

Robinson's Crusoe

By Bob Robinson

Snowflakes were starting to fill the twin beams of light that pierced the darkness ahead. The forecast on the radio had been correct. It had said flurries of snow mixed with rain, possibly turning to ice.

Bill slowed down slightly and switched on his interior light so he could see the time. He turned the light off.

3 a.m. 50 miles to go.
The neon lights of the all-night cafe flashed by him, gone almost before they were noticed. Bill slowed down and then, thinking better of it, speeded up again. He was tired and needed some coffee, but the snow was getting worse and he wanted to get home before it was too bad to drive in.

Only 30 miles to go.
Bill swerved his car to the right, barely missing the large headlights that just passed him on the left.

He had been drowsing. He knew he should pull off to the side road and sleep, but . . .

Only 20 miles to go.
It is Jan. 5, 1970. At 10:15 p.m. the hall lights of the dormitories on the Texas A&M campus were switched on and off several times, and then left off. Several thousand students began quietly to leave their rooms and walk toward the Academic Building . . .

Jim has just dropped off one of his riders in Texarkana. Spirits were high as the other three lived in western Tennessee and they knew their trip home for the holidays was almost over.

Spirits were also high because all three had accepted an offer of a drink at the one Aggie's home before continuing the trip. The one drink turned into two, and then three.

Jim had assured the Aggie's parents that the drinks hadn't affected him and that he would pull off to the side of the road if he got tired.

. . . the organ music from the Memorial Student Center settled heavily on the campus, which was growing darker as, one by one, the various buildings went black. The students gathered in ones, twos, and threes around the statue of Lawrence Sullivan Ross. Not a word was spoken . . .

A car carrying students to west Texas for the holidays was speed-

ing along Highway 21. It had been raining and the road was slick, but at least visibility, which had been hampered by the rain, was good again.

The road at that time of day wasn't very heavily traveled, so all three looked forward to being able to make good time.

One of the students was telling the other two about the engagement he had bought and was going to give his girl for Christmas.

Another, the one in back, had just told his buddies about the coed he'd met just before the holidays. He was looking forward to seeing his parents again, but for once, he wouldn't gripe too much about the holidays being over.

The car traveled swiftly around a curve and almost immediately came upon a tractor being followed slowly by another car waiting to pass.

The driver was going too fast to slow down, so he decided to go around both vehicles. It wasn't until he got in the other lane that he saw the pick-up truck bearing down on him.

Only the student in the back seat was wearing his seat belt.

. . . the music stopped and for several seconds, not a sound could be heard except for the rustle of a breeze through the branches of the trees surrounding Sully. Then, almost as if it was imagined, the slow, funeral cadence of the Ross Volunteers became audible, then louder, as it came closer . . .

In 1968, we killed over 55,000 people on the nation's highways. In Texas alone, a record number of 3,481 people died. 216,972 were injured.

Col. Wilson E. Speir, director of the Texas Department of Public Safety, estimates that 87 people in Texas alone will not live to see the end of the holiday season.

In the last 14 years, seven Aggies died over the holidays as a result of a traffic accident.

Every time someone gets behind the wheel of a car, three things are required: perception, decision, and performance. If the time needed for, or the correctness of, any of these actions are impaired, the possibilities of an accident are magnified.

. . . precision movement followed sharp, but softly spoken

commands. The order, "fire," was heard and seven shots pierced the black sky in unison and echoed off the surrounding buildings. Twice more the command was given and twice more volleys of seven rang out . . .

Sgt. Paul Allen of the Department of Public Safety headquarters in Bryan had this to say:

"Most of the time students are in a hurry to get home for the holidays and will take unnecessary chances. The vehicles are heavily loaded and carry a lot of weight that they (the students) are not used to driving with. The whole center of gravity of the car is changed. The braking system is not as effective.

"I suggest they take these factors into consideration and drive accordingly."

. . . a deafening stillness hung in the air several seconds, then the slow, mournful sound of four silver trumpets played Taps. Three times Taps was sounded; first north, then south, and finally, west . . .

Eighty-seven are expected to die between the start of the Christmas holidays and the end of the New Year holiday. Only the persons driving can do anything about it . . .

"We urge each individual driver to accept the challenge of proving our estimates are too high. Many holiday accidents can be prevented if Texans will drive safely and realize that no one is immune to a traffic crash," said Speir, Texas Department of Public Safety.

. . . Silence again reigned. Silver Taps was over, though not the feeling of sadness in each Aggie's heart as he walked quietly back to his dormitory. There was something no longer quite right about the last couple weeks, the Christmas season, the season of joy and happiness. An Aggie was gone . . .

The house was dark. The Christmas tree stood dark and forgotten in the living room. Friends and sympathizers had left long ago.

