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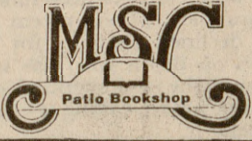

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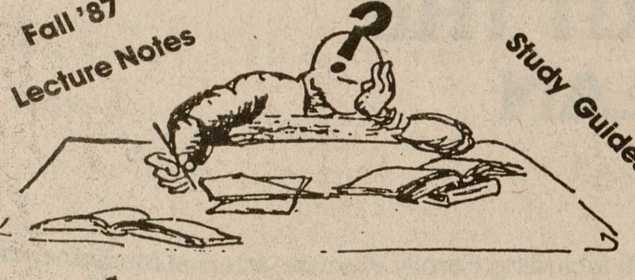


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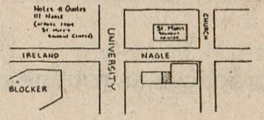


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A&M education expert: Reforms don't meet improvement goals

By Laura Ehrlich
Reporter

Texas public-school reforms are not accomplishing their intended goal of improving education, a Texas A&M education expert said.

Dr. Dean Corrigan, dean of education at A&M, said he was pleased that the Texas Legislature approved the education-reform bill popularly known as House Bill 72, but that better implementation of the reforms is needed.

Corrigan made his comments in response to a letter from the U.S. secretary of education, William Bennett. Bennett is mailing over 700 letters to educators and civic leaders across the United States to get their opinion of the nation's education reforms.

There are three reforms in which Corrigan places special importance,

beginning with smaller class sizes. "We must eliminate overcrowding and the resulting easy anonymity and shallow teacher-pupil contacts," he said.

Secondly, Corrigan said, tutoring should be implemented prior to a student's failure. He stressed that even gifted children deserve the extra help tutoring provides.

"The student should not be sent to a detention-like environment for improvement after it is determined he or she needs special attention to a problem," Corrigan said.

The third critical element of the bill, he said, is to make the teacher's position a professional one, which, in part, means higher salaries.

"This idea is to attract and keep good people in teaching careers," Corrigan said.

Before House Bill 72, starting teachers were making \$11,100 a year. Now their base salary is \$15,200 and

is expected to be \$15,800 by the end of this year.

Corrigan criticized standardized testing that began with the Legislature's reform bill, although he emphasizes that the tests themselves are not the culprits.

"Tests are not inherently bad; it's the mindless misuse of them that is bad," he said.

When test scores are the sole indicator of excellence, many equally important values in education are ignored, he said.

"In addition," he said, "political pressure for higher tests scores is forcing teachers and administrators to 'teach the test.'"

"They will want to teach the student according to the testing that follows, thus repressing the students' potential to reason, critically think and verbally interact."

Corrigan said the most frightening aspect of the current emphasis

on testing is that the push for higher test scores has consequently more students to drop out.

"Right now the fastest way for a school to come out on top in rankings game of test comparisons is to increase the dropout rate," he said.

"Instead of being used as an education tool, tests have become a political football."

One other problem of standardized testing is that the results are designed to help the students seldom even seen by them, he said.

Another test should not be unless the results are thoroughly discussed and areas of improvement specified, Corrigan said.

"It is clear that whatever the merits of present reforms, they are incomplete," Corrigan said, "and portend both a present and a disaster unless the needs of disadvantaged are addressed."

Carrasco's show entertains, lets audience participate

By Tom Reinarts
Music Reviewer

Joe "King" Carrasco and his band, Las Coronas, came to Texas A&M University last Friday night for a concert at Deware Fieldhouse and played before a moderately sized but enthusiastic crowd. Carrasco led Las Coronas through two energetic forty-five minute sets that included a fair amount of audience participation.

The band played songs from each of Carrasco's previous records including "Bandito Rock," his latest release. The audience enjoyed the music which combined the best elements of American rock 'n' roll and popular Latin American music. Several of those attending formed large conga lines and danced their way through the songs "Banana" and "Bandito Rock." "Houston el Mover" and "Party Weekend" were the best received songs of the evening.

