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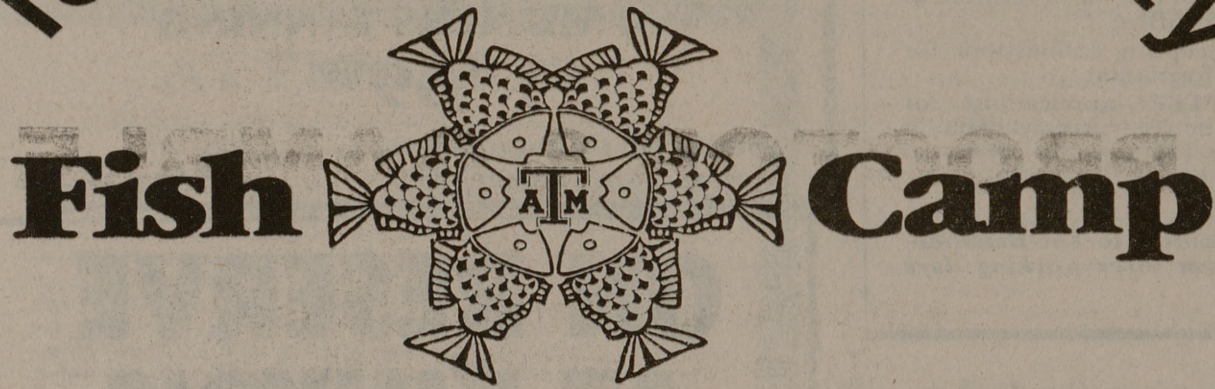
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Advocate says walking is best, safest exercise

Author promotes wellness ideas in lecture

By Susan Stubing
 Reporter

"Fitness is a snapshot of a temporary state. Wellness is a bigger picture involving every aspect of life," Robert Sweetgall, America's leading advocate of walking for wellness, told about 20 people Saturday during one of three "wellness weekends" hosted by Texas A&M.

Formerly a DuPont Chemical engineer, Sweetgall quit his job in 1981 after a series of family deaths from heart disease motivated him to begin promoting health.

He now is a walking consultant and author of three wellness books.

"It's simple. It's safe," Sweetgall said of walking. "It does the job by producing a conditioning effect."

Walking also is the only exercise that anyone — regardless of age — can do for the rest of his life, he said.

Walking at a fast pace can increase one's heart rate as quickly as jogging and can burn as many calories, Sweetgall said. The difference be-

tween the two activities is that there is less risk of injury in walking, he said.

Sweetgall emphasizes walking for wellness primarily to children, lecturing on the physiology and psychology of walking; he has delivered his message to over 140,000 schoolchildren.

"School systems today are a sad story in America," he said. "There is too much emphasis on winning the game."

The majority of students are not motivated to pursue an active life, he said, and the elite athletes are trained so intensely that they soon get "burned out."

Simple physical education programs are declining, he said, with many schools having less than 30 minutes a week devoted to exercise. Sweetgall recommends students exercise every day. He suggested using homeroom periods and lunch hours to provide activity for the students.

To impress students with the importance of cardiovascular and lifestyle, Sweetgall began his first journey, an 11,000-mile "walk" around the perimeter of the United States.

"I started to break down physically from running on this walk," Sweetgall said, "and I realized the one thing that saved me was walking."

In 1984 Sweetgall walked again, this time walking through the one year to emphasize walking as the best source of exercise.

"I like being alone," Sweetgall said when asked if he ever got lonely on his trips. He said being alone gave him time to reflect, put things together and enjoy nature.

"I just consider myself here to see America as I have seen it," Sweetgall said. "Sometimes walking at 55 mph we miss a lot of things. Walking about four mph you see it all."

Fort Worth gets more clout with 2 top political positions

FORT WORTH (AP) — For the first time in U.S. history, one city is home to both the speaker of the U.S. House and the statehouse, giving citizens in Fort Worth perhaps the most political clout in the country.

"We've always been overshadowed by Dallas," said chamber of commerce spokesman G.K. Maenius. "But not any more."

U.S. Rep. Jim Wright just succeeded Thomas P. "Tip" O'Neill as Speaker of the House in Washington, and state Rep. Gib Lewis was recently re-elected to the same post in Austin.

