

A&M's Debate Classic attracts 'better teams'

by Stephanie Marshall

Battalion Reporter

Last weekend's Texas A&M Debate Classic attracted better debate teams than ever before — including an improved A&M squad, said Debate Society President Brent Brossmann.

Brossmann, a junior English major from Bryan, said the tournament not only improved its quality but also increased the number of participants to 20 teams in the junior division and to 16 teams in the senior division.

This year Baylor University took home first place in both the senior and junior divisions.

"Baylor is one of our biggest competitors," Jeff Rouse, a debate society member said. "They are one of the best in the country and the best in the Southwest Conference ... but

we're coming up fast. "And we've done pretty well and hope to be in Nationals," Rouse said. "This year's National Debate Tournament will be held at the University of Texas at Arlington."

Rouse said that Texas A&M's Charles R. Rogun team (the traveling debate team), this year has traveled to Murfreesboro, Tenn., Wichita, Kan., North Texas State University, Houston, and San Jacinto Junior College.

There about 66 teams that go to the Nationals and they are chosen by bids, Brossmann said.

"First there is a first round bid in which the top sixteen teams in the U.S. are chosen," Brossmann said. "Each team submits their record for the year and the teams are chosen by a panel of judges."

Brossmann said that the next 40 teams are chosen from

district qualifying meets. He said the highest scoring teams are the ones to go to Nationals.

After the district tournaments, if a team still wishes to compete in the Nationals, they then submit another yearly record to panel of judges. From these applicants the judges chose the next top ten teams according to their record.

"The Rogun Squad is made of two teams this year," Brossmann said. "Julia Sullivan and Jack Williams make up one team and Jeff Rouse and I make up the other team."

Brossmann said that he expected that he and Rouse will make the Nationals this year.

Texas A&M sent a debate team to the Nationals in 1981 and 1982.

The Rogun Squad plans to be attending tournaments in the spring at the University of Southern California, University of California at Fullerton,

Baylor University, Northwestern University, and the "Heart of America Tournament" at the University of Kansas.

The Debate Society can train those interested in debating, Brossmann said.

"There were about 100 people who signed up for the society at the beginning of the semester, but now we have about 10 active members," Brossmann said.

The Debate Society also sponsors the Debate Forum that has addressed such issues as the Lebanon and El Salvador controversies.

"There are usually about 200 people there and we can always use help in the society to work the forums," Brossmann said.

Any interested debater may contact Brossmann at 846-9066.

Department store plans to open travel agencies

United Press International
LITTLE ROCK, Ark. — Dillard Department Stores has bought 50 percent of the Little Rock-based Executive Travel and plans to put travel agency offices in most of its stores in the South and Southwest.

The stores will conduct business under the name Dillard's Travel but will still be operated by Executive Travel, which has hired 40 new people in anticipation of increased business. Several hundred more may be added.

The in-store offices will have a manager and one to four other

employees, said Bob Piggott, who will be in charge of the Dillard's operation for Executive Travel.

Customers may charge the travel expenses on their Dillard's card as well as bank and travel credit cards.

Travel's office in the First Commercial Bank building so agents may check schedules, make reservations and process tickets quickly. Customers may charge the travel expenses on their Dillard's card as well as bank and travel credit cards.

Dillard's has 66 stores in Texas, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Louisiana, Tennessee, New Mexico, Kansas and Missouri. The first five travel agencies will open this spring in North Little Rock, Ark.; Shreveport, La.; Oklahoma City, Fort Worth and San Antonio.

U.S. sixth-graders finish last on test

United Press International

DALLAS — A test given to a sampling of students in eight industrial nations ranked U.S. sixth-graders lowest in math skills and showed mediocre grasp of science and geography, according to a copyright report Sunday in the Dallas Times-Herald.

Results of the tests, devised and arranged during a six-month effort by the Times-Herald, provided the first international comparisons in a decade, and prompted a former U.S. education commissioner to declare, "We have failed here."

The one-hour test was developed by the Times-Herald in consultation with leading educators — including a Nobel laureate — and administered to 600 students in the United States, Australia, Canada, England, France, Japan, Switzerland and Sweden.

American students were represented by a sampling from Preston Hollow Elementary, an public school in affluent North Dallas that ranks in the top 35 percent nationally on the wide-spread Iowa Test of Basic Skills.

American 12-year-olds taking the test answered correctly only 25.3 percent of the questions on

the math test, only half as well as Japanese students, who ranked at the top in math with 50.2 percent, the Times-Herald reported.

"This is embarrassing," said New York University professor Stephen Willoughby, president of the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics. "It seems that we should do a great deal better than that."

In science, U.S. students scored 43.7 percent to rank third from the bottom, with Sweden topping the rankings at 55.4 percent.

"We have failed here," said former U.S. Education Commissioner Ernest Boyer, currently president of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. "One can only be disappointed."

Informed of the test results of the first such test administered in a decade, U.S. Education Secretary T.H. Bell said, "Oh, my word."

Bell, who recently called American standards "unilateral educational disarmament," said he felt the Times-Herald test "tells us we are not requiring our students to study enough math and science."

