

The Battalion

Volume 60

COLLEGE STATION, TEXAS THURSDAY, DECEMBER 19, 1963

Number 183

96 Texas Deaths To Mar Family Holiday Festivities

'Deathwatch' Set To Begin Dec. 24

Your life is worth more than a statistic and a newspaper story.

But if you are one of 96 persons who become Texas Highway fatalities during the Christmas-New Year's holiday period, your only recognition will be a funeral service and a tally in the Texas Department of Public Safety "Operation Deathwatch."

"Operation Deathwatch" begins Dec. 24 at 12:01 a. m. and continues until 11:59 p. m. Jan. 1, 1964.

You may consider yourself too good of a driver to be killed in an automobile wreck. So did more than 2,000 other Texans last year. You say that you will drive carefully

Unfortunately, some do not live up to their word.

THE DEATH RATE continues to mount year after year. However, accidents can be prevented by observing driving precautions and highway laws.

These include: Don't drive too fast for road and traffic conditions; obey traffic laws and signs; allow plenty of time for any trips; be on the alert for dangerous mistakes on the part of the other drivers and pedestrians, and don't drink before driving.

DRINKING AND DRIVING too fast for conditions are factors in seven-eighths of all holiday accidents, previous reports have shown. Research studies show that a blood alcohol concentration of 0.05 per cent (about two or three drinks) impairs to some degree the driving ability of most individuals. At a concentration of 0.10 per cent (five or six drinks), all individuals are definitely impaired.

IN MOST MOTOR-VEHICLE accidents, improper driving of one kind or another is a contributing circumstance. In fatal accidents, it is principally speed, with driving left of center line next, although less than half as important.

Will the flag in front of the Academic Building be at half-mast Jan. 6 in honor of an Aggie traffic fatality? Statistics say it will. Let's prove them wrong.

14TH YEAR Safety Edition To Be Entered In Competition

Another Christmas season is once again dominant upon the American scene. A scene of joy and merriment prevails over the American countryside. It is hard to realize that such a scene can bring about the deaths of countless number of motorists who for some reason or another become lackadaisical in their driving habits.

But, these unfortunate and tragic mishaps do happen and for this reason, this special safety edition is presented to you, the student in hopes that you will sincerely adhere to the precautions contained in these pages.

For the 14th straight year this edition will be submitted to the Lumbermens Mutual Casualty Co. college newspaper safety contest. This contest was originated in 1948 and now college papers across the country contribute their pre-Christmas editions to safety campaigns.

Last year The Battalion received an honorable mention rating. The Battalion has won awards 11 times, taking second place in 1959 and first place honors a year later in 1960.

Since the start of this contest, The Battalion ranks second among the college paper entries.

Today's Thought

As long as people are ready to die for a great cause, that cause can never die—George Meany.

Home For Christmas?

By JIM BUTLER

A dimly lighted Christmas tree Stands stark in a cheerless room. Untouched presents lay beneath, Forgotten mid thickening gloom. Your body has come home.

