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Special Students Riding School friendly

Handicapped enjoy horses

By LISA J DUPREE
 Reporter

The atmosphere at the Louis Peace Pavilion Saturday was friendly and full of excitement as participants in the Special Students Riding School for handicapped people laughed and waved to their parents who were sitting in the bleachers. The clinic was the first of a three-part riding school for handicapped students. Sponsored by the Texas A&M Horsemen's Association, it gives handicapped students the opportunity to perform simple maneuvers on horseback.

Bill Doug Potter, committee chairman, said students with a variety of handicaps ranging from learning disabilities to cerebral palsy attend. There is no fee or age limit for the event. People from ages two to

22 took part at this clinic.

Potter said dates for the next clinics are Oct. 13 and Oct. 20, from 8 a.m. to noon.

He said area schools and the rehabilitation center sent letters to prospective students' parents.

The riding seems to have a therapeutic effect on the students, he said. "It helps them feel more self-confident and less handicapped," he said.

The club members enjoy the experience, too, he said.

"We have a great time," he said. "It's real gratifying for us and we're honored to work with these kids."

Three or four club members assist each student, Potter said.

"One leads the horse, one walks on each side of the student, and sometimes a member rides with the

student," he said.

Potter led the group in warm-up exercises, Simon Says, Follow the Leader and other games.

Most parents seemed pleased with the program. One parent, Lynda Marino, praised the Horsemen's Association members for their generosity in donating their time to the students. Her daughter, Katie, was attending her second clinic.

Richard Reynolds, whose son Ian has Down's Syndrome, described the clinic as a "good public service project."

He said he feels the parents appreciate it because it brings them together, too. "It's reassuring to find out you're not the only one with a handicapped child," he said.

Bettie Merchant said the riding school was a "wonderful opportuni-

ty." The students were enthusiastic. "Mom, I need a horse!" Stacie chant called to her mother.

Linda Alford, 22, was attending her fifth clinic. She is in a wheelchair because she was born with spina bifida. Alford said she really enjoys horseback riding because it changes her perspective. "Instead of being one having to look down on me, I'm the one looking down on the change," she said.

Local businesses are also sponsoring McDonald's and Jack 'n Jill provided refreshments.

Anyone interested in attending may contact Potter at 266-4492, his co-chairman Petra Schilling 775-2960.

Contempt charges threaten teachers

United Press International

Striking teachers in New Jersey were threatened with contempt of court citations if they don't return to work Monday, while Louisiana teachers whose strike is entering its eighth week downplayed board threats of mass firings.

Strikes in four states affected more than 50,000 students — 21,300 in Illinois, 12,000 in New Jersey, 12,700 in Pennsylvania, and 6,200 in the nation's longest teachers' strike in St. John the Baptist Parish in Louisiana.

Disputing threats by the school board, the Louisiana teachers vowed

Sunday to continue their strike.

Rita Williams, a spokeswoman for the St. John Association of Educators, dismissed school board threats of firings and also disputed board allegations that contracts negotiated by individual workers are breaking down the walkout.

The walkout has continued despite efforts by Gov. Edwin Edwards to negotiate a settlement.

Although a 5 percent pay raise was the initial point of argument, the main issue has become the demand by teachers for some form of collective bargaining.

Negotiations resumed Sunday in

strikes in East Brunswick, N.J., and neighboring Sayreville, where teachers have been out for two weeks.

Both unions have been ordered back to work by a Superior Court judge, with 11 members of the East Brunswick Education Association facing contempt citations this week. The union is also paying a court-ordered \$10,000 daily fine to the school board.

The school board in East Brunswick has offered teachers amnesty — but not back pay — if they return to work today.

No talks were scheduled in Waukegan, Ill., where the walkout by 660

teachers idled 11,500 students in the nation's largest strike. Teacher District 60 rejected the school board's final contract offer — a year contract with a 14 percent — and are holding out for a 20.4 percent.

Elsewhere in Illinois, elementary, high school and community college students were affected by strikes.

Pennsylvania teachers were in six districts, and a hearing in New Castle teachers back to classroom was scheduled for the longest running walkout.

Speakers explain United States role in NATO

By MARK SPICER
 Reporter

The United States is the biggest member of NATO, but the American people know less about it than natives of the other 15 countries in the alliance, U.S.M.C. Col. Billy Palmer said to about 600 cadets in Rudder Auditorium Thursday night.

Palmer is the leader of an international briefing team from the Supreme Allied Command Atlantic in Norfolk, Va. The team gave a presentation on NATO, the Soviet threat and NATO's response to that threat.

Palmer said the statements made

that the United States is doing more than its share in the alliance is not true. The Europeans contribute a tremendous amount of men, material, and money, he said.

SACLANT is the only NATO headquarters in the United States. The other two headquarters are located in Great Britain and Germany. Commander Moe, a naval officer from Norway assigned to the Strategic Planning and Policy section of SACLANT, gave a presentation on the history of NATO.

Moe said after World War II the eastern part of Europe came under Soviet domination.

