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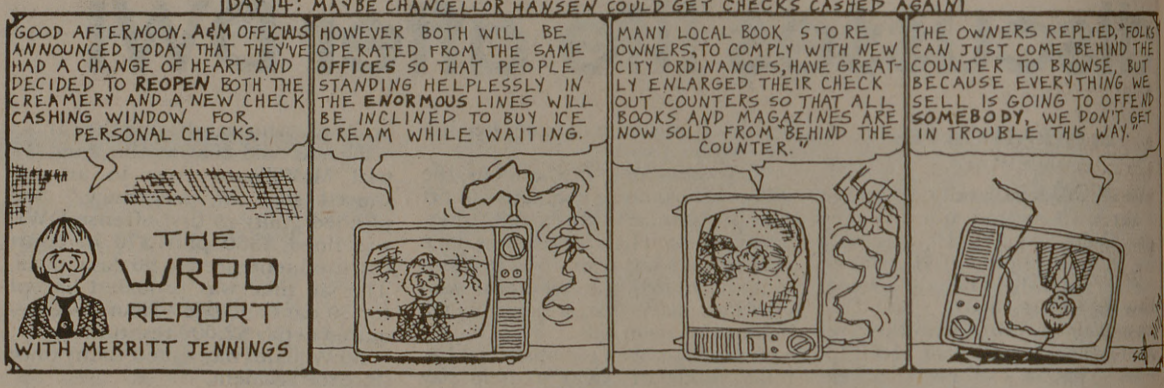
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Cain Dining Hall offers food, plus

By ADA FAY WOOD
 Reporter
 Eating in Cain Dining Hall is more than standing in line to get a routine meal for more than 200 Texas A&M athletes. Myrt Davidson, dining hall manager since 1978, makes sure of this.
 "I try to give them a wide variety," she said.
 About 150 breakfasts, 250 lunches and 225 dinners are served daily, seven days a week.
 Davidson said she finds her job both challenging and rewarding. Her primary concern is maintaining a pleasant atmosphere where the athletes can relax and enjoy meals, she said.
 Davidson uses occasional "monotony breakers" to add additional spice to the meals. For example, some monotony breakers are a Hawaiian luau, a Mexican buffet, Italian night and a western barbecue.
 In addition to planning these special events, she takes time to give a small cake to the athletes on their birthdays, and she eats with them. These special touches have earned her the nickname of "Mom."
 Davidson said she tries to be a positive influence on the athletes. For example, a dress code is used — no cut-off t-shirts, flip flops or caps — and different foods are introduced to give the athletes a chance to taste dishes they may have never tried before.
 And Davidson also does her part to get the football team ready for the games by preparing a special pregame meal. Four hours before the game the players are treated to a small steak, a baked potato, green beans and a tossed salad.
 When the Aggies win, they are treated to a victory dinner on Sunday night with Blue Bell ice cream for dessert, she said.
 However, if they lose, the team gets sandwiches, Davidson said.
 Sunday lunches are always special, though, since the athletes' girlfriends may eat with them, she said.
 Meals for the athletes are all prepared by a wonderful staff, Davidson said. First assistant is McNeil Fick, who has worked for the Texas A&M Food Service Department for 40 years. Her other two assistants are both graduates of Texas A&M.
 Davidson started working for Texas A&M in 1973 as the manager of food service in the Memorial Student Center.

Warped by Scott McCullar



Malnutrition does exist locally
Balanced diet important

By MICHAEL CRAWFORD
 Reporter
 Malnutrition. The word conjures up visions of starving children in poor Third World nations. Yet in a country as rich as ours there is still a need for preventive measures against malnutrition, even within the College Station city limits.
 Sue Ann Jackson, supervisor of the Children's Protectors Service in Bryan, says nutritional education is vital to maintaining a balanced diet. Most families touched by malnutrition, she says, are relatively uneducated and on the lower end of the economic ladder.
 "Adults are trying to get resources, but can't because they don't have the knowledge to get the help," she says.
 Jackson says parents know when they are hungry, but that children are not always able to express their needs. As a result, she says, malnourished children usually have healthy parents.
 In poorer societies "it is more a lack of food and money that causes malnutrition, while here it is a lack of knowledge that does," Jackson says.
 The Children's Protectors Service operates under the Texas Department of Human Resources to investigate possible cases of malnutrition.
 The service defines malnutrition of a child as physical neglect preventing the child from growing and developing properly because of a poor diet. Signs of malnutrition include large eyes with dark circles underneath, a protruding stomach and loose skin.
 Adequate nutrition is defined as consisting of three meals a day, which may include "junk food." A

child with minimal, but adequate nutrition may be skinny but not malnourished.
 Jackson says fast foods often are attacked as being junk foods, but they can be nutritional.
 "Just a hamburger can have meat, lettuce, cheese and bread," she says. "That's several important food groups there."
 People who are struggling on a fixed income can enjoy balanced diets, she says. But, children are not the only victims of malnutrition.
 The Adult Protection Service of the Department of Human Resources helps the blind, aged and disabled.
 "Elderly people eat very little, especially the poor," says Albert Benavides, a staff member with the service. These people are limited in their ability to prepare meals, Benavides says, and malnutrition can result.
 The service provides minimal care for several hours a day if the individual is over 18 years old, has functional limitations, an income of less than \$631.40 a month and a resource limit of less than \$5,000. Personal property such as a home or one automobile are not included in the limit. The service receives most of its clients from other agencies and reports from concerned neighbors.
 Feeding the elderly, people with low incomes and people who are home-bound is the primary concern of the Meals On Wheels program, says Annie Lee Thomas, director of the service. More than 50 meals are provided daily and transported to individuals who meet the criteria established by the Department of Human Resources.
 Pregnant, lactating mothers and women with children under five years old may join the Women Infants and Children program. The Brazos Valley Community Action Agency operates WIC as a nutritional education program, says Sally Thane, director of WIC. The program also provides a dietary assessment of families and keeps growth charts of the children, she says.

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