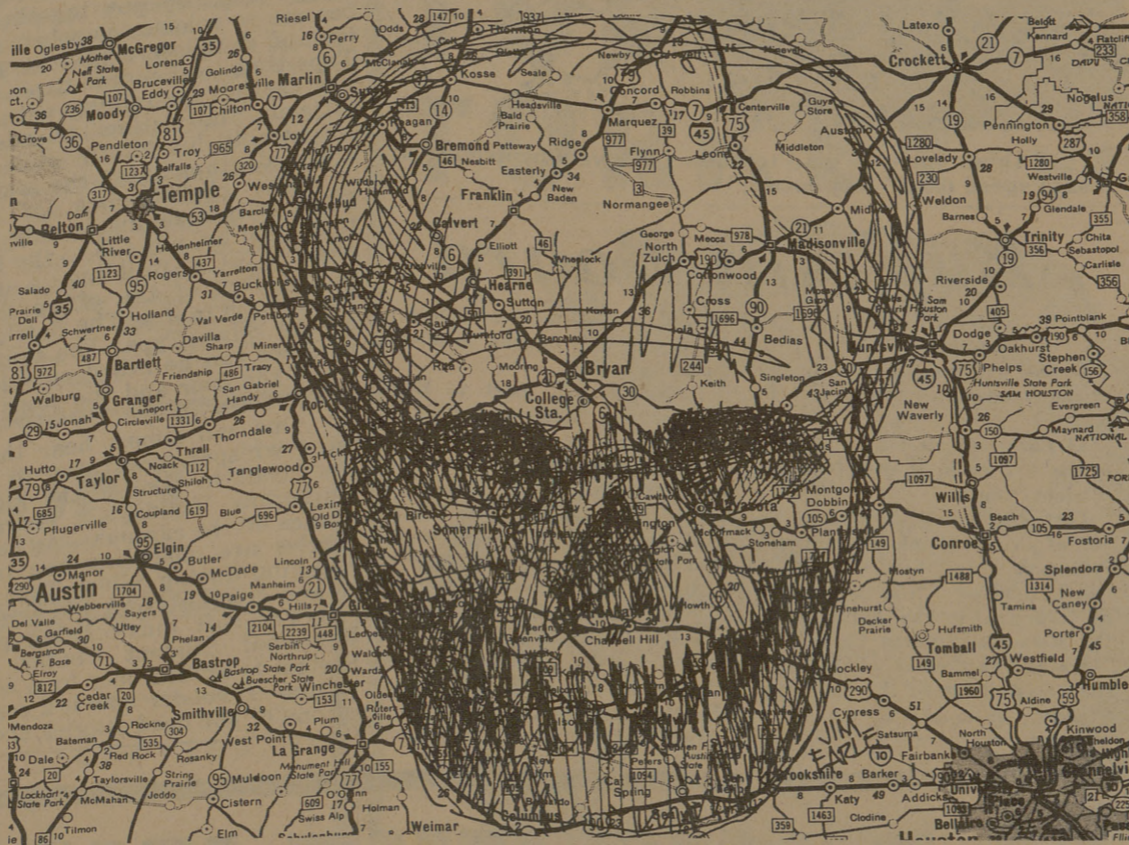
Sobs have taken the place of hymns, Tears supplant the snow; A joyous occasion to honor a birth Has suffered a saddening blow. Your body has come home.

In the living room, the fireplace, That used to burn so bright, Lays cold and grey, giving no warmth To a sad and lonely night. Your body has come home.

The silence of sudden sorrow Hangs like a formless shroud Above a home all prepared To welcome a spirited crowd. They brought your body home.

Lucky you won't have to see The sorrow and the dread That fill your family's faces When they hear that you are dead And bring your body home.

Were you driving too fast, or drinking? Careless, or just too tired? It doesn't really matter now. Your family has missed To bring your body home.



STUDY THIS MAP CAREFULLY BEFORE YOUR TRIP HOME.

Highway Fatality Will Bring Needless Family Grieving

BY NICHOLAS D. BLAIN

In October of 1962 a college senior's life was taken on the highway between Dallas and Kaufman. It was not just an ordinary accident but one that injured the hearts of many people. The student attended a Southwest Conference School and was on the varsity football team. He was to be graduated in May of 1963. He had been 21 for two months and was at the happiest time in his life. On October 20, he had become engaged to a girl from Arlington at approximately 10 p.m. On Sunday morning, Oct. 21, at 2 a.m.—he was dead.

A drunken driver had fallen asleep at the steering wheel of his car. He crossed the center

line and struck the young man's automobile. The youth was killed, the girl injured slightly—the drunken driver escaped uninjured.

It was a shattering thought that a young man who had never been happier in his life was now dead. The girl he had loved was now alone in the world. The mother and father had lost their only child.

