

# Local

## Umbrellas do more than shield rain

By CATHERINE J. THOMAS  
Battalion Reporter  
Mary Poppins landed a job as a nanny with her umbrella, the girl on Morton's salt box sports hers on her shoulder and Gene Kelly discarded his and sang in the rain. Everybody has an umbrella.

T. S. Crawford said in his book, "A History of the Umbrella," the first umbrellas were constructed more than 3,000 years ago in Egypt and Assyria as a sign of prestige and to block the sun. He said it is thought that the umbrellas were modeled after the heavens, and were held over kings by their slaves to show their heavenly status.

Even in early Greece, Crawford said, the people sometimes used umbrellas by the side of graves to provide shade for the dead instead of the usual planted trees.

But not until 1750 were umbrellas used for the same purpose they are today — to shield rain. Crawford said even then they were seldom carried in anticipation of a shower because the novelty of their aristocratic status had worn off and their faulty waterproofing made them more trouble than they were worth.

The first pocket-sized

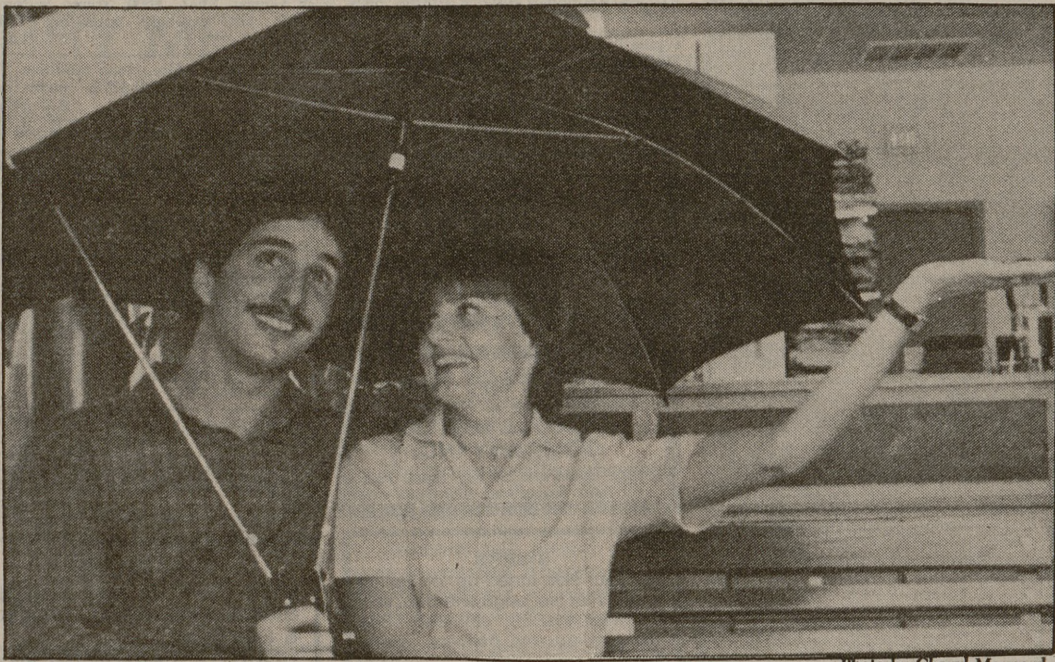


Photo by Cheryl Maynard

Prepared for the worst rainstorm, Steven Belli, a junior from Dallas, holds a dual umbrella over Kay Ingram, a sophomore from Houston. The umbrella sells for \$50.

umbrella was invented in 1787. The frame was made of whale bone and the handle was mahogany.

In the early 19th century umbrellas aided in nautical ex-

periments, Crawford said.

In 1844 they were used to test the prototype of the inflatable rubber life-raft. It was powered by an umbrella and a paddle.

Robert Louis Stevenson

coined this folksy phrase: "There is no act in meteorology better established ... than that the carriage of the umbrella produces dessication of the air; while it be left at home, aqueous

vapor is largely produced, and is soon deposited in the form of rain."

