



Listen Up

Editor: A pain strikes deep within a mother's womb, She cries out in the night. A father weeps silently as he sits by his desk at work. A boy has died. Death's cadence keeps time, a mournful sound. A valley speaks for the departed. Walls of trumpets disturb the birds. A man no longer walks with his comrades. At A&M there is Silver Taps. Ah, yes, we are a large university. Is it 15,000 now? We cannot live in the past. It is ridiculous for an institution so big and so important in research to turn out its lights and remain still for an

evening. "Why I have that paper to write, the test to study for, and my research is too important to take time from. But it is only a few minutes so I will put up with it. Afterwards I can turn on the lights and work!" It was two days into classes. We move to another year and traditions bend a little and crack. Another Aggie dies. Yes, we still have Silver Taps, but the spirit took a day off to die. When the Aggie Spirit dies who will hold Silver Taps? A mother cries herself to sleep. A father hides his tears at work. At A&M there is . . . Jan Faber '74

Ask Walter H. Parsons Jr. what he's enjoyed most about life and his answer is quick — Texas A&M. Parsons retired Thursday as director of the TAMU Physical Plant, the institution's largest department with 630 employees and the tough job of providing maintenance and utilities to almost all parts of the nation's largest college campus. The retired Army Corps of Engineers colonel, a 1930 architectural structural engineering graduate of TAMU, has earned a reputation for getting the most out of people through kindness. He also has a hard time saying "no" to any civic request. Parsons and his wife plan to stay in the Bryan-College Station area. "I have enough work to keep me busy for a long time," he said on the eve of retirement. His civic work includes board member for the Bryan City Mission, including serving as chairman of the building committee which plans to develop a 9 1/2-acre donated site; Sir Knight in the Knights of Columbus, as well as district deputy and Master of the Fourth Degree; past president of the St. Mary's Catholic Church Council; 10-county chairman of the USO, and former president and six-year board member of Catholic Charities, Austin Diocese. In addition, Parsons is a board member of the Sam Houston Boy Scouts of America, the College Station Salvation Army, past president of the College Station Community Chest, president of the College Station Kiwanis Club and advisor to Alpha Phi Omega, the student service fraternity. Since joining the staff in 1962, Parsons has concentrated on serving the community and improving the physical plant services. He said reorganization of the physical plant, the former Building and College Utilities Department, and computerization of the administrative department are his proudest accomplishments. The workers were organized under the same system used by the armed forces. While the enrollment and facilities of the university almost doubled over the past 10 years, the work force has remained about the same. "When we started computerization, there was concern that some of the people would lose

their jobs. Actually, it allowed us to take on more work and increased efficiency," Parsons related. He also started an "employee of the month" program, which the employees like. He said complaints dropped fast. Another of Parson's ideas was providing free uniforms and uniform laundry for the physical plant workers. It improved appearance and attitude on the job. One university official pointed out Parson's has the toughest job on campus. His department not only provides all the utilities for the 5,200-acre campus, but handles all maintenance. The department is responsible for just about everything except new construction over \$10,000. Parsons came to TAMU following retirement as center engineer at the vast Army Air Defense Center in El Paso. His Army career included organization and construction of an oil refinery and 1,000 miles of pipe lines in the Yukon Territory during World War II. He was senior engineering branch professor in the ROTC program here from 1948-51, which he calls the best time of his Army career, and various other assignments in Germany, director of instruction at the Army Engineer School at Fort Belvoir, Va., education at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., and director of the Department of Army Snow, Ice and Permafrost Research Establishment. Four of the Parsons' five sons attended TAMU. They are Lt. Col. Walter H. Parsons III, 1956 graduate now on the engineering staff at West Point; Maj. Donald Parsons, 1958 graduate, military intelligence officer with the 82nd Airborne Division at Fort Bragg, N.C.; David Parsons, who attended A&M one year before going to West Point and graduating, now an engineer in Minneapolis, Minn., and Paul Parsons, 1970 graduate employed by a Houston glass company. Son Michael, a New York freelance advertising writer studied at a St. Louis seminary.

System Plant Employees Honored Wednesday

Three men directly involved in Texas A&M's recent phenomenal growth were honored Wednesday by TAMU system physical plant employees at a retirement party. Howard H. Badgett, assistant director of facilities planning and construction; C. K. Leighton, system civil engineer, and Paul K. Gippin, construction inspector who has been overseeing the Mitchell Campus program in Galveston, retired. Executive vice president Gen. A. R. Luedecke presented retirement certificates. "On an occasion such as this when friends gather that you have worked with the major part of your lives, it's a saddening

note," Gen. Luedecke commented. "Actually, it's not when you can swap your pencil, paper and slide rule for a good fishing pole." Badgett has been building campus facilities 38 years, including planning most of the buildings standing today. The Denison native earned bachelor and master's degrees from Texas A&M, in 1929 and 1932. He was with the Texas Engineering Experiment Station before World War II. Returning as assistant manager of construction, Badgett became director of the physical plant, manager of TAMU system physical plants and then assistant director of system facilities planning and construction. Leighton joined Texas A&M in

1940 as construction engineer and became the system civil engineer. A 1933 A&M graduate in civil engineering, he worked for the Texas Highway Department several years and is past-president of the Brazos Chapter of the Texas Society of Professional Engineers. A registered engineer, Leighton was formerly from Corsicana. Gippin joined the university in 1968 as construction inspector. Also an A&M graduate, Class of 1928, with his bachelor degree in mechanical engineering, he is a registered professional engineer with more than 40 years experience. The Dallas native was unable to attend the retirement event due to illness of his wife.

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Batt News Summary

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS SAN CLEMENTE, Calif. — President Nixon flew Wednesday to Hawaii for summit talks with Japanese Prime Minister Kakuei Tanaka. Besides his two days of talks with Tanaka, Nixon plans some election-year politicking and a meeting Thursday with Ambassador Ellsworth Bunker, U. S. envoy to Saigon. NEW YORK — Democratic presidential nominee George McGovern charged Wednesday that President Nixon has remained silent "in the face of continued persecution of Soviet Jews."

Appearing before the New York Board of Rabbis, the South Dakota senator urged that restrictions on emigration by Soviet Jews be eased. REYKJAVIK, Iceland — Bobby Fischer inched closer to the world chess championship Wednesday as he drew the 20th game of his match with Boris Spassky. The American challenger needs only one more point to take the world title away from Spassky. HONOLULU — President Nixon arrived in rain-swept Hawaii Wednesday for summit talks with Japanese Prime Minister

Kakuei Tanaka and predicted the mid-Pacific conference will contribute to a new structure of peace. A lei draped around his neck, Nixon stood in the rain and told an estimated 5,000 persons who gave him a warm welcome that he was here to further the United States' "very close friendship" with Japan. Nixon noted that it was in Hawaii three decades ago that World War II began with the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. TRY BATTALION CLASSIFIED

The Battalion

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