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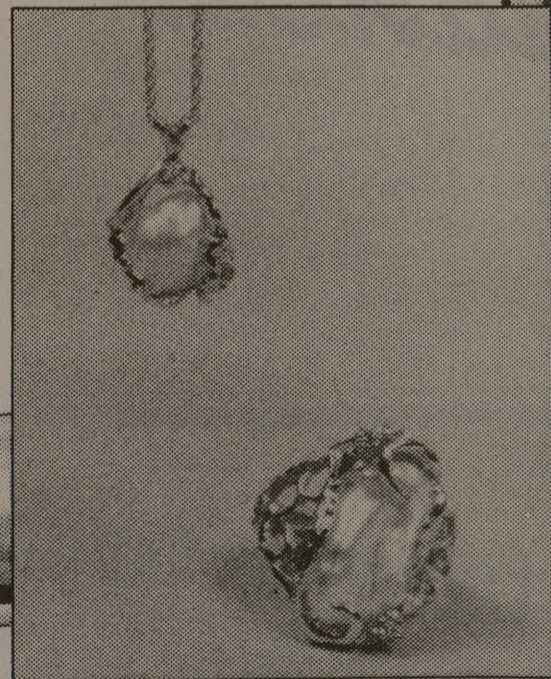
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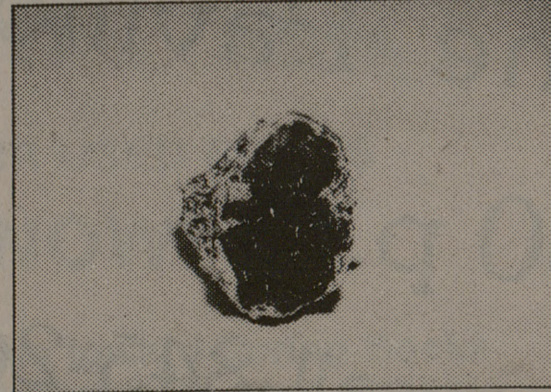
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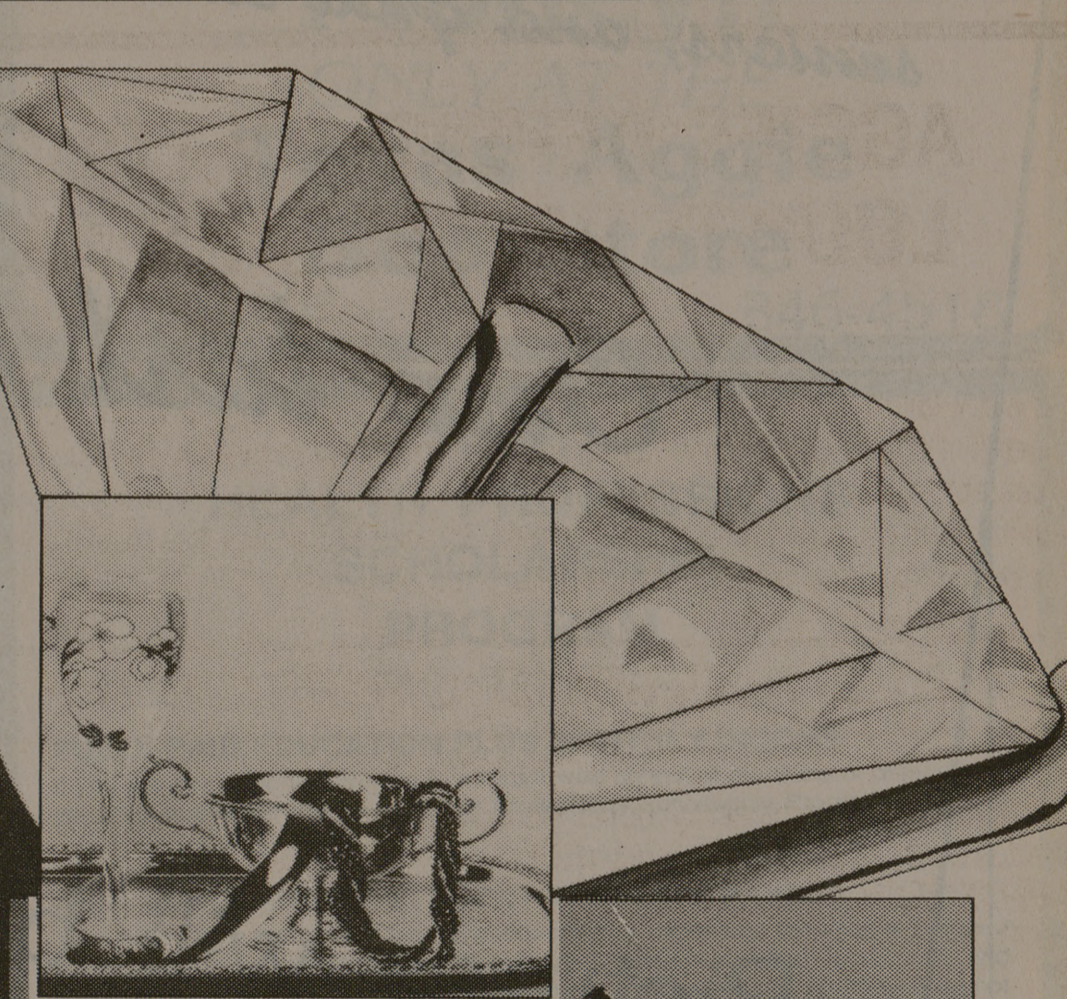
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