

Drum major tryouts

photo by Michael Davis

Jim Williams, a junior mechanical engineering major from College Station, gets advice on drum major tryouts. Nineteen Aggie band juniors tried out for drum

major. Adrian Burke, from Deer Park, will lead the band. Assistant drum majors are Kenny Barton, from Midland, and Nick Evanoff, from El Paso.

national

New food push from 'past era'

United Press International WASHINGTON — The push by some developing nations to become self-sufficient in food production may be a remnant of a bygone era, Agriculture Secretary John Block says.

Instead of paying heavy subsidies to encourage their own farmers to grow larger crops, those countries could save money by importing more of their food from the United States, Block told a news conference Monday.

"It (the subsidy policy) doesn't make a lot of sense, when the food is available here and prices are substantially less than they are having to pay to produce," Block said.

The drive for self-sufficiency at any price has its roots in the past, "where countries historically didn't have the kind of transportation and trade that we see today," he added.

Modern trade practices may mean that the world's major food-producing nations — especially the United States — are

the best sources of food for some developing countries, Block said.

"If this kind of realization can come about, you're going to see less of these almost ridiculous situations where one side is subsidizing to cut production and one side subsidizing to increase production," he added.

He referred to the contrast between programs in some nations to encourage farmers to grow more and programs in the United States that promise farmers cash and surplus crops if they agree to plant less.

Block made his comments following his return from a 10-day trip to expand U.S. farm exports to North Africa and the Middle East.

The trip led to announcement of a special credit package to allow the sale of \$50 million in tobacco and corn to Egypt and an agreement to establish an agricultural office in Turkey to work to increase sales of American farm products in that country, Block said.

Firms' donations suspend their fines

United Press International DENVER — Two firms convicted of rigging bids on construction projects have donated \$131,000 to community organizations in Colorado and Wyoming, and a federal judge has suspended \$552,000 in fines against the companies.

Prescon Corp. of San Antonio, and the VSL Corp. of California were facing fines of \$252,000 and \$302,000 respectively, after pleading no-contest last year to charges of submitting rigged bids on concrete construction projects.

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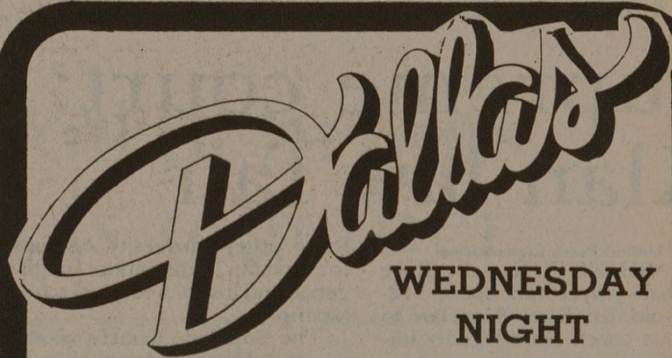
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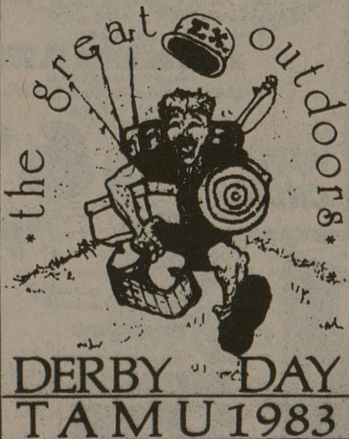
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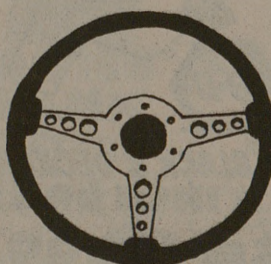


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