Twelve nations signed the North

Atlantic Treaty on April 4, 1949. Greece and Turkey joined the alliance in 1952, West Germany in 1955 and Spain in 1982.

Moe said Article V of the Treaty states that an attack against the territories of any one of the individual nations in Europe and North America, or on their ships or aircraft in the Atlantic area shall be considered an attack against them all.

SACLANT is responsible for all military operations in the North Atlantic, from the North Pole to the Tropic of Cancer.

Commander Becker, a naval officer from West Germany assigned to the Intelligence section of SA-

CLANT, presented material on the Soviet threat.

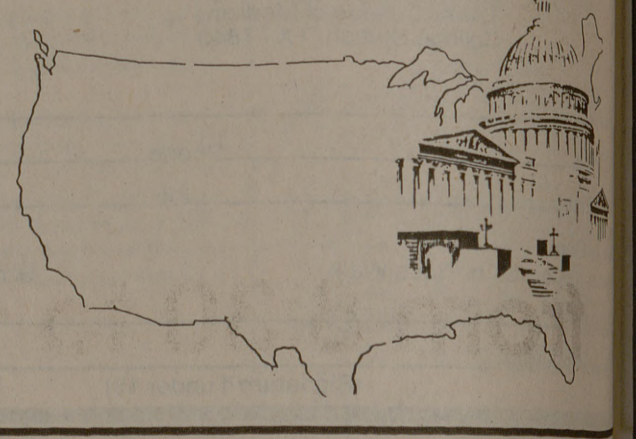
Becker said the greatest threat to NATO countries need freedom of the seas is from the navy, which is growing at an alarming rate.

Becker said the Soviet's nuclear fleet in the Bering Sea is of concern to SACLANT because direct access to the open ocean.

The Soviet fleet has about 100 submarines in it and a new one added to their fleet about every two weeks, he said.

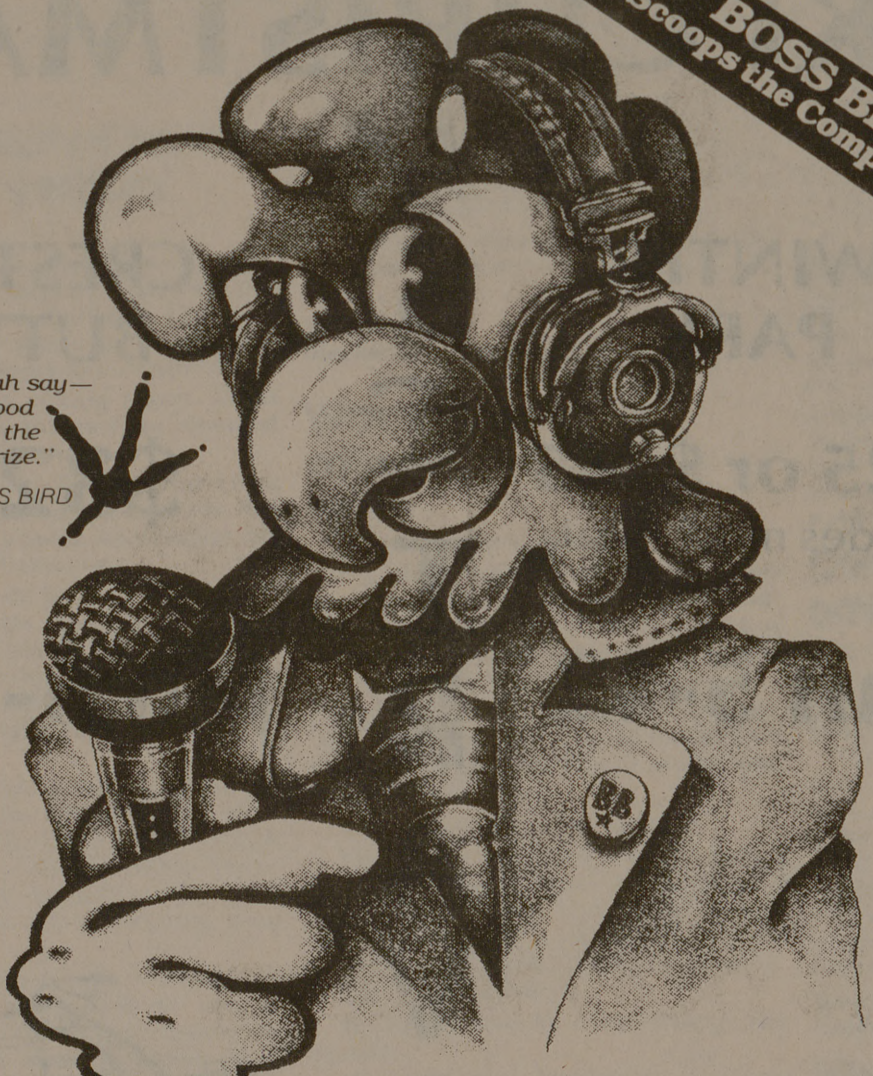
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