

Local

Russians do without wheat, A&M does without pianist

By JED T. YOUNG
Campus Reporter

Russians will do without American wheat and Americas will do without Russian performers. Texas A&M University has recently felt an irrevocable cancellation of a Russian artist's performance here.

Texas A&M's MSC Opera and Performing Arts Society March 27. OPAS adviser James Randolph said the cancellation was due to the current political situation.

Randolph said Soviet artists are much like American artists in that both usually have American management agencies who handle tour arrangements. The agency wrote to Berman in the Soviet Union to ex-

plain that his tour had been cancelled.

Randolph said the agency, Jacques Leiser of New York, told Berman that it was cancelling the tour because it felt adequate security could not be provided due to the current political situation.

They had also written to OPAS: "In view of the situation between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R., we request

that you take strict precautions to assure the safety (of Berman)."

Randolph said he thought there was no reason to be so concerned about the safety of a Russian pianist performing in the U.S., because his life was not truly in any grave danger.

The proposed tour would have included performances in Cleveland,

Philadelphia, New York and at the Kennedy Center in Washington. This would have been the fourth year that Berman has toured the U.S.

In Berman's place American pianist Bryon Janis will perform April 17 in Rudder Auditorium. Ironically, Janis was the first pianist to visit the Soviet Union at the beginning of the cultural exchange.

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QUALITY FIRST

Handicapped help

Center puts special people to work

By AMY DAVIS
City Reporter

Joe, 27, works at a local food service business, a job he has held for three years. He is active in his church and attends night school.

Mundane as his life may sound, he prefers it to the 16 years he spent as a patient at state schools for the mentally retarded.

In September 1976, Joe left the Alexia State School and entered a training program set up by the Brazos Valley Mental Health-Mental Retardation Center.

Four years later, he has become a razos County resident who is so "normal" that his co-workers do not now he is retarded.

He is the epitome of success for the Dilly Shaw Vocation Training center.

Dr. John McBeth, director of the mental retardation programs for the Brazos Valley, said the center is a sheltered workshop that his staff supervising clients who work on assigned tasks.

"We try to keep the clients challenged, but not to the point of frustration," McBeth said.

The center is set up "kind of like a small business," McBeth said. The clients are paid according to the amount of work they do and the center is under contract to a company.

For example, the clients are currently installing storm windows and another group works as a janitorial service, he said.

When the clients start approaching minimum wage in their pay scale, they are usually moved into the janitorial service. From there they go to a job in the community.

"We try to build the client up progressively to the point where they can successfully perform a job in the community at a pay of minimum wage or higher," McBeth said.

He said many of the employers benefit from hiring "handicapped"

clients. The government provides a tax break for the employers.

When a client has been trained and is ready for a job, he is as good, if not better, than the person he replaces, McBeth said.

He said the center usually tries to place the client in jobs with a high turnover.

"One thing about mentally retarded people — they don't mind doing the same thing over and over again in their jobs," he said.

The Brazos Valley MHMR Center does more than just train people for

jobs.

Another program provided is "The Family Tree," a halfway house for mentally retarded males. Presently, there are six men living in the four-bedroom home in Bryan.

McBeth said, "The goal of the program is to bring people out of the state schools and rehabilitate them.

"The men are taught things most of us learn by just growing up," he said. Brushing teeth, washing hair and managing money are some examples.

"It is really interesting to watch these men develop into real human beings," he said. "That is what the center is trying to accomplish."

The center helps the taxpayer monetarily. It costs about \$400 a month more for a client to live in a state school than a halfway house, he said.

Another thing that cannot be measured is the greater amount of happiness found in a house, as compared to a school, McBeth said.

"You can't assign a monetary value to someone's happiness. The client is involved in society when he lives at the house. In a school, he is only exposed to other mentally retarded people," McBeth said.

The facility is funded by grants from the state and McBeth said he is pleased with the amount of money they have been receiving.

"I have nothing to gripe about. It would be nice to have a better facility for the sheltered workshop, but right now, we have what we need," he said.

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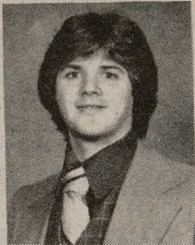
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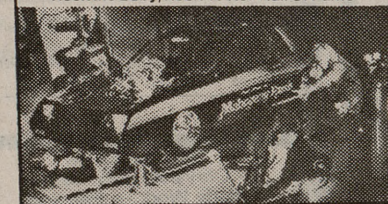
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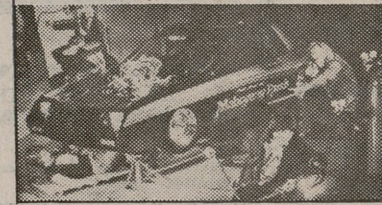
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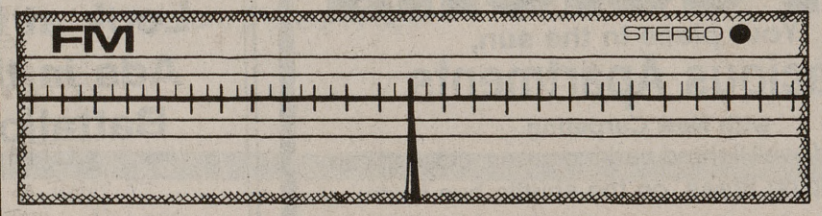
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