

Austin Kerley, an associate professor of educational psychology here, retired Jan. 31 after 27 years of service. Throughout his career,

Kerley tried to make life easier for the students.

Battalion photo by Lynn Blanco

Prof recalls easier times

'39 Ag made life simpler

By PATTI SHOQUIST
Battalion Reporter
Throughout a 27-year career at Texas A&M University, Austin Kerley, retired associate professor of educational psychology, has seen a lot of changes.

"Remember what A&M was like during the Depression," said Kerley, an Aggie graduate in 1939. He retired from Texas A&M on Jan. 31, although he still teaches senior level educational psychology part-time. Things were much simpler when I began teaching at A&M in 1952," he said, "the College of Education was only a tiny department back then." Despite the rapid growth of the University, Kerley centered his career around making life at A&M simpler for students.

In the early 1950s Kerley became director of guidance, and for 10 years he headed a counseling program for freshmen.

The program was a basic college division, like any other academic college, and had its own dean. All freshmen were enrolled in the program.

"The purpose of the basic college division was to supervise all freshmen before they transferred to a degree program," Kerley said. However, he said, "By 1960, those of us who were a part of the basic college felt that there were too many entering freshmen to continue such a program." The basic college program evolved into what is now the Academic Counseling and Testing Center, which aids all students seeking help in academic matters.

Helping entering freshmen was another of Kerley's projects. He said one of his most gratifying positions was serving as director of the A&M Adjunct, a summer camp in June.

For 20 years (1951-71) Texas A&M conducted two six-week summer sessions at the camp. Kerley said 250 students attended each session and received credit for two regular courses and one group guidance course.

"The benefits of such a program were that students could really concentrate on their studies, and they got off to a good start in college," he said. However, the summer camp program was not the only means of exposing students to Texas A&M, Kerley said. "Our University has a long heritage of concern with entering freshmen." "When I entered A&M as a freshman in 1934, I came here a week early to take placement tests and adjust to the campus." He said that it was very progressive for a school to have such a program 45 years ago.

In the 1950s, Kerley coordinated two-day summer conferences for entering freshmen.

There are now 13 to 15 two-day summer conferences for entering freshmen each year. At each conference students are given an opportunity to meet with their academic deans to plan their programs, take placement tests and see the campus.

A&M also brings 300 high school

counselors to the University each summer to acquaint them with the school's offerings.

More than 4,000 parents come to Texas A&M for summer conferences as well. Kerley said the parent conference program has improved public relations and communications between students, parents and the school.

Kerley said the expanding guidance program has helped entering freshmen adjust to college life with ease. However, he said more work should be done for transfer students to make their transition to college easier.

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President requests Congress double wilderness acreage

United Press International
WASHINGTON — President Carter has asked Congress to add 15.4 million acres to the nation's wilderness system, almost doubling the acreage preserved from roads or settlement.

The president also has ordered more than 36 million acres of untrampled U.S. countryside opened up for logging, oil, gas and mineral exploration.

Carter said in a White House statement that release of the lands will help meet the nation's "urgent need for energy, wood products, livestock forage, minerals" and will provide for a "broad array of recreational opportunities."

"While we plan to proceed with other uses on these lands, this does

not automatically mean that all of these areas will be intensively or immediately developed," said Assistant Agriculture Secretary M. Rupert Cutler.

Wilderness areas, which must be approved individually by Congress, are intended to offer solitude, with access only by foot, mule, horse or, in Alaska, by dog sled.

About 9.9 million acres of wilderness would be in the lower 48 states and about 5.5 million in Alaska.

Carter also asked Agriculture Secretary Bob Bergland to study another 10.6 million acres of the land with a view to energy exploration and possibly logging.

Those areas include parts of the Overthrust geological formation running through Montana, Idaho,

Utah and Wyoming and are believed rich in energy resources.

Another Agriculture Department official said it could be 20 to 30 years before activities begin on some non-wilderness areas.

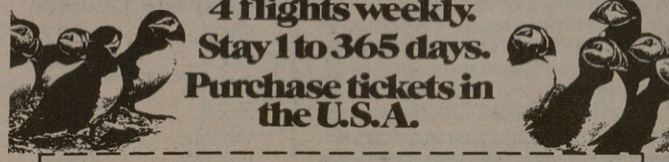
The lands involved are in 38 states

from coast to coast and Puerto Rico.

The largest chunks of wilderness are proposed for Idaho with 2.2 million and Colorado with 2 million acres. Almost 1 million acres have been proposed in California and about 700,000 in Wyoming.

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