

Seniors to vote on '85 class gift

By MIKE DAVIS
Reporter

Just as every graduating senior class donates a gift to the University, the Class of '85 will be no exception. In fact, the class has been working on its gift for more than a year.

The Class of '85 will have its first general meeting tonight at 7 p.m. in 501 Rudder to discuss the gift.

"The main reason to have the class meeting is to get the ball rolling as seniors, and to present to the class as a whole the gift ideas that have been brought up thus far," Anne-Marie Dixon, Class of '85 secretary, said.

Last year, the class officers appointed Michelle Weishaar, an accounting major from Converse, and Jay Cherrington, a business major from Wichita Falls, to head the class gift committee.

Weishaar said gift committee members have met with various student leaders and faculty members during the past year to discuss ideas. Suggestions also were made by the Class of '85 advisory board.

The advisory board consists of prominent businessmen from San Antonio, Houston and Dallas, select members of the Class of '85 and Dr. John Koldus, vice president for student services. The board advises the class officers about everything from managerial skills to fundraising and legal matters.

Weishaar said that with the help of the advisory board, the ideas for the class gift have been narrowed from 20 to five.

Several criteria were used for the weeding-out process, Weishaar said. The gift should have permanent value and there should exist a definite need for the gift on campus. The gift also should be visible.

"A gift from the Class of '85 to the campus and to all Ags past and future," she said.

Weishaar said the five remaining ideas will be presented at the meeting and a class vote will be taken. The vote will determine where the class interest lies and will serve as criteria for the final decision made by the class council.

"Mainly what we want at the meeting are pros and cons on the ideas

that we have now," she said. "Not necessarily new ideas, but how students feel about the ones we already have."

Weishaar stressed the importance of the class vote.

"It has to be something they want because they have to raise the money for it," she said.

Dixon said the class has set a goal of \$85,000 which she said is realistic with a class of 9,000 students.

"We're well on our way," Dixon said.

Cherrington added that with such a high goal, class participation is essential.

"We're going to need a lot of money," he said. "We're going to need ideas on how to raise it. Even though we do have some pretty good ideas so far, participation and their (class members') input on how we can raise more funds is always welcome."

Weishaar agreed. "One of our main objectives is to get the class involved in the gift, since it is their gift," she said.

Weishaar also stressed the urgency of choosing the gift.

"It is important that we get our selection made because once we pick one, we have a lot of work to do between now and April," Weishaar said. "That is, getting all the legal ends done, working out the exact details and meeting our goals of the financial dollar."

The gift will be announced on Parent's Weekend next April.

The class meeting also will include making applications available for three class council positions, two communications positions and one public relations position, and signing up for various class committees, such as ring dance, banquet and newsletter.

Dixon said seniors who cannot attend the meeting but who are interested in participating in class activities should contact one of the class officers.

MSC CAMERA



1st meeting

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Black entertains with western tales

By ROBIN BLACK
Senior Staff Writer

"It was obvious I was not going to be able to support myself by working for a living, so I decided to go to college."

That's how Baxter Black — author, singer, poet, cowboy extraordinaire — got his start in veterinary medicine.

He says. The ex-veterinarian was a guest Tuesday evening in Rudder Auditorium at the first meeting of Texas A&M's student chapter of the American Veterinary Medical Association.

Black entertained the audience with tales (some could be classified as outlandish) of his experiences as a vet (not to mention some stories about interesting people he's run into), told jokes and sang songs.

"My parents had six kids," he said. "Four boys and two dogs. Three of us are even paper trained now."

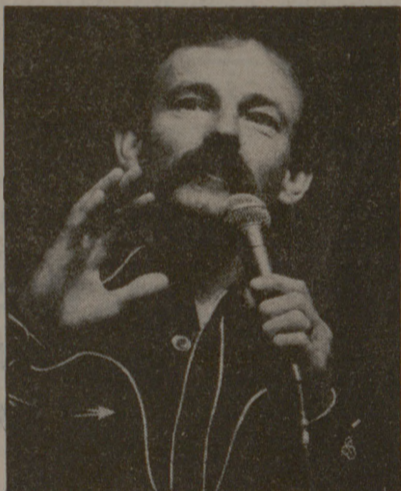
He continued with his childhood story: "My dad taught us all how to hunt. He'd take me out in the woods and give me a two-minute head start."

Black went on to talk about what it's like to be a vet, stopping every once in a while to tell a related poem he had written on the subject.

People will call a vet at odd hours of the day, he said, frantic for advice about a sick animal — for instance: the lady who called in a state of panic about an ill parakeet.

"The parakeet practice is not high on the list of requirements in vet school," he said. "But they think that because you're a veterinarian you care." (don't worry, he said it jokingly).

The highlight of the evening was his somewhat tongue-in-cheek account of animal rights vs. plant rights (or how vegetarians can get



Baxter Black

too carried away about their plight).

He let it be known that he didn't really take the whole vegetarian-animal rights thing too seriously, then enlightened the crowd on newly documented evidence that plants feel pain, too. The example he cited was that of a rutabaga that was violently hacked to death with a chain saw while sensitive electrodes monitored the plant's reaction.

Black is featured on the syndicated radio program "Cowboys and Sourdough," writes a weekly column "On the Edge of Common Sense," and narrates the documentary "Working Cowboy."

A veterinary graduate of Colorado State University, Black practiced for 13 years in the Great Divide states and now works as a consultant to Burroughs Wellcome pharmaceutical company when not dispensing Western philosophy drawn from his years in New Mexico and Colorado.

Black's appearance was sponsored by the Burroughs Wellcome company.

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