A mother was weeping silently. A sad, quiet father was doing his best to console her.

Neither of them could understand why their son hadn't been a little more careful, taken a little more time on the trip home.

On Flying Saucers Project Blue Book Ends Last Chapter

By Frank Carey
AP Science Writer

WASHINGTON (AP)—Dr. Edward U. Condon, chief of a panel which recommended an end to the flying saucer hunt, says "there's no reason why the government should spend a lot of money checking up on lights in the sky."

Neither national security nor science were being served, the Air Force said in announcing an end Wednesday to 21-year-old Project Blue Book, which kept voluminous files on reported sightings of unidentified flying objects.

Hundreds of thousands of dollars were spent on Blue Book in addition to the \$539,000 for the Condon panel's 18-month study.

The University of Colorado physicist, in a telephone interview from Boulder, Colo., said though there are "plenty of kooks" who claim otherwise, "no body has produced a shred of solid, credible evidence to support the idea that these UFOs represent visitors from outer space."

Phi Delta Sigma Aids Toy Drive

Phi Delta Sigma pledges and the Bryan-College Station Jaycees are cooperating in a Christmas toy drive for orphans and underprivileged children.

The pledges have worked two nights a week for the past two weeks sorting toys. The drive will end Friday and the toys will be distributed during the holidays.

Snack Bar, Cafeteria Announce Hours

The Golf Club Snack Bar and the Memorial Student Center Cafeteria will be open on a holiday schedule, according to Fred W. Dollar, director of food services.

The snack bar will be open daily from 10:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., and the cafeteria will be open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Dec. 29-31.

GOLF CLUB SNACK BAR

The Golf Club Snack Bar will be open each day from 10:30 to 4:30 p.m. during Christmas and New Years Holidays.

Happy Holidays !!



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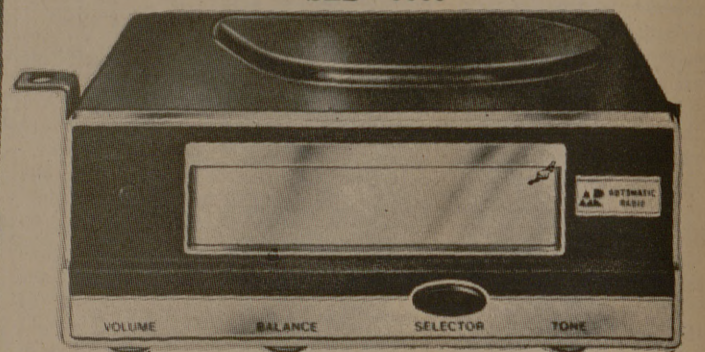


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Editor:

In response to Professor Douglas' letter of Dec. 12, I would like to present the following list of speakers which Political Forum has presented in the past and speakers to whom invitations have been extended and allow you to decide for yourself if the program of Political Forum is designed to "warp the minds of students and faculty to the left."

CONSERVATIVES

These have spoken: Bill Presnal-D, Bill Moore-D, Henry Grover-R, Bill Bass-D, George Bush-R, W. S. Heatley-D, Olin Teague-D, and Mrs. S. W. Kowierschke-R and David Crews-D.

These have been invited to speak: Strom Thurmond-R, Russell Kirk-R, Leroy Collins-D, Will D. Davis-D, John Tower-R,

Howard Baker-R, John Connally-D, Ben Barnes-D, Dan Gurney-R, Barry Goldwater-R, and Andrew Hacker.

MODERATES

These have spoken: W. T. McDonald-D, V. E. (Red) Berry-D, B. H. Dewey-D, Cliff Carter-D and Mrs. Walt Rostow-D.

These have been invited to speak: Winthrop Rockefeller-R and Margaret Chase Smith-R.

LIBERALS

These have spoken: Barbara Jordan-D, A. R. Schwartz-D, Bob Eckart-D, Wych Fowler-D, Ralph Yarborough-D.

These have been invited to speak: Mark Hatfield-R, Shirley Chisholm-D, Harold Hughes-D, George McGovern-D, Edmund Brooke-R, Jesse Unruh-D, Albert Pena-D, Birch Bayh-D, Kenneth

Keating-R, and Don Gladden-D.

(I do realize that classifications of this type are rather arbitrary but these classifications would be those of a substantial number of political observers.)

Tommy Henderson
Student Senator

Vet Prof Attending Rijswijk Symposium

Dr. Stewart McConnell, associate professor in the Veterinary Microbiology Department at the College of Veterinary Medicine, is participating in a symposium this week at Rijswijk, The Netherlands.

Dr. McConnell received a special invitation to present a paper entitled "Monkey Pox—Prevention and Control."

The Battalion

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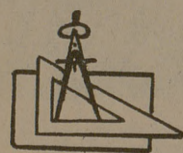
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