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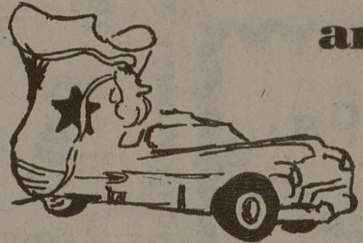
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Local

**Film, video show
to be presented**

By KATHLEEN McELROY
Battalion Staff

Since there's more to the U.S. Southwest than "Dallas" or any other television shows can portray, southwest artists are producing their own films and video, some of which will be shown tonight in 100 Harrington starting at 7 p.m.

Dr. Larry Hickman of the Texas A&M philosophy department, organizer of the evening, said Monday he's been interested in the visual media since his graduate days at the University of Texas. About that time, Marshall McLuhan wrote his revolutionary *Understanding Media*, the book proclaiming "The media is the message."

"I became convinced when I was in graduate school that we're under a profound technological revolution taking us from print to visual," he said. This revolution, he continued, has changed society's way of viewing fundamentals like knowledge and beauty.

Hickman said most of tonight's pieces will be film, made by people whose consciences reside in the Southwest. One such film tells of a clown who entertains in the region, performing in junior and senior high schools.

The video features work by Laurie MacDonald, a dancer-turned-video artist who now attempts to present more than the movement of dancing — like the filmmakers and their subjects, she wants to capture the conscience of dancing.

"She's done something conceptual with video she couldn't do dancing," Hickman says. "She does a dying swan on ice." Not a ballet dancer gracing a stage, but actually a bird dying.

The program is sponsored by the Texas A&M Department of Philosophy, the Southwestern Alternative Media Project and the Texas Commission on the Arts. They will also sponsor another night of films Wednesday, Nov. 5. That evening is devoted to the film work of Andy Anderson, a professor at University of Texas-Arlington.

Life expectancy rising

What's it like to age?

By NANCY ANDERSON
Battalion Staff

To be 65 in America is to be considered old. And being old is something most of us would rather not think about.

Yet one in every 10 Americans is 65 or older and 1,000 more join this steadily growing group daily, according to the National Council on Aging. With life expectancy increasing to 79 for men and 83 for women, it's time to look at what it is like to grow old in this country.

First of all, throw out any preconceived notions you may have about older people. They are no different from anyone under 65. They have the same physical and emotional needs as the rest of us.

However, there are some problems which are unique to this age group. Chief among these is living on a fixed income.

Social Security is the most common source of income and serves as the economic mainstay for many. Yet average monthly Social Security benefits for a retired worker living alone is \$283. It is \$482 for a couple with both spouses receiving benefits and \$267 for a widow, according to Consumer Guide magazine.

Additional income may come from Supplemental Security Income, a combination federal and state program that makes monthly payments to

needy persons over 65. The amount of money received depends on income, other resources and living arrangements. The maximum federal SSI payments are \$208.20 for an individual and \$312.30 for a couple, Consumer Guide reported.

The elderly get additional funds from pensions, savings, investments and veterans' benefits, to name a few. The median annual income for a married couple aged 65 to 71 is \$8,959 and declines to \$6,885 for couples 71 and older, according to Aging magazine.

Inflation is compounding the problem of living on an income which the NCA reported usually decreases by half upon retirement. The combination of inflation and decreased income is diminishing the older person's purchasing power.

Ironically, it is the expenses most affected by inflation — food, housing, medical care and drugs — which are incurred increasingly as a person gets older.

One solution to rising medical costs is Medicare, a government health insurance program which anyone 65 or older is eligible for. About 86 percent of this group have one or more chronic conditions, the most common according to the NCA being arthritis (38 percent), hearing impairments (29 percent), vision impairments (20 percent) and heart conditions (20 percent).

But the required medical care these problems — routine physical examinations, hearing aids, eyeglasses and drugs — are not covered by Medicare. Neither is dental care, dentures, so the average Medicare beneficiary still pays for 60 percent of his medical bills, according to Consumer Guide.

Housing is another major expense. It is the No. 1 financial burden for this group, the NCA reported, and it usually accounts for over a third of their total budget. Older people are more likely to live in houses, which for many is their major financial asset. About 30 percent live on rental properties, the NCA reported, and increasing rentals is causing some to become nomadic.

Contrary to public belief, only 10 percent of this group lives in nursing homes, according to the NCA.

But no matter where they live, the energy crisis is taking its toll on everyone. Increasing utility bills are taking bigger chunks out of already tight budgets. High gasoline prices are limiting many people's mobility since many own cars, but can't afford to fill the gas tanks. The lack of public transportation in many areas is also curbing this group's activities.

Yet despite the economic pressures, life can be normal and rewarding after 65.

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**Ag to speak
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The MSC Travel Committee is sponsoring a speech on travel in the Soviet Union Wednesday at 7 p.m. in MSC 226.

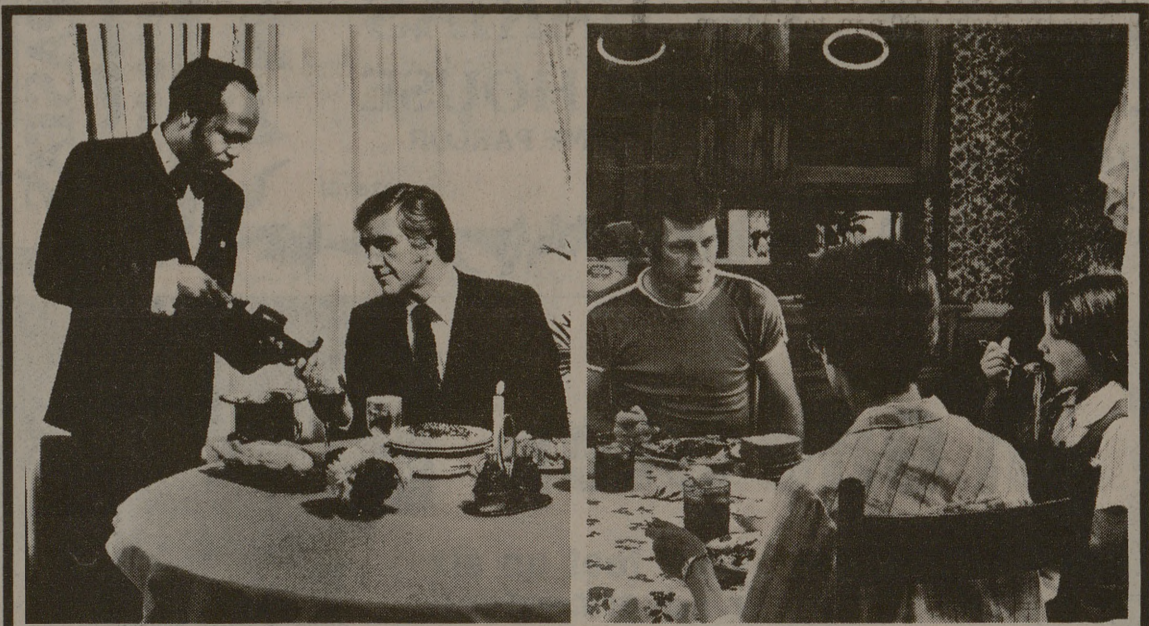
Speaking will be Richard Street, a fifth year student who spent 23 months this summer in Russia and eastern European countries.

His presentation will include a slide show.

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