The mother of the boy had just returned home from the hospital, having had an operation. Upon receiving the notice of the death of her only child—she could only weep. The father could only say—"Why did it have to happen to our boy?" The girl, who was in the hospital, had not been told of the death of the young man she loved.

Having been notified of the death, a nephew immediately rushed to the side of the mother. When he neared the bedside of his aunt, she woke up and looked at him. She said, "Your mother will have to give you to me so she can have a daughter (his older sister) and I can still have a son to love."

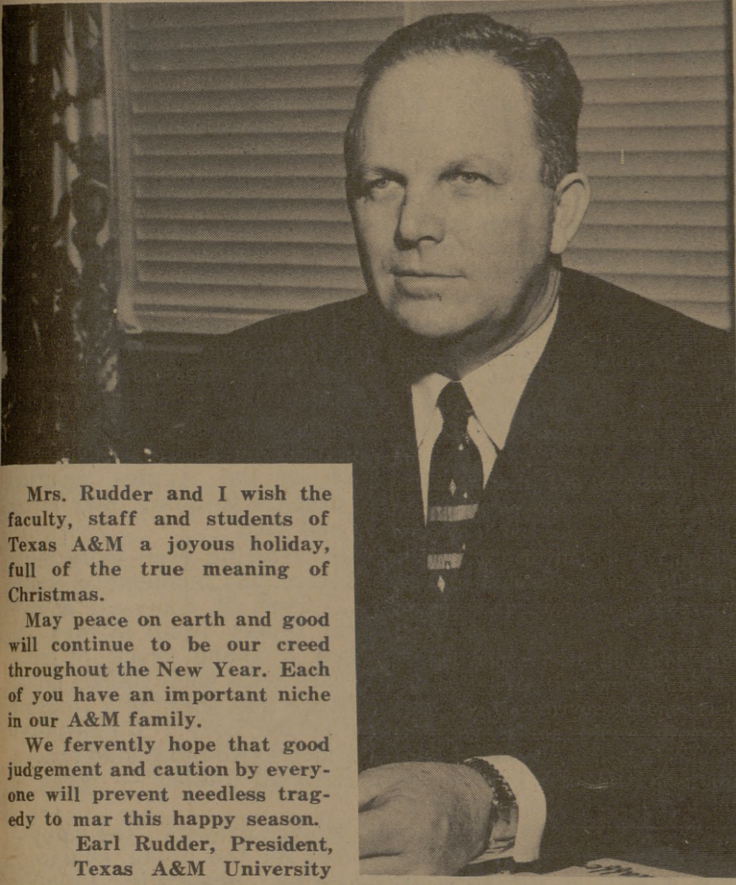
The girl told him the story of her life. Her father had been killed in an automobile accident when she was seven and her first boy friend had been killed on a

Aggies Urged To Be Careful While Driving

"With approximately 8,000 students hitting the highways at the end of this week, we all hope that everyone will drive carefully, will avoid driving when fatigued or after having a drink and will drive defensively as though all other drivers are crazy," said James P. Hannigan, Dean of Students, in a statement Wednesday.

"We certainly hope that all students are carrying the accident insurance policy sponsored by the Student Senate," said Hannigan. "This is inexpensive and covers the student both in and out of school. Too often the student runs up a big hospital bill which would be paid by this policy if he had only bothered to take it out.

"Safe motoring and Merry Christmas to all!"



Mrs. Rudder and I wish the faculty, staff and students of Texas A&M a joyous holiday, full of the true meaning of Christmas.

May peace on earth and good will continue to be our creed throughout the New Year. Each of you have an important niche in our A&M family.

We fervently hope that good judgement and caution by everyone will prevent needless tragedy to mar this happy season.

Earl Rudder, President, Texas A&M University

Garrison Gives Extra Warning To Be Careful

Death has been particularly close to Aggies during the past few days. Seldom before has there been occasion to hold so many Silver Taps ceremonies within the space of just a few days.

