

Warped

by Scott McCullar



Waldo

by Kevin Thomas



Discarded Christmas trees sought for needy families
A&M professor spreads Christmas cheer

By Lydia Berzsenyi
Reporter

Not all Santa Clauses are white-gigged, chubby old men who waddle around saying, "Ho! Ho! Ho!" One local Kris Kringle disguises himself as a 6-foot-2, red-mouse-whiskered sociology professor, determined to increase the social awareness of today's youth.

Dr. Larry Stern, an assistant sociology professor at Texas A&M, has organized several major projects to bring yuletide cheer to the less fortunate members of the Bryan-College Station community.

"Don't Trash Your Tree" is the title of Stern's version of saving Christmas leftovers.

Last year Stern asked students to bring their Christmas trees to Dunbar Field at the end of the semester. He and several of his more dedicated students then took the trees to the City Mission Inc., which gave the trees to families who could not afford their own.

Stern collected only 15 to 20 trees last year, but he said poor advertising of the project was the major problem.

He hopes to increase that number this year by collecting not only from campus students but also from those in major apartment complexes, he said.

Stern said all campus residents are encouraged to bring their trees to the back—or northeast corner—of Dunbar Field. Other students wishing to donate trees should place them in a central location within the complex, he said.

Stern said the best method of mustering publicity for the project would be for someone in each complex to post fliers, then call Stern at 845-0812 to tell him the location. He asked, however, that only one person from each complex call him so his office won't be swamped with phone calls.

He said he also is searching for volunteers with trucks to take the

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— Dr. Larry Stern, A&M assistant professor

trees to the mission. Anyone wishing to donate time should contact Stern.

"Many people believe that they can do nothing to make the world better," he said. "But even a little thing like this can make a difference."

Stern said the project is aimed at raising the student body's sense of social awareness.

"I want people to know that they can help without hurting," he said.

Another project aimed at social awareness is Stern's annual Christmas fund-raising campaign. This year he's collected \$425 from students in his sociology classes and several ex-students, he said, as well

as from the members of Company G-2 of the Corps of Cadets, for which he is an academic adviser.

Stern said his campaign has an advantage over its competitors: the donors get to help spend their money.

Any student who pitched in a dollar to the cause was invited to meet him at the Kay-Bee Toy & Hobby Shop Inc. in Post Oak Mall. The collection then was divided and each student received a sum with which to buy a toy. After two hours of shopping, 55 participants bought 177 items, spending \$399.

"The students got so much fun out of it," Stern said. "Almost as much as the kids will have."

The remaining money was donated to the Bryan-College Station Eagle's Cheer Fund, and Stern said he still is accepting donations.

"If we all help a little, collectively we can do a lot," he said.

Stern said he wants to start a new Aggie tradition—giving.

"I simply want to raise people's social awareness for things they believe in," Stern said.

"I'm not opposed to any cause," he said. "I just want people to know that everyone can do something."

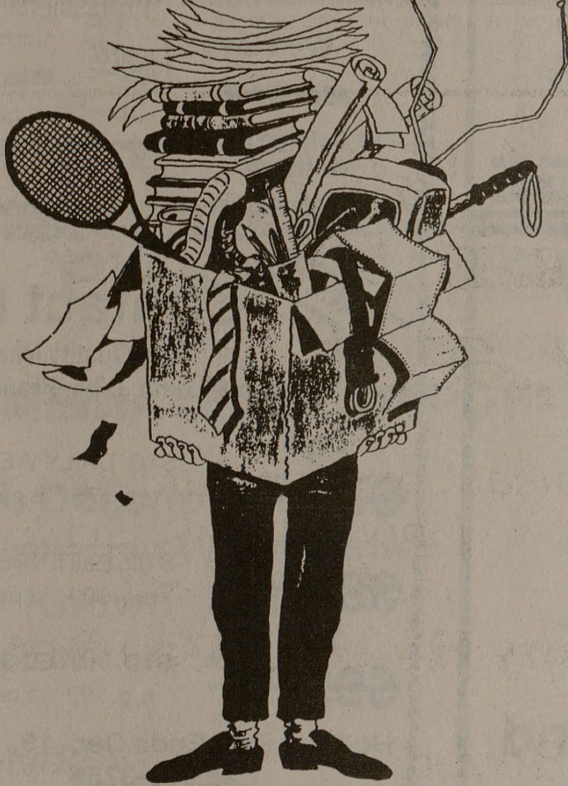
Stern said he would like to start a "floating fund" through his classes or through the sociology department.

"With a floating fund, we can take \$50 to relief workers in Mexico, or we can sponsor a child overseas," he said.

Stern said many people are reluctant to give because they can't see the results of their contribution.

"I don't agree with that," he said.

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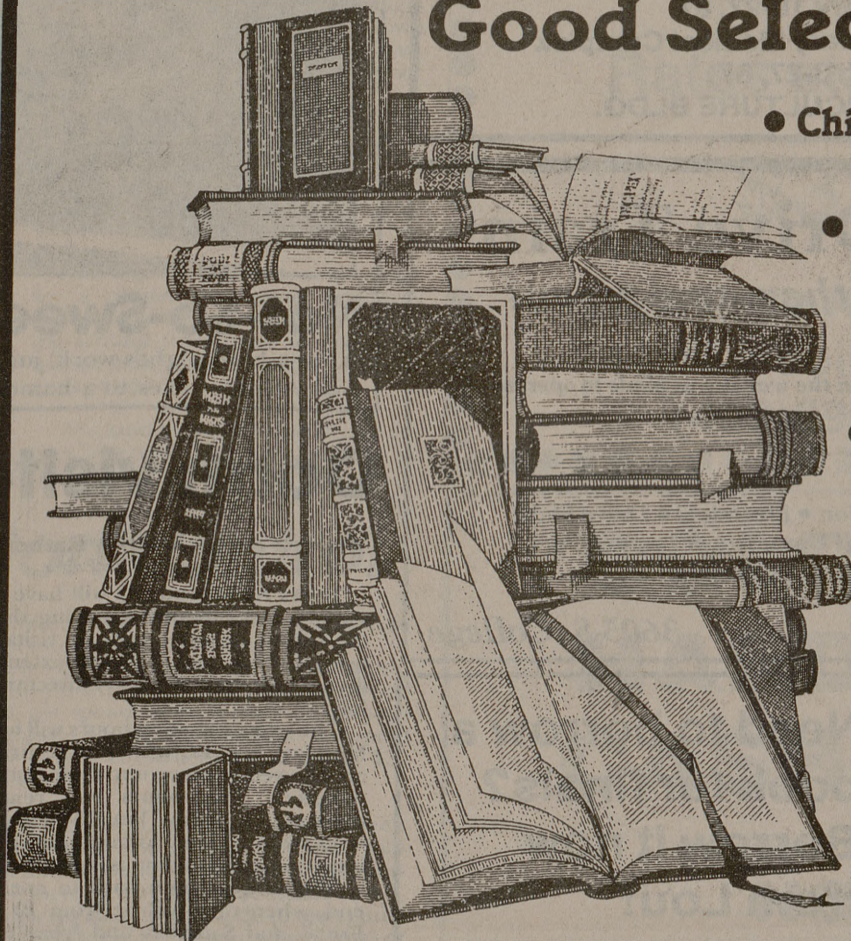
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