

Local



Future Aggies?

These boys were enjoying the Wofford Cain Pool Wednesday during "Aggie Day," one part of the four-week Fred A. Lennon Youth Sports Camp. The camp is held in Magnolia in two sessions each summer for underprivileged youths from the Hockley area in Houston. An endowed scholarship fund at Texas A&M reserves scholarships for any of the boys who graduate from high school and fulfill entrance requirements. Bob Pankey, a lecturer in the Texas A&M physical education department is camp director.

Photo by Laura Larson

Center provides help in real estate

Trying to make heads or tails of the real estate market can be easier with the services of the Texas Real Estate Research Center.

The center, a part of Texas A&M University, provides information ranging from new variable-rate financing to provision of minimal leasing. It is dedicated to helping consumers make good decisions when buying or selling property.

"We do our dead level best to distribute information about real estate to anybody — you'd think we have a staff of 2,000," said Dr. Ivin B. Wooten, retiring director of the 23-member staff.

"We're a public service agency, we don't just provide services to brokers. Certainly we work closely with brokers, but our emphasis is on the consumer."

Through modern computer technology — many computer programs used in real estate are developed by TRERC — the center is capable of gathering and analyzing all kinds of information

for its 165 publications, most of which are free. Much of the information is obtained through the Multiple Listing Services of major Texas cities.

"We have a statewide responsibility for real estate research in all areas and for real estate education," said Wooten. "We don't regulate anybody, don't tell anybody what to do. We take research and put it to practical use."

Six months ago the center developed a radio program, "Realty Report," which is aired on 90 Texas radio stations. More than 40 newspapers run a weekly column written by members of the staff. The column, "Real Estate Consumer," began a month ago.

"Back in 1972 we started working with four junior colleges developing curricula for real estate programs," Wooten continued, "and now we're working with 47 of them."

In 1978 TRERC established real estate professorships at Texas A&M and the University of Texas at Austin. The center was instrumental in launching the Texas Real Estate Teacher Association.

Because the real estate industry is so highly influenced by changing consumer behavior, population increases, income growth, inflation and rising interest, Wooten maintains new methods will be needed to house more people, provide funds for homeownership, reduce the impact of rising energy, construction and land costs and to prepare new entrants

into the real estate profession. "The industry is changing rapidly and is getting more and more complex each day," he said. "Anybody in the market can tell you that."

Wooten pointed out that in 1985 new brokers must have the equivalent of an associate's degree in real estate. He foresees the day when a bachelor's degree in the field will be required. To keep practitioners updated the center

conducts an annual eight-day Study of Advanced Realty Subjects conference.

Wooten says the top real estate issue is money.

"Getting enough money at a rate that's affordable so people can build or buy residential and commercial property is the biggest concern in the business today," he said.

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