

# How oxygen pressure cures is not clear

Physiologist William Fife might not term the cures carried out in his hyperbaric (high pressure oxygen) lab as miracles. But some patients who received the pressure chamber treatments at Texas A&M University are alive or in good health today because of it. Modern science is still baffled as to why.

Fife, associate dean of Texas A&M's College of Science, has pioneered the use of high pressure oxygen in arresting or curing certain

serious infections, sores and gangrene cases that had discouraged both patient and physician.

Untreated, these ailments could have resulted in loss of limb or life for the patients referred to the unique University facility.

The white pressure chamber in the lab swings open its hatch to receive an average of three cases a day, five days a week, year-round with minimum time for holidays. All patients come on a referral-only basis from local doctors.

Still, the University regards it as a training facility for Texas A&M students even though doctors and patients are happy to have it available for medical treatments.

Although the chamber treatments are administered to a variety of afflictions from gangrene to carbon monoxide poisoning and radiation therapy sores, among the most common are failing skin grafts and osteomyelitis, an infectious inflammatory disease of the bone. The latter malady results in death of sur-

rounding tissue, which sometimes causes a painful abscess.

Scientists are still puzzled as to why the delicate balance of just the right amount of oxygen works, but they know it does.

Discovering what makes it work is one of the next research projects, says Fife, although he hastens to point out that no experiments are conducted on the steady stream of patients treated here.

The chamber is used as an addition to regular treatment and is an alternative when other therapy does not seem to work alone.

Some of the life-saving cures come about in only a few days. Others take months. Numerous times, the patients' arms or legs are saved from amputation. There are many diseases, however, which are not helped at all by the hyperbaric treatment.

Medical authorities are interested in the technique and the Air Force School of Aerospace Medicine in San Antonio is one of the most active centers for such treatment. Fife works in conjunction with them and plans are being considered to bring the two programs even closer together. Some of the Air Force physicians are already visiting members of Texas A&M's graduate faculty.

But medical treatment is just one phase of the hyperbaric ground broken here by Fife.

He has been instrumental in de-

veloping a non-explosive underwater breathing mixture called hydrox, short for hydrogen and oxygen. The mix allows divers to go deeper and stay longer.

Student research projects conducted with animals also increase man's knowledge of hyperbarics. One of the current projects indicates that it may be harmful for the unborn child if pregnant women go underwater diving or are subjected to rapid decompression that sometimes occurs in space travel.

One of the features of the Texas A&M hyperbaric lab is that it serves at once as a medical, research and teaching tool.

Graduate students are given direct responsibility for operating the chamber. Fife teaches classes in treating underwater diving accidents (including the "bends") and on handling patients taking hyperbaric therapy.

The students, nearly all of whom have some scuba diving experience, come from several disciplines on campus — marine resources management, ocean engineering, oceanography, underwater archeology and biology.

Since they must pop in and out of the pressure chamber during their education, Fife insists the students remain in top physical condition.

So once a week, they close down shop at the end of the evening's work and head for the campus pool for late night swimming exercises.

## Kellogg says its products aren't causing cavities

United Press International  
BATTLE CREEK, Mich.—The pungent smells of corn syrup and malt assail the nostrils of visitors who pass the statue of Tony the Tiger and enter the 140-acre Kellogg cereal company complex.

In the days when Sugar Pops were tops and Tony insisted Sugar Frosted Flakes were G-R-R-E-A-T, there was no particular reason for the city's biggest employer to worry about the effect of its commercials on young children.

Now, the Federal Trade Commission wants to change all that.

The FTC is contemplating a ban on cereal and candy commercials aimed at very young children and a requirement that advertisers of sugared products pay for public service announcements preaching good nutrition and dental health.

The proposal has raised quite a stir in the cereal manufacturing capital of the world.

"We already take special care to show milk being poured on our cereals," said Peggy Wollerman, a public relations spokeswoman for Kellogg, largest of the "Big Four" cereal makers based in Battle Creek.

"We would have no problem with a tag line like 'brush after breakfast.'"

