

Middle class can get Fed funds School grant eligibility widened

By LEIGH MCLEROY
Battalion Reporter

There's good news for students who thought their parents made too much money for them to receive financial aid. Nearly 68 percent of the undergraduate students at Texas A&M University will be eligible for Basic Education Opportunity Grants for the 1979-1980 school year.

The Basic Education Opportunity Grant is an open-ended account with no limit on funds. The Federal Government is required to pay those students who are deemed eligible for the grants by way of a financial report.

The ceiling for the BEOG was raised in 1978 by the Middle Income Assistance Act, making nearly 17,000 Aggies eligible for aid.

Last year, for example, the grant ceiling for a family with two children, one of whom attends college, was \$13,500. For the '79-'80 school year, that figure will increase to about \$25,000. The ceiling rises for families with more students in college and a greater number of dependents.

To apply for the BEOG students must submit a financial report. That form is available in room 310 of the YMCA building.

Once it is completed and mailed, it usually takes 30 to 40 days for a reply. A student's application is accepted or rejected, or more information is requested. There is no fee for filing the application.

The amount of each grant ranges from \$200 to \$1,800, depending on two variables: the student's eligibility index, which indicates the amount his parents can be expected to contribute for that year, and the cost of attending the student's university.

R. M. Logan, the University's director of financial aid said those cost figures have not been revised for several years. Because of inflation and higher tuition, the figures are low. He said the only way that will change is if students complain about it to their congressman.

Logan says the average grant issued is about \$950, made in two payments, one each semester.

There is no deadline for filing for the BEOG, but Logan advised applicants to file as quickly as possible to insure that grant payments are made early next fall.

Handgun safety program for women starts today

Women can learn how to handle firearms in a training program that starts today at Texas A&M University.

The classes are for women who have handguns for personal protection. They are being held at the Research Annex by personnel of the Law Enforcement and Security Training Division of the Texas Engineering Extension Service.

"In offering this training, we are not implying a person should or should not own a weapon for protection," Bill Cooksey, division training specialist, said. "We do feel that if she decides to (use a gun for protection), she should learn to handle it properly, for her safety and the safety of others."

The 20-hour course includes four-hour sessions today through Friday.

and an eight-hour session Saturday. The Saturday session will be devoted to firing on the weapons range at the Texas A&M Research and Extension Center off Highway 21.

The cost is \$30 per person which

includes practice ammunition for .38-caliber to .357-caliber pistols.

A course for men will be considered if interest is shown, Chief Ira E. Scott, head of the police training division, said.

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School prayer amendment taken from Dept. of Ed. bill and buried

WASHINGTON — The Senate, apparently unable to defeat the issue of allowing prayers in public schools, has taken the long way around to avoid a showdown on the emotional issue.

The winner, if there was one in the two days of skirmishing, was the proposed new education department. The leaders indicated it stood no chance of passage if the prayer amendment were attached to it.

In one of its last actions before taking a 12-day recess over Easter and Passover, the Senate attached the voluntary prayer amendment to a bill that has little chance of enactment, then eliminated it from the education department bill, which the administration did not want jeopardized by the controversy.

The issue came up suddenly last Thursday when an amendment by Sen. Jesse Helms, R-N.C., to the education department bill was adopted, 47-37. It would have overturned the Supreme Court ruling outlawing all voluntary prayer in public schools and buildings.

The leaders succeeded in getting a reconsideration of the vote and postponing it until Monday. But weekend head counts apparently showed they lacked enough votes to overturn it.

So after a series of procedural votes, Democratic Leader Robert Byrd — with Vice President Walter Mondale orchestrating the maneuver — led the Senate out of a political thicket that threatened to bring one side or the other to its knees.

His solution permitted a "yes" vote on attaching the amendment to a bill dealing with Supreme Court jurisdiction on other matters before deleting it from the education department bill, thus allowing some members the opportunity of voting both ways on the issue.

An irate Helms called it "the surest way to kill the prayer amendment," because Chairman Peter Rodino, D-N.J., of the House Judiciary Committee will bury the court jurisdiction bill "so deep it will take 14 bulldozers just to scratch the surface."