Fort Worth Mayor Bob Bolen said his staff's research shows the twin speakerships to be a first. The two Democrats live in each other's district, and their territories overlap to include most of Fort Worth.

Lewis and Wright now wield authority to control committee and legislation assignments as well as political opinion. It's the kind of power that makes them prime targets of people with special interests to press.

Although they represent a district where the defense industry is key, they say they won't play pork-barrel politics with their posts and are interested only in making sure their hometown gets its fair share of state and federal benefits.

But that doesn't dim the glow from city officials delighted to have such ready access to such influential ears.

"This puts us close to the power source and gives us input into the political arena we wouldn't have otherwise," Bolen said. "And it's also an issue of civic pride. They're family."

The reporters who regularly dog Wright and Lewis also can make a difference to a city so bent on attracting new industry — especially considering a recent Harris poll that found that while local folks thought a lot of their city, people outside Fort Worth didn't think about it much at all.

"When somebody interviews Jim Wright when he's at home, it won't be Boston you see in the background on national television," Bolen said. "It'll be Fort Worth. And reporters will be writing about us more. It will mean more visibility now than ever."

The limelight is nothing new for the 64-year-old Wright, who was first elected in 1954 to the 12th District seat. His political savvy and longevity helped him secure the post as

majority leader in 1976; since then, he has been summoned regularly to the White House and often speaks for his party on national television.

Lewis, who owns a label-making firm in Fort Worth, represents Texas' 89th District and won election to the speaker's post in 1983. While city officials hope Wright can bring home a big chunk of federal bacon, they're relying on Lewis to make sure the city holds its own in Texas' troubled economic times.

Fort Worth has tended to be Democratic than its Republican neighbor to the east.

Yet while recent elections the power base is shifting away from the GOP, city officials from parties say they think Lewis and Wright don't need to worry about being ousted from their seats as long as they continue to speak for the city.

"I think they'll be there as long as they want to be," Bolen said.

House speaker opens Fort Worth gun shop

FORT WORTH (AP) — Surrounded by enough firepower to mount an assault on a small country, the speaker of the Texas House grinned when asked if he thought of calling his new gun superstore "Gib's Guns."

Gib Lewis and three business partners instead named the store "Shooter's Palace." It seemed right for a \$2 million store that includes every facet of guns, from purchase to safety to repair to practice shooting — and even to stuffing the bagged animals.

"It's quite unique," Lewis said proudly while showing off the emporium that opened quietly last summer in a two-story warehouse building south of downtown Fort Worth.

"There's not another quite like it, to our knowledge, in the world," he said. "We have indoor pistol and rifle ranges. We have sporting goods, all type ammunition, any type of pistol or rifle you might want to buy. We have a taxidermy studio. We book hunting trips, fishing trips, to go anywhere in the world."

Guns are Lewis' favorite playthings. He has used them in all parts of the world. He has hunted in Alaska more often than most folks have been to Houston, and in the Soviet Union more times than most politicians have gone there to talk peace.

Many of the animals displayed in this firearms equivalent of Neiman-Marcus were killed by Lewis.

But Lewis is a little different about what he thinks has been a media-created notion that a trigger-happy, macho kind of man goes around shooting cent animals. He was even to pose with a rifle for a magazine, but he says he might send the wrong message.


"This is a business center," Lewis said. "We're here to provide a first-class, Cadillac operation where we have something to offer to the people, as far as a controlled environment. We put safety first, (teaching) people to control and handle handguns."

Shooter's Palace even has a chain-operated, clanking gallery built in Brooklyn, N.Y. for use at Coney Island in 1927. For a buck, you can away with small-powered and the moving birds, bullseyes and other beasts.

You also can shoot on the pervised pistol range for \$10 per hour, and on the rifle range for \$7.50 per half-hour.

"The main thing that we stress is that we have classes for someone who purchases one of our pistols or one of our rifles," Lewis said. "We teach how to use them safely."

That includes classes for young women how to use a handgun. There also is a complete shooting gallery where law enforcement officers, security guards and others can practice quickly to good-gun target situations.



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