authority, is "not large enough for the planned 125-bus facility," he said.

Additional land purchases would be necessary, either from the adjacent city maintenance facility on Ayers or from private landowners.

Drake noted the authority would be encroaching into residentially zoned land if it tried to buy the privately owned parcel. Otherwise, it may meet resistance from the city if it tries to acquire land that the city may want for expansion of its own maintenance yard, he said.

No decision was made by the board on which site or approach to use. Transit General Manager Tom Niskala said he is waiting for land appraisals.

## City cleared 74 junkers off streets

The city's Junk-a-Jewel program concluded last week with 74 junk vehicles in three months cleared from the streets, according to code enforcement officer Stan Miller.

Miller's Neighborhood Improvement Department handled 664 calls from residents tired of looking at junk cars in their neighborhoods.

Some of the callers identified more than one car, and some cars were the subject of multiple complaints, which makes it difficult to determine exactly how many cars were identified, Miller said.

In many instances, he said, cars reported had valid license tags and inspection stickers and did not qualify as junked cars. Others were inspected or repaired by owners to take

them off the junk list, Miller said.

All 74 of those hauled away were done with owner consent, a major goal of the program, he said.

Junk-a-Jewel, which offered free towing service, sought to identify 1,000 junk vehicles and begin work to remove them from city streets.

"It was a worthwhile program in that we did get rid of 74 initially," Miller said. "And to use supply terms, we got the pipeline started for continually ridding the city of these junk vehicles."

## NAACP trial is delayed

A suit filed by the Kingsville branch of the NAACP and five of its members against the city of Kingsville probably will not go to trial until sometime after June 3, the plaintiff's attorney says.

The suit filed in July 1984 had been set for trial last week in Corpus Christi federal court.

Corpus Christi attorney Herbert Hawkins, counsel for the plaintiffs, said Tuesday the trial had been delayed, but that a new trial date has not been set.

The suit alleges that the city of Kingsville has "established a system for the distribution of Community Development Grant funding, federal housing assistance funding, revenue sharing funding and other federal assistance, which has the effect of continuing and preserving the defendant's policy of discrimination against the plaintiff's members and the community which they represent because of race."