

Among 19 vet schools in U.S.

Many veterinarians from A&M

By MARY ALICE WOODHAMS

One out of every eleven veterinary school graduates in America comes from Texas A&M. Located west of the Northgate area on Farm Road 60, the vet school has an enrollment of 401 students who will earn a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (D.V.M.) degree during a three-year program. There are 19 veterinary schools in the nation, and only two of them have three year programs.

After passing the state veterinary exams, graduates may work in small animal practice, general or "mixed" practice, large-animal treatment, and in zoos or the military as a veterinary officer. A&M offers several post-doctoral degrees in veterinary surgery, pathology, microbiology and other fields.

"More of our graduates now go into small-animal medicine," said Dr. George Shelton, dean of the college. "Animals play a major role in the mental health of our society. People will pay for having their animals cared for, and this has influenced our profession a great deal."

Of the graduates, thirty-five per cent go into small animal medicine or "companion animal practice"—treatment of dogs, cats and horses. Fifty per cent enter general practice in small towns where they work in every aspect of veterinary medicine. And fifteen per cent work specifically with food animals.

Shelton said that three or four graduates are commissioned annually into the armed services.

Today the College of Veterinary Medicine receives an estimated \$4 million budget and a \$1.5 million research budget, said Lyndon Kurtz, administrative assistant.

Mark Francis, founder of the veterinary college, could not secure enough funds for buildings or equipment.

He writes, "I think they felt that nothing could be done and it would simply be a waste of public money." He was the first professor of veterinary medicine when he arrived at A&M in 1888, and helped establish a four-year veterinary science program, in 1905.

Francis' efforts in the control of "Texas fever", a blood disease in cattle transmitted by ticks, impressed

the 1916 Texas legislature and they appointed \$100,000 for the construction of Francis Hall, which housed the Veterinary College. The school was later moved to the west campus in order to keep the animals away from the academic area and since 1920 about 2900 students have earned their DVM from A&M.

"Everyone is talking about the 'new' west campus, but we've been here for years," said Dr. Shelton.

The college consists of three connected buildings—the Veterinary Administration building completed in 1968, the Vet Hospital built in 1954 and the Basic Sciences building completed in 1955.

Students at the vet school attend classes from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily for three 15-week trimesters. Training is in every aspect of veterinary medicine, from basic to applied.

Students do not specialize in any field while earning their D.V.M., although they may take eight hours of electives in the third year to concentrate in a given area.

"It's against veterinary ethics to publicize that you're a specialist," said Jan DeWitt, a first-year student.

To practice veterinary medicine in Texas, a person must earn a D.V.M. and pass the state exams. The tests involve two and one half days of written exams and interviews with a six-man committee appointed by the governor. Students learn the results of the state tests on graduation day in August, and those not passing the exam may re-take it six months later.

First-year students take basic veterinary science courses, including anatomy, histology, pathology, physiology and pre-clinical studies. A videotape network permits them to witness animal autopsies broadcast into their classroom from the surgery areas.

"When the classroom is not in use, a student can go on his free time and replay a videotape," said Kurtz.

Second year students learn advanced veterinary science and junior surgery. The first and second year classes are divided into two sections with about 70 students in each.

In the third year of the program, students spend most of their time in clinical practice.

Duty groups of four to eight people work in several clinics on a weekly basis, gaining experience in surgery, pathology, parasitology, public health and food hygiene, poultry disease and radiology. The groups spend five weeks in large animal clinics treating horses and cattle, and four weeks treating dogs and cats.

Students on the ambulatory clinic leave at 6 a.m. for Texas Department of Corrections at Huntsville, giving free services to their cattle.

Third-year students perform clinical surgery under the supervision of instructors, and often assist in operations.

"We have two kinds of practice: the out-patient clinic for local people to bring animals for routine treatment, and the referral clinic, where Dallas and Houston veterinarians refer animals for special treatment," said Shelton.

The referral clinic gives services a private practitioner cannot render, and clients are charged average rates, said Kurtz. Patients that stay overnight are charged \$5 daily for feed and stall fees.

A&M owns more than 100 horses and 300 head of cattle that are used for study in addition to patients brought in. Small animals used for dissection are purchased from dealers, while large animals are often bought live at local auctions.

Experimental drugs are never used on patients, but if an animal is donated to the school it can be used for research.

"If the prognosis is that a donated animal will not live, we may use experimental drugs. If the animal survives, we return it to its owner," said Kurtz.

Students of the college publish "The Southwestern Veterinarian" magazine each trimester. They write, edit, photograph and draw for the magazine, which includes articles by A&M professors and costs \$2 an issue.

The College of Veterinary Medicine employs 140 faculty members, 115 of whom work full time.

"Most of our faculty have more than one degree," said Shelton. There are about 30 full time faculty members who research cancer, thyroid and heart diseases, as well as Venezuelan Equine Encephalitis (VEE).

WOODY GILPIN '50

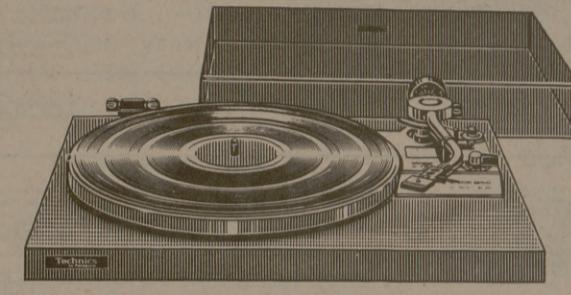
Dear Fellow Students and Local Citizens of Aggieland:

We were raised in the shadows of Texas A&M University; went to school at A&M Consolidated; and then to TAMU. We urge you to support our favorite candidate, W. W. (Woody) Gilpin, A&M, Class of 1950, for Brazos County Commissioner, Precinct No. 3, in the May 1, Democratic Primary. Not only because he is our DAD but because he is the best qualified candidate, by education and experience. He fought for you in World War II.

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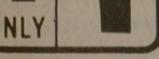
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