Florist wills estate to A&M

Floral art blooms on campus

Buddy Benz sent flowers to Texas when he retired, but his wasn't just my average bouquet. They haven't wilted and are blooming bigger than

Benz, a Texas A&M alumnus and oral design specialist, made flowers is life. In fact, his theories of floral ign, world-wide lectures and deonstrations made him famous.

By the time Benz was ready to etire, his estate included a rewned school of floral design which ad operated since 1945 and the opy rights and publishing rights to hree successful books on floral art. t none of his heirs were interested taking over the business, Benz de-

That's when Texas A&M, his alma ater, came into the picture, and came the sole heir of the estate. The three books are the only ones the floristry field that have ever en reprinted, and are recognized and the world as the best, florist m Johnson said.

Benz chose Johnson, his former tudent and florist for 14 years, to each his course at Texas A&M.

Johnson said he felt there is mough training for people entering oristry, so he decided to sell his siness in Indiana and move to Colge Station.

"There's nothing better than working with Aggies," he said, twist-ng his curly mustache. "They're ensiastic and they really seem to low where they're going and what hey want. They're the fuel of my atteries, that's for sure."

Benz' floral design course, a twoweek, intensive study from 9 a.m.-5 .m., teaches students the design nd mechanics involved in making ower arrangements.

"It's one thing to know proportion anchor those flowers."

Seven students, from California to Louisiana, completed the first class held at Texas A&M in August.

"It's been like money in the bank for me. I learned so much," said one of the students, Joel Baker, who worked at a San Antonio florist shop or six months. "I didn't know if I would be that

od," he said, "and now I do all the esigning. It gave me the confidence

Iim Johnson teaches students the finer points of floral arranging in a two-week intensive course. Johnson's most recent class included students from as far away as California.

school. He got us interested in art. You'll start to see things that you've never noticed before. Even if you don't become a florist, it's worth taking the class just to know Mr. Johnson and let him open your eyes

The floral designer works with his medium, flowers and plant materials, just like an architect works with concrete, steel and glass, and like a painter works with oil or a clothing designer with silk and wool, Johnson said. The principles are the same no matter what medium is being used.

Johnson teaches flower arranging and line and rhythm," Johnson said, by making an example in the class"but it's another to know how to room applying the principles of design. The students then make up their own designs. Eighty percent of the students' time is spent standing at their desk and making ar-

rangements, Johnson said.

"All of the human emotions are expressed through flowers, so a florist needs to know how to deal with people," he said. "What could be more emotional than funerals, weddings, having a baby, getting a promotion or celebrating an anniversary! We talk a lot in our class about deal-"Johnson is a real asset to (the) ing with people

'It's one of the few businesses in the world where you still work with your hands and with people on a oneto-one basis, and where you can be creative and express your managerial talents all at once," he added.

The two-week course is offered through the Office of Continuing Education, but students who would like to take floral arranging for an elective credit can do so on a semes-

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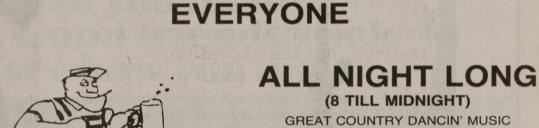
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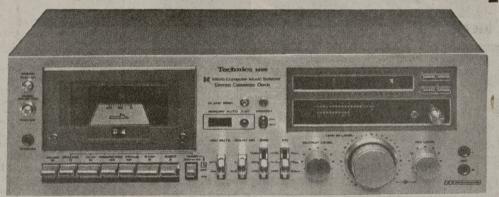
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