

State and Local

Students from A&M may attend new branch in Japan by 1989

Campus could improve relations between U.S., Japan

By Rachel Cowan
Reporter

Students may be able to attend Texas A&M in Japan as early as 1989 if the administration approves creating a branch campus, Jaan Laane, A&M professor of chemistry said.

A number of American universities, including A&M, the University of Texas and Ohio State University, are looking into forming branch campuses in Japan.

The U.S.-Japan Committee for Promoting Trade Expansion, headed by Rep. Richard Gephardt, D-Mo., suggested the idea to improve relations between the two countries.

Japanese communities, industries and students would supply land and funding for the campuses, while the American universities would provide the faculty and administration. Because neither the United States nor Japan will pay for

the branch campuses, tuition will cost as much as private school fees.

"Texas taxpayers won't pay for any of it," Laane said.

The A&M branch probably would have 30 faculty members and about 500 students, he said, but while most of the students would be Japanese, the curriculum would be taught in English. The curriculum could be technical or it could be two years of basic courses with the students finishing at A&M in College Station, Laane said.

"Everything is still in the preliminary stage, though," Laane said. "None of the plans are certain and the administration hasn't yet decided whether to approve the branch campus."

He said the program, if approved, the program also would help Japanese students improve their mastery of English. Laane noted that their proficiency in reading and writing the language

is good, but that their speaking ability is poor.

American A&M students could take classes in Japan, he said, because the same academic criteria would apply to both the College Station and the Japanese campuses. A&M faculty also could teach at the branch campus, he said.

Laane and Provost Donald McDonald, along with representatives from 18 universities, went to Japan in February to discuss plans with Japanese officials. They toured six potential sites for the branch campuses, four of which were near Tokyo.

Laane said the Japanese are enthusiastic about the program because of the educational and commercial opportunities it offers.

Since Japanese students don't leave home to attend college, the campuses would need to be in a large metropolitan area to ensure enough student enrollment, Laane said.

Astronaut calls Challenger accident 'the price you pay' to explore space

By Debbie Monroe
Reporter

Exploration of space has always had a cost, and the lives of the astronauts killed in the Challenger explosion were part of the price, NASA astronaut Michael J. McCulley said Tuesday night at Texas A&M.

McCulley was on campus to solicit support for the American space program. Speaking to the Human Factors Society, a student group interested in designing technology for human use, the shuttle pilot compared the shuttle accident to hurdles explorers have cleared in the past.

He compared the accident to hurdles explorers have cleared in the past.

"Magellan paid the price," he said. "Scott paid the price at the South Pole, and Amelia Earhart paid the price over the South Pacific."

"You just don't go into the unknown without having to ante up."



He said the explosion was the result of poor design and engineering, and a human factors problem. After the first four shuttle flights, the emergency escape system was removed from the shuttle. The astronaut believes the Challenger crew might have lived if one had been in place.

While acknowledging the problems NASA has with the shuttle program, McCulley also pointed out the

successes credited to it. He called the 24 missions prior to Challenger technological wonders, citing scientific advances made during shuttle missions.

"We found water in Ethiopia and manufactured a new drug that may make a tremendous impact on diabetes research," he said.

Reviewing the 26-year history of NASA's manned space programs in the filled lecture hall, the Navy pilot stressed how far human dynamics have come since the early days of the Mercury program. The first seven American astronauts were chosen because of their small stature. They had to fit into a tiny space capsule.

"They were small men physically, but they had huge hearts and courage," he said.

The 6-foot-1-inch shuttle pilot said today's astronauts are self-starters and generalists who are capable of working outside their areas of expertise.


McCulley said fixing problems with the shuttle is NASA's top priority, though he doubts the program will be operational by NASA director James Fletcher's 1988 deadline.

He also discussed other long-range programs, including construction of the space station and a trip to Mars.

Designs for the space station have been simplified, he said. The original plan called for a massive structure dedicated to research. Now NASA will start with a smaller configuration and add to it.

Plans for a manned mission to Mars are also under consideration, McCulley said. When all the problems are solved, astronauts, not robot probes, will explore the red planet.

"Humans will never be satisfied with a photograph or a number off a sensor," McCulley said, quoting astronaut Gene Crenna. "Exploration will always have humans."



