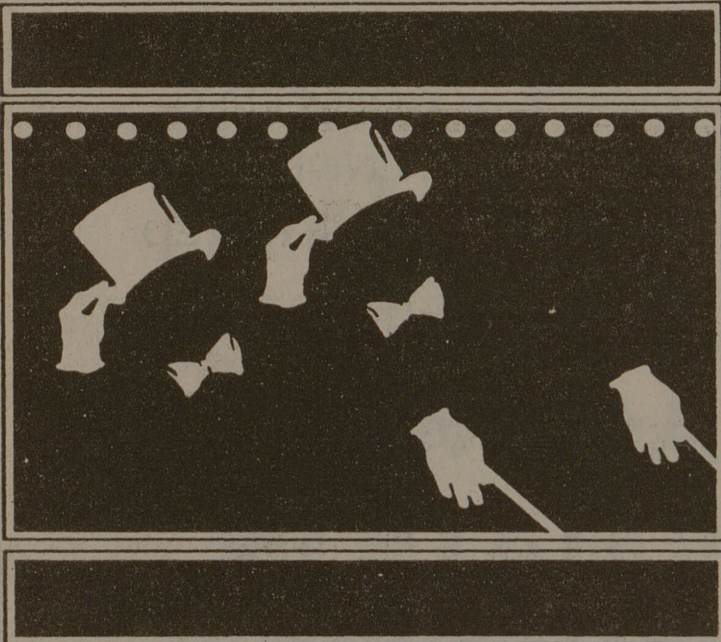


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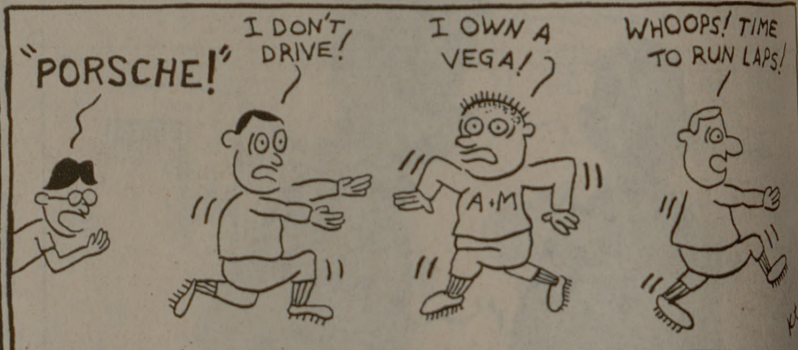
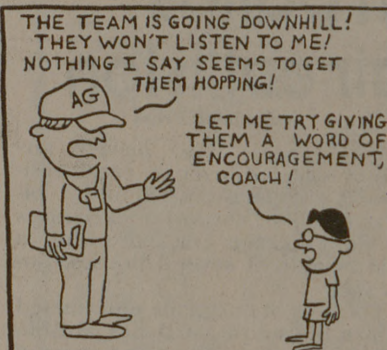
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The Missouri Repertory Theatre Tour is made possible by financial assistance from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Missouri Arts Council, the Mid-America Arts Alliance, the Texas Arts Exchange and the University of Missouri-Kansas City.

Waldo

by Kevin Thomas



## Last Depression-era cannery in Texas victim of the times

Associated Press

LOCKNEY — The Floyd County Community Cannery will soon take its place among the other relics of the past, a victim of dwindling can supplies, county belt-tightening and waning public interest. With it goes a piece of Depression-era Americana, the last of its kind in Texas.

"I hate to see it shut down," said cannery manager Eunice "Pete" Hulcy. "It's been a lot of help to a lot of people for a long, long time."

In existence since the '30s, the cannery was a product of FDR's Work Progress Administration. At the time it was one of many across the nation where farmers and rural folk could bring their produce and have it canned, paying for the service with a portion of the canned product. The rest of the canned goods were kept for the family's use or traded in town for other merchandise.

Now, according to Rex Sherry, training officer with the Food and Drug Division of the Texas Department of Health in Austin, the community cannery is "a dying breed. People were very dependent on them once. To my knowledge, it (Floyd County's cannery) is the only one in the state at this time."

One of the reasons for the demise of the Lockney cannery, which is housed in an old military barracks building, is dwindling use. Three years ago, following a food poisoning scare, state health department rules forced cannery employees to put an end to the barter system that had existed since the Depression. People bringing in produce were required to do most of the work themselves, paying for the cans, and cannery employees had to keep strict records.

Although the food poisoning was ultimately traced to other causes, the rules remained, and use of the community cannery dropped sharply, according to Hulcy.

But use is still fairly high during

*The cannery was a product of FDR's Work Progress Administration. It was one of many across the nation where farmers and rural folk could have their produce canned, paying for the service with a portion of the canned product.*

the peak months of August and September, with anywhere from 10 to 30 people a day using the cannery.

Some of the cannery users come from other counties.

The number of out-of-county residents using the cannery is one of the problems, according to Floyd County Judge Choice Smith.

Floyd County residents pay 22 cents a can while out-of-county users pay 25 cents a can for produce processed at the facility. The county makes 2 to 5 cents profit on the actual cans, but employee wages, equipment maintenance and utility bills are paid for by county taxpayers.

The county budgets \$10,000 a year for operation but two of the last three years the cost has slightly exceeded that amount. Smith concedes it is not a huge percentage of the county's \$1 million-plus annual bud-

get, but points out that the cannery isn't the only victim in the fiscal belt-tightening.

County commissioners have been coping with property valuations that are down by almost \$98,000 and expected to decrease even more the next two years.

But the real death-knell for the cannery was Smith's discovery that the 20-cent tin cans the county purchased from American Can Co. in Arlington, would no longer be available.

He checked around and finally found another source — in New Orleans — with a price of 40 cents per can.

"And that didn't even take into account the increased cost of transportation," Smith said. "A lot of people have benefitted from the cannery. But they just wouldn't be willing to pay that much. It's sad it has to close, but it just priced itself out."

Hulcy agrees that there is probably no alternative to closing the facility: "Nobody can pay 40 cents for empty cans. I hate to see the place close down, but when you can't get materials, you can't get materials. There have been a lot of businesses around town that have closed. The (commissioners) have hung on for a long time."

Hulcy estimates there is about a two-day supply of cans left. When they are gone, the cannery will remain open until the end of November so that people have access to the grinder and pressure cookers.

After that the facility, an institution in Lockney and Floyd County for almost half a century, will be permanently closed — relegated to the memories of those who partially owe their survival through the Great Depression to the community cannery.

# Freshmen & Sophomores!

## LAST CHANCE



The schedule for Freshmen and Sophomore photos for the 1986 Aggieland has been extended to October 1-11.

Photos will be taken at Yearbook Associate's studio located above Campus Photo Center at Northgate.

Office hours are 8:30-12 and 1-4:30.