

Concert at A&M arouses feelings of holiday spirit

By Patty Pascavage
Reporter

The Texas A&M Vocal Music Programs aroused the Christmas spirit in Aggieland Sunday night at its annual Christmas concert.

The Women's Chorus, the Singing Cadets and the Century Singers performed an assortment of Christmas carols and seasonal music for an audience of about 2,000 in Rudder Auditorium.

The Women's Chorus, directed by Patricia P. Fleitas, began the festivities with a welcome followed by Benjamin Britten's "A Ceremony of Carols." The modern English composer's work, consisting of nine carols written for the harp, immediately set the tone for the evening. Shana Norton, of Austin, played the harp accompaniment throughout the chorus' performance.

Robert L. Boone directed the Singing Cadets, who followed with a series of songs tracing the life of Jesus. This all-male chorus of about 70 sang "We're On Top!" as a tribute to the Aggie football team, its coaches and its supporters.

Next, the group let loose with "Christmas Party," complete with theatrics and Santa Claus. This hu-

morous number was a tremendous crowd pleaser.

Boone said the group wanted to give everyone a feeling of Christmas and everything it stands for.

"We want everyone to get the right spirit for this Christmas season," he said.

Boone has directed the Singing Cadets since 1960. The group is presently accompanied by local pianist Nannette Goforth.

The Century Singers, a mixed chorus, sang a contrasting Christmas repertoire with traditional carols such as "Twas the Night Before Christmas" and a "Jingle Bell Travlogue" that included versions of "Jingle Bells" from around the world.

The singers, also directed by Fleitas, concluded with Daniel Pinkham's "Christmas Cantata." They were assisted by a brass ensemble, composed of ten members of the A&M Symphonic Band.

The audience stood during the "Hallelujah Chorus" from Handel's "Messiah." Directed by Boone, the three choirs combined their 172 voices for this spectacular finale.



The Texas A&M Century Singers perform during a Christmas concert at Rudder Auditorium Sunday night.

MADD '3-D Week' pushes awareness

Brazos County chapter will hold candlelight vigil for victims

By Leigh Ann Rogers
Reporter

Mothers Against Drunk Driving chapters across the nation marked the beginning of their fourth annual "3-D Week" on Sunday.

The "3-D" stands for Drunk and Drugged Driving. President Reagan has designated Dec. 7 through Dec. 13 as "National Drunk and Drugged Driving Awareness Week."

"President Reagan, in designating this week, calls attention to the need for all Americans to drive more carefully during the holiday season and throughout the year," said Kirk Brown, president of the Brazos County MADD chapter.

Brown said the public hears more about drunken driving than drugged driving.

But he said there are just as many drug-related accidents as alcohol-related accidents.

A candlelight vigil will be conducted tonight at 7:30 on the front steps of the College Station Community Center.

During the vigil, one candle is lighted for each loved one injured or killed in an alcohol-related crash.

"This is a time to remember loved ones, and say they haven't died in vain," Brown said. "We're using the vigil to make people aware and save other lives."

"We have war memorials for those killed in wars, but we have no memorials for those killed in drunken driving accidents."

County Judge Claude Davis will speak at the vigil.

Brown said the community is invited, and anyone wishing to have a loved one remembered may call the MADD office at 690-0512.

During 3-D Week, radio and television stations will broadcast public service announcements.

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, alcohol is involved in more than 2 million motor crashes each year, and

more than 650,000 persons were injured last year in alcohol-related crashes.

Of all drivers killed each year, more than 60 percent are legally intoxicated.

Yet alcohol officially is ruled a contributing factor in only 21 percent of the cases.

"We are killing Brazos County off at an average of eight people per year," Brown said. "We're down from 16 per year in 1979, but we're a long way to go."

"During the holidays we have more accidents than any other time of the year because it's New Year's Eve used to be the deathiest time because it was designated as a drinking time focused on the New Year's and holidays and have lowered the fatalities on this day."

The 1986 figures for alcohol-related deaths will not be available until July 1987.