Carrasco jumped off the stage and into the audience on several occasions, as he has been doing at concerts

for several years. From time to time he would run around Deware and play his guitar off stage.

The performance by Carrasco and Las Coronas was as good as any on campus in the last year. The lead singer maintained a high energy level throughout the concert. Carrasco did not just stand on stage and sing. He also encouraged participation from the audience, and even brought several members of the crowd onto the stage for the closing numbers.

The most refreshing element of the concert was the lack of a gratuitous encore. Rather than pretending to be finished and then carrying on with a pre-planned encore song or two, Carrasco and his band played their hearts out until the last song was finished and then quit for the evening.

Town Hall did a good job of organizing the concert, and with the exception of the delayed start, there were very few problems with the evening.

Two flags from expedition find home in A&M Archives

By Missy Sims
Reporter

Two flags that survived 48 days of sub-zero temperatures and extremely high winds in an Antarctic expedition became part of the Texas A&M Archives Friday.

The flags, one of which survived a week-long separation from its keeper, are memorabilia of A&M graduate student Austin Mardon's participation in a meteorite-recovery expedition in Antarctica.

A small Texas flag was given to the A&M graduate student by the Houston Museum of Science, and a Texas A&M pennant was given to Mardon by Dr. Frank Vandiver's office. Both flags were attached to Mardon's snowmobile and survived the 48-day trek. Mardon said that at one time winds of 100 miles per hour ripped the A&M pennant off of his snowmobile. He found the

flag about a week later several miles from the camp.

"We'll keep the flags as a representation of the accomplishments of one of our graduate students," said Dr. Charles R. Schultz, University archivist. The flags, as well as copies of 30 letters of commendation Mardon received, will be used as a future exhibit in the archives, or in Sterling C. Evans Library.

Antarctica's sub-zero temperatures allowed for minimal earthy contamination of the meteorites retrieved by the NASA-funded expedition.

Scientists at National Aeronautics and Space Administration are using the specimens to learn more about the solar system and the extinction of prehistoric animals.

The research team returned with over 500 meteorites. Their findings are in special containers at Johnson

Space Center in Houston to protect them from terrestrial contamination. They will be processed for three years, and they then will be put on public display.

The trip was more than just research for Mardon. It evoked his sense of honor and satisfaction, a disposition Mardon considers his special connection to the University.

"Aggie spirit is great patriotism — idealism," he said. But he is concerned that this idealism is disappearing from the campus. He said many students and faculty members focus too much on money. It is the thrill of adventure and the honor of accomplishment that Mardon said he is interested in.

"I'm not interested in money," he said.

Mardon, 25, is working on his doctorate degree in education at A&M.

Jet makes emergency landing in San Antonio

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — A jetliner carrying Colombian President Virgilio Barco made an emergency landing Sunday at Kelly Air Force Base when the front landing gear of the plane would not retract after takeoff from Travis Air Force Base, Calif., officials said.

The presidential plane carrying

49 people, including the flight crew, arrived at Kelly about 1:30 p.m. CDT Sunday, officials said.

The blue and white Boeing 707 had taken off from Travis about 7 a.m. (PDT) and Kelly officials were notified about 90 minutes later that the plane would be diverted to the base because of the mechanical diffi-

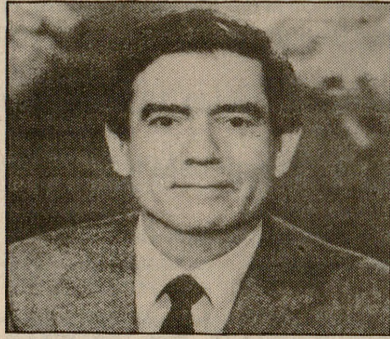
culties with the front tires.

While in flight, the plane's crew made several unsuccessful maneuvers to try and make the landing gear retract, officials said.

After the plane arrived at Kelly, some of the passengers — including Barco — were taken to the Base Operations building and another group

was taken to the officer's club for refreshments while officials worked the plane.

Bogdanski said the flight was diverted to Kelly because the plane had been designated by the Department of Defense and the Air Force as a landing facility for the San Antonio area for arriving heads of state.



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