

First JFK High School

Texas kids honor memory

United Press International
SAN ANTONIO — John F. Kennedy is more than a history lesson for students at a high school located in one of the poorer school districts in Texas, an area where many adults keep pictures of the late president and Jesus Christ on the wall.

"My mother told me he was a great man," said Tonya Spellman, 17, a senior at John F. Kennedy High School, the first school to be named for the late president following his assassination 15 years ago in Dallas.

Much has been done at JFK High to keep the memory and achievements of the late president alive, including a memorial service each year to "acquaint" the students with the school's namesake.

Jeanette Benavides, 17, said: "I've never heard any bad things. He stuck to his morals. He liked people."

"He started the Peace Corps, he visited West Berlin. He challenged the Russians. My father talks about what he remembers," said LeRoy Johnson, 18.

John F. Kennedy High, completed in September 1963 but never officially dedicated because of the president's assassination two months later in Dallas, is located near the gates of Kelly Air Force Base. Many of its students are Mexican-Americans whose parents voted 8-1 for the first Roman Catholic president.

Principal Antonio Rodriguez said this year's memorial service will be viewed by students on closed circuit television throughout the school district. Officials also plan to transmit a

film on Kennedy's life obtained from the public library.

"The years I've been here, it's been one of our traditions and loyalties," Rodriguez said.

There are reminders of Kennedy throughout the school. Its sports teams are called "the Rockets," because of Kennedy's interest in the space program, its colors are green and white in recognition of Kennedy's Irish ancestry. Pictures of the late president, memorials and a framed copy of his inaugural address presented to the school by Sen. Edward Kennedy, D-Mass., adorn the walls.

David Ochoa, 28, an assistant principal and "Kennedy buff," led student delegations at their own expense to the national cemetery at Washington in 1974 and to Dealy Plaza in Dallas in 1975 to lay wreaths in memory of Kennedy.

Ochoa is proud of a framed copy of Kennedy's last official speech, made at the dedication of Brooks Air Force Base on Nov. 21, 1963, in which Kennedy said: "This nation has tossed its cap over the wall of space and we have no choice but to follow it."

The speech is backed by a piece of plywood cut from the stage on which Kennedy stood to make the speech the day before he was shot by Lee Harvey Oswald in Dallas.

A cramped schedule prevented Kennedy from answering an invitation signed by 18,000 area residents to dedicate the school or for his wife to accept an honorary degree at a local university.

"The students were optimistic until the last minute that he would show up," Ochoa said. "The Secret Service had come to the school just in case he could make it."

Kennedy had promised Gonzalez he would return in early 1974 to dedicate the school, and perhaps for his wife to receive the honorary degree at nearby Our Lady of the Lake College.

"We shook hands on it," Gonzalez recalls.

The next day was one of shock as word arrived at the school that Kennedy had been shot.

"Just watching the kids, it was a general shocked attitude, disbelief, like it really didn't happen," recalls Beatrice Brown, a counselor at the school. "They came in and asked us: 'Did it really happen? Is it really true?'"

Ochoa said school officials hoped Edward Kennedy or some other family member would formally dedicate the school.

Canines are best salesmen

United Press International
NEW YORK — Trademarks have gone to the dogs, according to a study unleashed here by the creators of one of America's oldest and most popular product symbols.

Of the many animal insignias, canines are the most commonly used, says RCA, in announcing the rejuvenation of its own famous trademark, "Nipper," the fox terrier listening to "his master's voice" emanating from a gramophone.

Dogs have been featured throughout history on ancient signboards, knights' crests, letterheads and in corporate advertising, the study shows, because people love canines.

In addition to Nipper, other dogs still having their day include a pair of terriers that symbolize Scotch whisky, a bulldog for trucks, the black greyhound for a busline, a Boston terrier and a basset for shoes and, of course, a variety of hounds representing dog food manufacturers.

Kids in 1953 told '78 future

United Press International
BUFFALO, N.Y. — The fifth graders at the Eggert Road Elementary School did such a good job of predicting the future 25 years ago that their teacher decided to give them another try.

It was in 1953 that Dr. Richard Auerbach asked his pupils to visualize what the world would be like in 1978. He placed the prophecies in a time capsule that was opened last month.

The youngsters — now in their mid-30s — had accurately predicted:

- Three-hour trans-Atlantic jet flights.
- Touch-dial telephones.
- Heavy use of computers.
- Space travel.
- Inflation.

So Auerbach decided a reunion was in order. He invited his former pupils to his home Sunday.

The dozen who answered his call got quite a surprise: a yellow school bus whisked them to Eggert Road and Room 5A, the latter meticulously arranged in its 1953 pattern by Auerbach.

Auerbach, noting "it was legal to do it then, opened class with a prayer. He said the 'kids' received their 1953 predictions — marked and graded — and settled down to describe the planet's conditions a quarter-century hence.

Auerbach then sealed the 2003 world view in a second time capsule.

Two of the students' present occupations seemed to reflect a confidence in their 1953 oracles.

Historian says Indians weren't the only scalpers

United Press International
CHICAGO — Historian Francis Parkman wrote a vivid account of Indians hacking to pieces an elderly militia leader atop a kitchen table in what is now New Hampshire.

What Parkman, a noted 19th century historian, did not mention is the reason behind the grisly attack in the 1680s — the militia leader had tricked a group of Indians 13 years earlier.

Francis Jennings, himself an historian, said the victim invited the Indians as a gesture of goodwill to participate in wargames. But he seized the opportunity to take them captive, hang 13 and ship several hundred to the West Indies as slaves.

"There is a reporting of atrocities by the Indians in all the gory details," Jennings said, "but you just do not get descriptions of atrocities on the other side."

Jennings heads the Center for the History of the American Indian at Chicago's Newberry Library. The Center is working to set the history of American Indians straight for classrooms.

"I spent 34 years teaching everything from 10th grade to graduate school," he said. "And for the most part Indians were depicted as nothing but obstructions in the landscape to be swept aside for civilization or as savage animals."

Jennings said only in recent years have Americans' attitude about Indians as savages changed, but it has not yet fully filtered down to the classroom.

"The usual rule in college textbooks is an opening chapter on America before European discovery

and after that Indians are pretty much forgotten, except that they give some difficulty to settlers. Indians were people usually stereotyped with little cultural diversity."

Jennings said the depiction of Indians in American schools comes from a need for "justification of conquest."

"We've been stealing their land and we have to put a good face on it," he said.

Dorene Wiese, a Chicago Indian who participated in the center's workshop for teachers last summer, said the high school she attended in Minneapolis — a city with 10,000 Indians — offered virtually no material on Indians.

"The treatment of Indians in the school turned me off to history," said Wiese, 29. "There were a few sentences about Pocahontas and things like that. I got the subliminal message it was not cool to be an American Indian."

Jennings said a gradual change in attitudes toward Indians reflects improving race relations in the United States, heightened consciousness among America's 800,000 Indians and the growing numbers of Indians in the educational system.

Jennings said textbooks are plagued with "overt omissions like leaving out the entire culture and history" of the Indians and "mythmaking — rationalizing conquest in the name of progress and expansion."

Jennings said every school child knows about Indian scalping. But it is not commonly known that settlers also placed bounties on Indian scalps and heads and that frontiersmen in the Rocky Mountains "boasted gloves of Indian skins."

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