Kellogg, which produces everything from frozen pies in Pennsylvania to pizza in Australia and baby food in Brazil, puts most of its stock in cereal. Kellogg's Corn Flakes is big business.



Battalion photo by Susie Williams

### Passing fancy

A future Aggie athlete? This could be quite possible. Four-year-old Kris Welch's father is Bruce Welch, a former offensive guard on the Texas Aggie football team. Kris may be planning to become a quarterback as he demonstrates great passing ability with his rock throwing.

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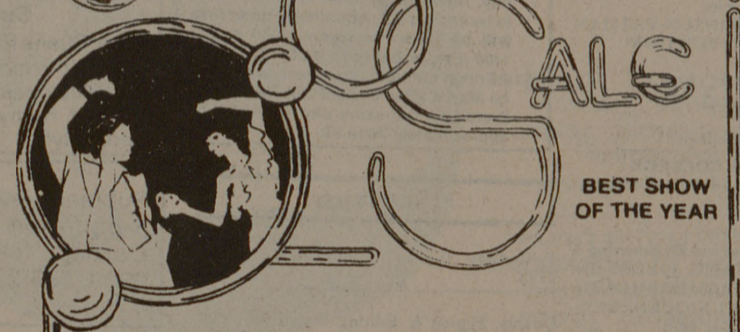
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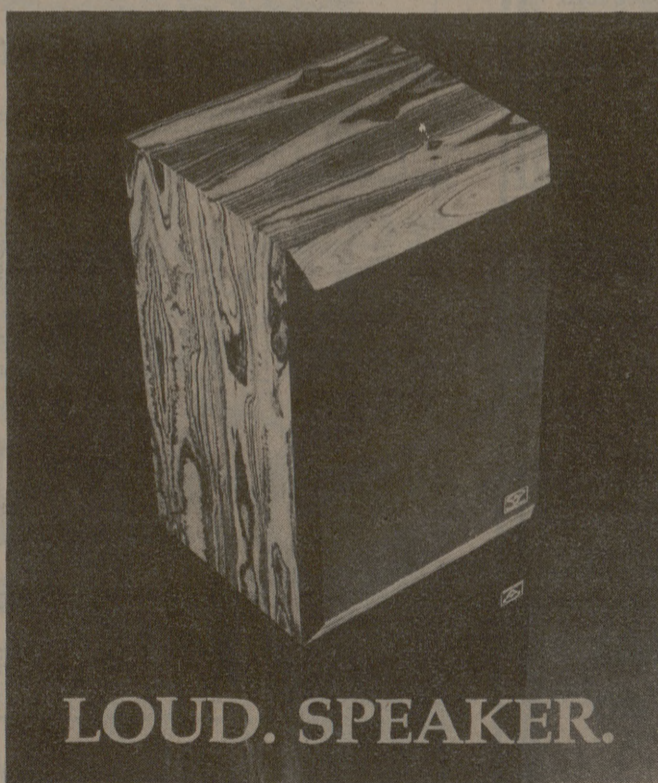
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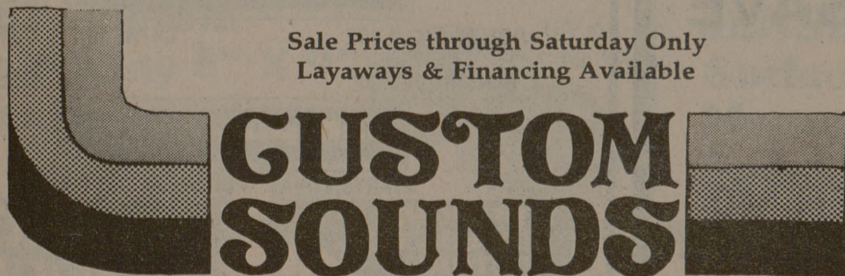
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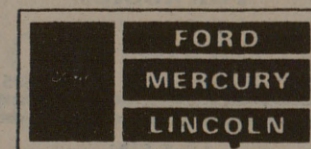
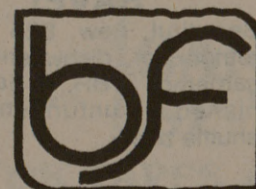
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