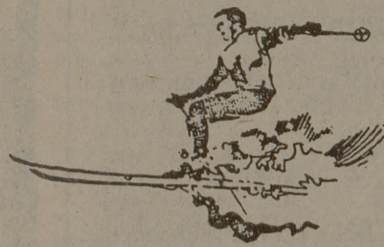


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## Warped

by Scott McCulloch



## Board tastes menu suggestions

# Students review food

By JENS KOEPKE  
Reporter

It is a ritual for many Texas A&M students.

They stumble into the dining center. Senseless and burnt out, they wearily fill their trays with food and plod down at the nearest table.

With their frustration at a peak, they scream, "Is this lasagna or a pork chop?"

Ask the menu board.

The Student Menu Board is a group of students who decide on the acceptability of menu additions and who relay complaints from board-plan members to the food services administrators.

"Anything that I'm told by students that makes sense, I write down and bring up at our meetings," said David Taylor, a Sbsa menu board member.

Texas A&M was the first university to initiate the program in 1965.

Assistant Director of Food Services Lloyd Smith said, tastes change so quickly that understanding the tastes of today's college student is very difficult.

"By having a group of 16 to 18 people that are the current generation ... and are somewhat representative, we're going to get some ideas," Smith said.

"They're going to tell us what they like and what they don't like. They'll see some things I don't see."

Each dining center has a board that meets once a month. All three

menu boards also meet jointly with managers and supervisors from each of the dining centers, and several food services administrators the first Tuesday of the month.

During the joint meetings, Taylor said the board members taste food items ranging from chopped steak patties to different brands of thousand island salad dressing. They then vote on their acceptability. A simple majority rules.

If the food is already on the menu, members sample several different brands. Those brands deemed acceptable are placed on the competitive bid list and considered for purchase.

Smith said, the Department of Food Services will sometimes introduce a new recipe or a new food item and have the boards taste it. If the food is voted acceptable, the board members must decide whether to add it to the menu. If the board adds an item to the menu, it must also take something off.

"They have a right to put anything or take anything off the menu," Smith said.

Commons board member Marty Roos said, "They (the managers) tell us that we have to eat our mistakes."

The foods tasted at the meetings are chosen either as a result of a student complaint, or sometimes through department initiative.

The addition of lasagna and baked potatoes as entrees to the night menu is an example of the

changes initiated by the board, Taylor said.

Raw materials like flour and vegetables are never sampled. Smith said only prepared meal items and dressings are tasted since they are what the students eat.

The quality of the raw materials is assured through USDA regulations.

Taylor said board members try to choose food that most students will enjoy, and not just ones that they like.

"I think the strangest tastes have come from salad dressings," he said. "We have had some stuff that we thought was bad. Like the soft cheese dressing that had the consistency of sour cream."

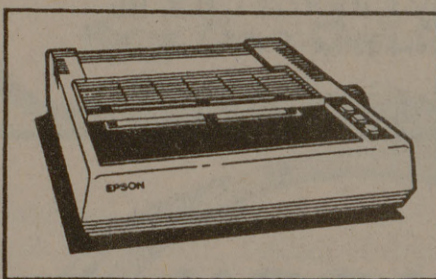
The boards also pick the dates for all cheese and ice cream parties while the Duncan Hall menu board alone chooses the dates of Thanksgiving and Christmas dinners.

Student menu boards are appointed by the executive branch of the Student Government and approved by the Student Senate. Candidates fill out applications, which are available at the Pavilion, and are chosen based on their experience with similar programs.

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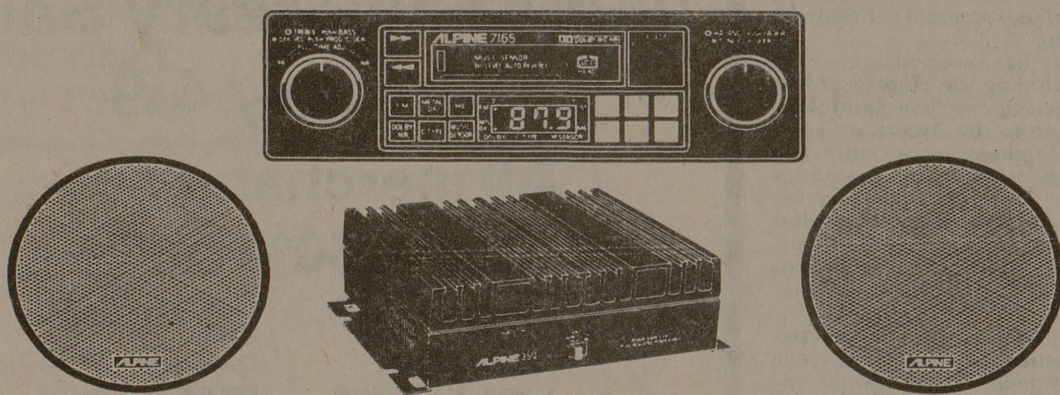


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