But the preliminary estimate for the year through June is 13 percent lower than last year, Brown said. This decrease could be due to seatbelt laws and the raised drinking age.

Explosion rocks area in downtown Fort Worth

FORT WORTH (AP) — An explosion in the heart of the downtown area early Sunday destroyed a row of specialty shops, blew out scores of windows in a four-block area and frightened guests at a hotel, authorities said.

A guest at the 509-room Worthington Hotel was cut by glass, but no serious injuries were reported in the blast, which occurred about 3 a.m. and caused an estimated \$2 million damage, said Fire Department spokesman Butch Hall.

A natural gas leak inside a cafe probably caused the explosion, Hall said.

Two cafes, a print shop, an optometrist's office and a bookstore were destroyed, and at least 20 other businesses were damaged in the blast.

It also blew a hole in the roof of a building on Throckmorton Street, across the street from the normally bustling Tandy Center shopping mall. An explosion just hours earlier in the normally congested area could have resulted in many casualties, Hall said.

"Had it happened three hours earlier, I'd hate to think about it," Hall said. "This is a heavily traveled area."

The blast blew out windows in 162 rooms in the Worthington Hotel and shattered a 30-foot glass wall in a ballroom lobby but caused no structural damage, hotel marketing director Tom Weiskopf said.

Hall said investigators believe a natural gas leak in a food preparation area caused the explosion.

"It's not a suspicious situation at all," he said.

An inspection by Lone Star Gas Co. revealed no problems with mains or service lines in the area, Hall and company spokesman Breck Harris said.

Hotel guests said they thought a bomb had exploded or a plane had crashed.

Ken Yoder of Wheaton, Ill., said he pocketed a piece of glass from his hotel room as a souvenir.

"It was the loudest noise I ever heard," Yoder said.

W.P. White, a hotel guest from San Angelo, Texas, said that "some people got a hell of a wake-up call."

Firefighters checked all 509 rooms of the Worthington for casualties, Hall said.

"One guy slept through it," Hall said. "He wouldn't answer the door so we beat the door down with an ax. When we got in there, the room was covered with glass. There was glass all over his bed. He wanted to know what had happened."

Barbara Aucoin, a hotel guest from Nashville, Tenn., said she was "petrified" by the explosion.

"I thought it was an airplane crash," she said.

Her husband wasn't worried.

"He told me to go back to bed," Aucoin said. "He said it was only thunder."

Because of the threat of falling glass and weakened structures, investigators waited until after daybreak to search the wreckage and sealed off six downtown city blocks.

Hall described the scene as "a little bit eerie."

"It's kind of an eerie feeling walking the street and hearing the sound of glass hitting. It's like walking on ice."

SMU booster 'didn't want to cause embarrassment'

DALLAS (AP) — George Washington Owen Jr., who finds himself near the center of the latest football flap at Southern Methodist University, said his intentions were to help the school, not hurt it.

Acquaintances describe Owen as the ultimate booster.

Owen, 61, is a native of Dallas. He attended SMU on a basketball scholarship and is now a real estate developer.

He was one of nine SMU boosters singled out by the NCAA last year for undisclosed recruiting activities. Owen was barred for life from having contact with SMU athletes, an event that he says has caused him pain.

"I just don't want to do anything that would cause SMU any embarrassment or any problems," Owen said. "I've done enough of that already."

Three weeks ago, the Dallas Morning News reported that Owen had provided a rental apartment in Carrollton to a former SMU football player, Reese, an SMU football player suspended for the last two games of the season.

Owen acknowledged providing a rent-free apartment on the complex for David Stanley.

Last month, Stanley told television station WFAA that he received \$25,000 for signing the Mustangs and continuing to receive monthly payments from SMU on its latest probation in August 1985.

Henry Lee Parker, SMU's ball recruiting coordinator, said he (Owen) would give a shirt off his back if he (Owen) friend, he's your friend and through everything and anything. He's a very, very good person — to a fault, I'd say.

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