In other words: when you leave your umbrella at home, it'll rain.

Luckily, College Station isn't low on umbrellas, even after the wet spell last week.

Beall's, in Manor East Mall, has many \$6 and \$8 umbrellas, in both the tote size and regular size.

The Fair, also in Manor East Mall, has umbrellas ranging from \$2.49, for a see-through plastic one to \$4.50, for a black, men's style umbrella with a matching case.

Lester's, in Bryan, has umbrellas ranging from \$6 for a plastic one to \$21, for a cane-type umbrella, with an Italian-made handle.

R Rush & Co., in Culpepper Plaza, has a unique selection of umbrellas.

Their prices start at \$6 for a plain black umbrella and range to \$65 for an umbrella whose tip can be stuck in the ground and the handle opens up to form a chair.

Another unusual umbrella at R Rush & Co., going for \$50, is navy blue, has two adjacent domes and is made for two people. What could be more practical?

## Student conference to meet here Friday

Texas A&M University will host the Texas Junior Engineering Technical Society (JETS) conference Friday, at the Memorial Student Center and Rudder Complex.

The conference will include a competitive testing program, a General Assembly Awards Program and engineering exhibits.

High school students who are JETS members will take competitive tests in chemistry, engineering graphics, mathematics, biology, physics and English on Friday morning, Kathy Shearer, assistant state coordinator of JETS, said.

The winners of the competitive tests will be determined by raw test scores, Shearer said.

These winners, along with recipients of scholarships awarded by Southern Methodist University, Texas A&I University and Texas A&M will be honored at the General Awards Programs beginning at 3 p.m. in Rudder Auditorium.

W.W. Madden of Exxon Co., U.S.A. will speak at the program. Exhibits showing the contributions of engineering to society will be open from 8 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. in the Rudder Center Exhibit Hall.

The Texas Junior Engineering Society has been holding state conferences for over 25 years. This year's conference is sponsored by the Texas Advisory Committee for JETS in cooperation with Texas A&M's College of Engineering.

Approximately 2,300 JETS members will attend the conference, Shearer said.



Bottom Row (Left to Right) Kelly Conley, Stephanie Schwab, Brenda Anderson  
Back Row (Left to Right) Albert Martinez, Jesse Liscano, Michael Sloan

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## Recognition of Greeks still in works

A proposal to recognize Interfraternity Council and Panhellenic at Texas A&M University has been delayed for the past three weeks by the organizations' committee formed to draft the proposal.

When completed, the proposal will be submitted to Dr. John J. Koldus, vice president for student services, asking the Student Organizations Board to recognize the two Greek organizations as official University groups. This would allow the two groups to use University facilities for meetings and advertising and to apply for a share of the Memorial Student Center profits as do other recognized organizations.

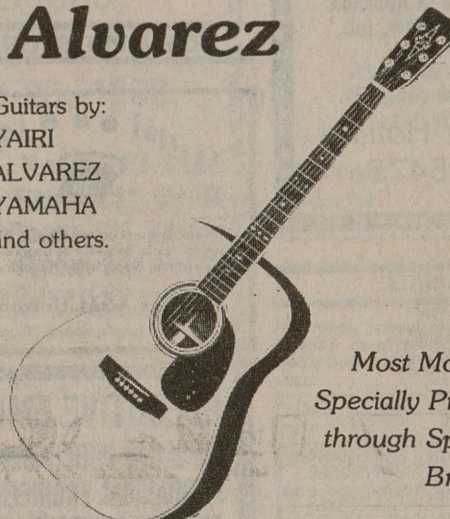
Mark Hawkins, president of Interfraternity Council, said Monday efforts to write the proposal have been delayed because several committee members had been unable to attend meetings to draft the proposal.

Committee members include Hawkins, Lisa Jakubik, president of Panhellenic, Lisa Newsome and Casey Fleming.

Hawkins is planning another meeting for Thursday and he said he hopes to complete the proposal before spring break.

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