

Business Administration Prof Was A Friend Of Ernie Pyle

THE BATTALION

Tuesday, October 22, 1963

College Station, Texas

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Ministers Urged By Doctor To Stress Physical Fitness

Church workers were urged here Friday by an American Medical Association official to become "stewards of body health."

Dr. F. J. L. Blasingame of Chicago, AMA executive vice president and a speaker at A&M University's 1963 Town and Country Church Conference, said the church has a "unique hold on the people which enables it to give great help in the medical field."

His topic was "The Town and Country Church Meeting Our Physical Needs."

The physician called for ministers and laymen to encourage physical discipline, diet and exercise. In short, they should become stewards to promote healthy minds and bodies, he declared.

"One of life's great expectations is to cultivate a sound body and mind," the doctor pointed out. "This soundness can have a profound effect on everything a person does."

Such stewardships, he added, should motivate healthful living through education, not compulsion.

The conference, sponsored by the Department of Agricultural Economics and Sociology in co-operation with denominational representatives ended Friday.

Dr. Blasingame taught for four years at the University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston and practiced for 20 years at Wharton. He is an active layman in his church and serves on many state and national boards and committees.

He said the church has traditionally been a repository of knowledge and has long concerned itself with health.

"This is fine, but more effort is needed," Dr. Blasingame explained. "Overall work being done now by the church is only a drop in the bucket to what is needed. Ministers and laymen should work more with health groups."

He pointed out that church gyms, lounges and other recreational facilities are admirable, but they are only a means to an end.

"Ministers and their congregations should teach that life is precious and should be preserved through good health," he emphasized. "In this way, people can better utilize the talents nature has given them."

Tom Prather, Texas Agricultural Extension Service farm management specialist and church conference official, announced new Town and Country Church Conference officers for 1963-64.

They are the Rev. Wilson Weiting of the Methodist Circuit at Grapeland, president; the Rev. Jewel R. Johnson, United Church of Christ, Burton, vice president;

and the Rev. William R. Farmer of San Gabriel, secretary.

Denominational representatives named were the Rev. Walter Bowden, Methodist Circuit, Winfield; the Rev. Willard Rother, Saint James Lutheran, Brenham; Bruce Harper, First Christian Church, Selman City (Tyler); and the Rev. Darwin Farmer of Dallas, Metropolitan Division, Baptist General Convention.

Faculty Interfaith Group To Continue Talks Wednesday

"The Origin and Nature of Man" as considered by Christianity, Islam and Judaism will be discussed at 7 a.m. Wednesday as the second topic in the A&M University Faculty Interfaith Fellowship series. The gathering will be held at All Faiths Chapel with coffee and doughnuts served later at the YMCA.

Representing the three religious communities for the discussion Wednesday will be Dr. Robert Powell, plant sciences, for the Christian viewpoint; Dr. Melvin Eisner, physics, Judaism; and Dr. M. Z. El-Sabban, a postdoctoral fellow in chemistry, Islam.

Dr. El-Sabban is director of the department of physics in the Ministry of Health, Cairo, but has studied extensively and been engaged in research projects in this country.

A&M faculty and staff members and personnel of religious organizations are invited to attend. Following the brief presentation of the three viewpoints, there will be time for questions and cross-examination.

Others are the Rev. W. A. Engstrom, Presbyterian Churches at Burnet and Marble Falls; the Rev. B. G. Federwisch, United Church of Christ, Kurten; the Rev. Roman Widacki, Saint Mary's Catholic Church at Temple; and Dr. Lannes Hope of Bryan's Saint Thomas Episcopal Church.

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Ernie Pyle, America's front line war correspondent of World War II days, still has plenty of "buddies" around, even though he has been dead almost two decades now.

One gentleman who cherishes his experiences with the thin little man of World War II fame is now a business administration professor at A&M University.

He is Rollin Lafayette Elkins, referred to as "Satch" by Pyle in a newspaper story and a book entitled "Brave Men."

It was Elkins, now a colonel in the U. S. Army Reserves, who received a letter from Pyle 10 days after the correspondent was killed on an island off Okinawa April 18, 1945.

In his Pacific-dated letter, Pyle said:
"I suppose I will be out here for a year if I don't crack up in the meantime, and I don't look forward to it with any great glee. I guess I need some of you old timers to come out and hold my hand."

Elkins and Pyle first met in a cactus patch in Tunisia shortly before German tanks and troops came swarming out from behind the mountains at Faid Pass.

In a newspaper story, Pyle wrote, "The attack was so sudden nobody could believe it was in full force. Our forward troops were overrun before they knew what was happening. It was a complete melee. The American tanks fought till knocked out."

"A friend of mine, Major Rollin Elkins of College Station had his half-track (military vehicle) hit three times by German shells. They were standing still, cleaning a carburetor filter, when the third shell hit. It set them afire."

Pyle's account continued, but a citation issued later completes the picture.

The report continued telling how the half-track was destroyed. "Elkins directed his men to take cover. He was captured but escaped under cover of darkness and walked 20 miles to rejoin his organization."

Elkins had made Pyle retreat shortly before the heavy attack from Nazi Panzers forces began.

"Ernie wasn't too happy with me then," Elkins recalls, but when he saw what happened he felt better. The whole unit was shot to pieces."

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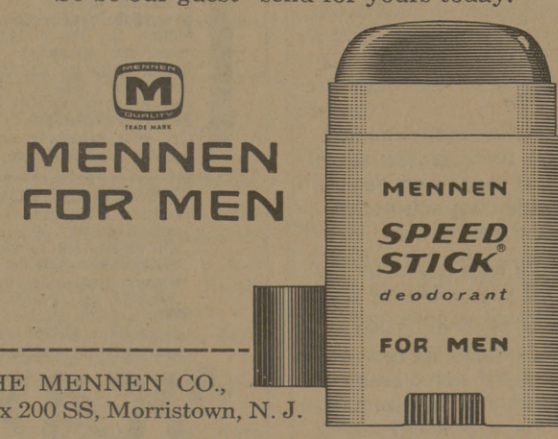
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