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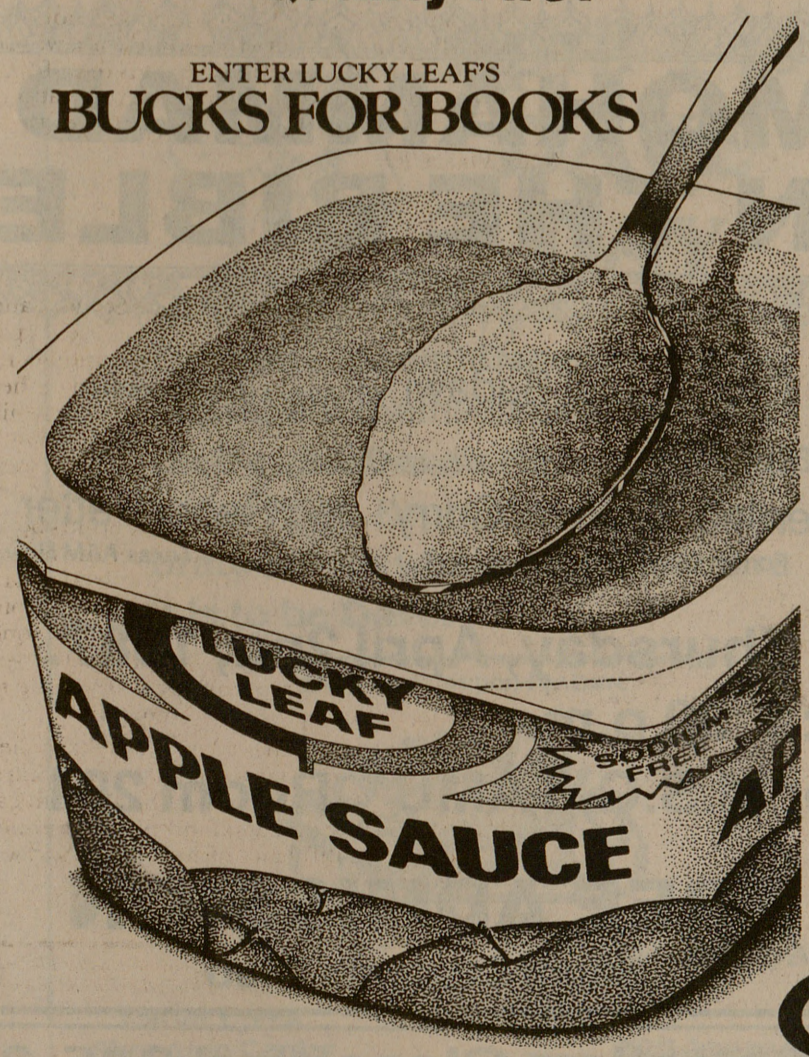
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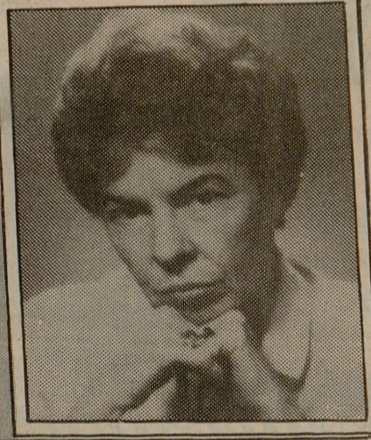
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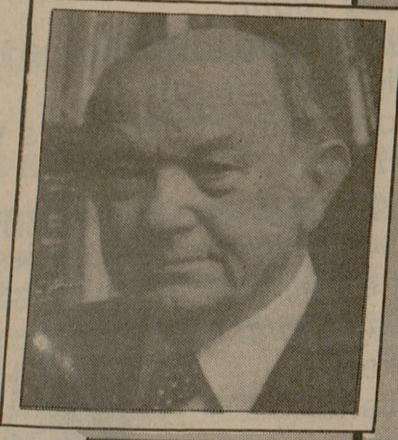
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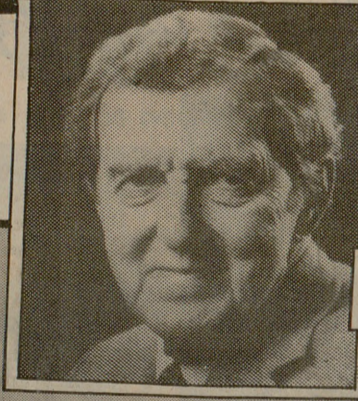
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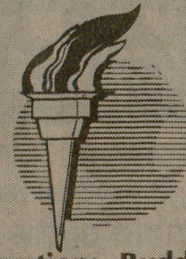


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