True all these men did not die in traffic accidents, yet two Aggies have recently died in—or as a result of—auto accidents within hours of each other.

With this in mind Col. Homer Garrison Jr., Director of the Texas Department of Public Safety has conveyed a personal message to all Aggies before they depart for home:

"Past experience has indicated that an estimated 96 human lives will be taken in traffic accidents in Texas during the coming Christmas-New Year holiday season unless a most unusual effort is made on the effort of all Texans who drive, to hold the line and prove the statistics wrong.

"Driving too fast for existing conditions, driving while drinking, or on the wrong side of the road—or a combination of these factors, are the stand-out reasons for this tragedy that occurs at this otherwise wonderful time of year.

"But there is one over-all factor that cannot be denied in pointing fingers at the cause of fatal accidents, and that is the general carelessness and inattentiveness on the part of drivers.

"During this nine day period the Department of Public Safety will step up its enforcement program by adding an extra 150 patrolmen from out of other uniformed services to the Highway Patrol.

"This will not do the job itself because there are simply not enough men to cover every mile of highway. The drivers themselves are the ones who can do the biggest job in advertising a huge toll of lives during the holidays.

"The Department of Public Safety will also launch an Operation Deathwatch during the period of Christmas Eve throughout New Years in an effort to keep the dangers of holiday traffic uppermost in the minds of motorists.

"During this period we will tabulate violent deaths as they occur and three times daily the death count will be revealed to the public through the news media.

"Meanwhile the Highway Patrol will be constantly on the alert to detect any abnormal conditions which might eventually lead to accidents, and will take proper steps toward preventing tragedies.

"Let me repeat however that the most effective work must be done by the drivers themselves. Only by taking care to avert tragedy can we expect the number of deaths to be under the estimate."

Their Christmas Joy Dies When You Are A Statistic

By MIKE REYNOLDS

Will you be a Major 10-76 for Christmas? Three people, in particular, will be waiting with dread anticipation to hear your final note of fame over a police radio.

Ten-seventy-six is a code that will alert Manley Jones, ambulance driver, Dr. J. W. Martin Jr. and Ron Crenshaw, Bryan police dispatcher, when a major highway accident involving serious injury takes place over the holidays. However, they don't want you to be part of it; Christmas would be better for them if they had no business.

Jones, of Calloway-Jones Fu-

neral Home, has had his Christmas holidays ruined too many times.

"The first and last thing you will hear on the telephone will be that voice crying, 'My God! Hurry,' and you will never forget it," Jones said.

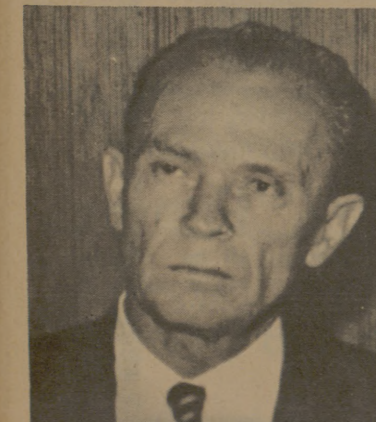
Dr. Martin, president of the Brazos - Robinson Medical Association, is lucky. He is called in on emergencies only in special cases, but he, too, must look at death.

"I just don't understand how level-headed, sensible people who have driven safely for many years, suddenly do something very stupid," said Martin.

The doctor went on to relate that studies now reveal that many drivers, who are injured because of a lack of good judgment, are suffering from carbon monoxide poisoning or are sedatives and drugs.

"If an Aggie speeds and kills himself, he is the only one that suffers, but how many people have seen rescue workers pull a headless baby from a car that had been struck by a drunk. It isn't pretty when an adult gets killed, but how can a baby defend himself?"

Will they be forced to listen to your Major 10-76 on their radios?



MANLEY JONES



RON CRENSHAW



DR. J. W. MARTIN JR.