Helms promised to keep trying to overturn the court on the prayer issue "no matter how long it takes."

Home state campaign aid for Connally

WASHINGTON — In the 66 days since former Texas Gov. John Connally announced his candidacy for the GOP presidential nomination, he has raised \$1.27 million in campaign contributions with the bulk of the funds coming from his home state.

Connally's national campaign chairman, Winton Blount, Monday said the Connally for President Committee report to be filed this week with the Federal Election Commission will show financial contributions of approximately \$1.27 million for the period ending March 31.

"It is particularly significant that more than half the total funds received during this first period came from John Connally's home state friends and neighbors," Blount said.

"These are people who know him best, who are most intimately familiar with him and his record of integrity and service over a long period of time. I think that says a great deal about the man."

Blount said Connally had received more than 10,000 individual contributions from residents of 49 states, including 2,100 contributions of more than \$100 each.

Connally, campaigning Monday in San Antonio, made no reference to the campaign report but continued to criticize the Carter administration for blaming inflation on the oil companies.

Connally told 1,400 delegates to the International Petrochemical Conference that the Carter administration finally was deregulating the oil industry, but it still continued to blame that industry for the nation's economic woes.

"The American people know the No. 1 problem in America today is inflation," Connally said. "They (the administration) still put the blame on the oil companies."

and demanded to know of "one child who has been harmed by being exposed to prayer."

But Sen. Edward Kennedy, D-Mass., said overturning the Suvj Court's 1962 ban on classroom prayer would "establish a precedent for all types of mischief" with the Constitution, which he said was coming under its greatest assault in 200 years.

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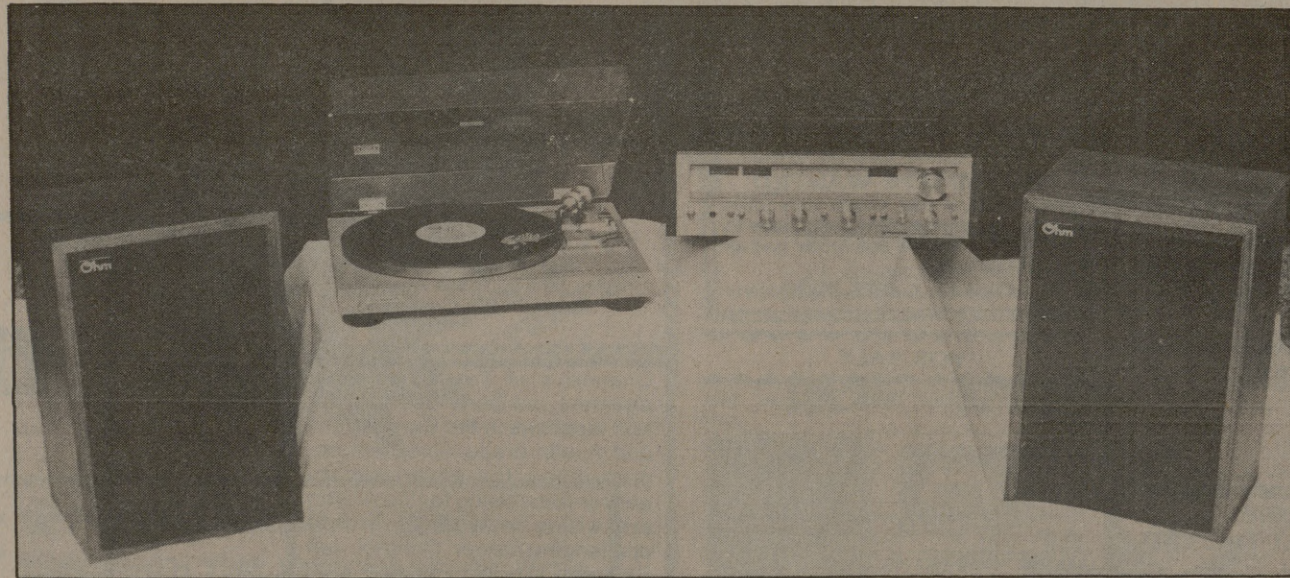
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