

Photo by Jay Janner

Go fly a kite

Jeff Peryn, an environmental design major, holds on to the handles while Andrew Mathews, an economics major, releases the kite behind

Aston Hall Monday afternoon. The two freshmen from Spring took advantage of the windy weather to practice flying their new kite.

El Paso civic leaders encourage ABC to renew locally based show

EL PASO (AP) — Business and civic leaders say they plan to begin a letter-writing campaign to persuade ABC to resurrect "Juarez," a police drama set in El Paso that was canceled before the show was broadcast.

The show, which starred Benjamin Banda as Rosendo Juarez, an El Paso County sheriff's deputy, would have been the first dramatic series on a U.S. network to have a predominantly Hispanic cast. The pilot originally was scheduled to be shown on Feb. 16, then was slated for February.

ABC executives told executive producer and director Jeffrey Bloom about the cancellation just three days after they saw the pilot and ordered four more shows.

There was definitely some difference of opinion on what the show

should look like," Bloom said Monday in a telephone interview. "They started hitting us with, 'Where's the Southwest style?'"

"By 'Southwest style,' they're talking about this Beverly Hills conceit of what the Southwest should be. Everybody should have this adobe house with a cactus and white walls and a Navajo rug. . . . They wanted, probably, Santa Fe."

Bloom showed a rough cut of the pilot to leaders of two Hispanic arts organizations, Nosotros and the Hispanic Academy of Media Arts and Sciences. Richard Yniguez, Nosotros president, said he liked the show, as did Ivy Orta, chairman of the Hispanic Academy.

Yniguez said the groups will ask their members to write letters to

ABC. Leaders of both groups want to meet with executives of ABC and Columbia Pictures Television, which produced the show.

El Paso, an industrial border city of 500,000, bears little resemblance to Santa Fe, a picturesque, art gallery-filled town of about 50,000 high in the Rockies of northern New Mexico.

"El Paso doesn't have that sort of rarified, beautified atmosphere they were looking for," Bloom said. "They wanted more of an upscale look, and there's not much of an upscale look in El Paso."

Robert Knight, director of El Paso's film commission, agreed. "Probably one or two (ABC executives) have been to a party in Santa Fe and think that's what the Southwest is all about," he said.

Luz Taboada, general manager of Cimarron Media Services in El Paso,

said she would like to join the Hispanic Academy's campaign, partly because she has a stake in the show. She helped cast extras.

Taboada said CBS viewers set a precedent when they wrote enough letters to keep "Designing Women" and "Cagney and Lacey" on the air after the network announced their cancellations.

ABC spokesman Jim Brochu said the series was shelved because of scheduling changes and creative differences with Bloom. The network still is interested in producing a series with mostly Hispanic characters, he said, adding that ABC might go back to the drawing board with "Juarez."

Bloom and Taboada said network officials might have been skittish when they watched the show and discovered that about 90 percent of the cast was Hispanic.

Explosion, fires trap 160 in Mexican mine

MEXICO CITY (AP) — An explosion and fire trapped about 160 men in a coal mine in northern Mexico on Monday, authorities said. They said 17 were rescued by mid-afternoon.

Americo Juvenal Soto Rodriguez, police chief in the town of La Esperanza near the mine, said the blast occurred in the morning and the fire was making rescue work difficult.

Rescue squads are working on it, and we have firemen from the

(nearby city) of Monclova . . . It is doubtful they could be brought out (alive)," Soto Rodriguez said in a telephone interview.

Officials at the scene said they believed that sparks from a faulty power generator may have come into contact with coal-gas and caused the explosion at "Cuatro y medio" mine.

The underground mine, with the main shaft half a mile long, is located two miles from La Esperanza, in

Coahuila state, 70 miles southwest of Eagle Pass, Texas.

The mine belongs to Compania Hulera Mexicana, but a telephone operator at the main office in Mexico City, who did not identify herself, said they could not get in contact with mine office in La Esperanza.

"The telephone there has apparently been damaged by the explosion," she said.

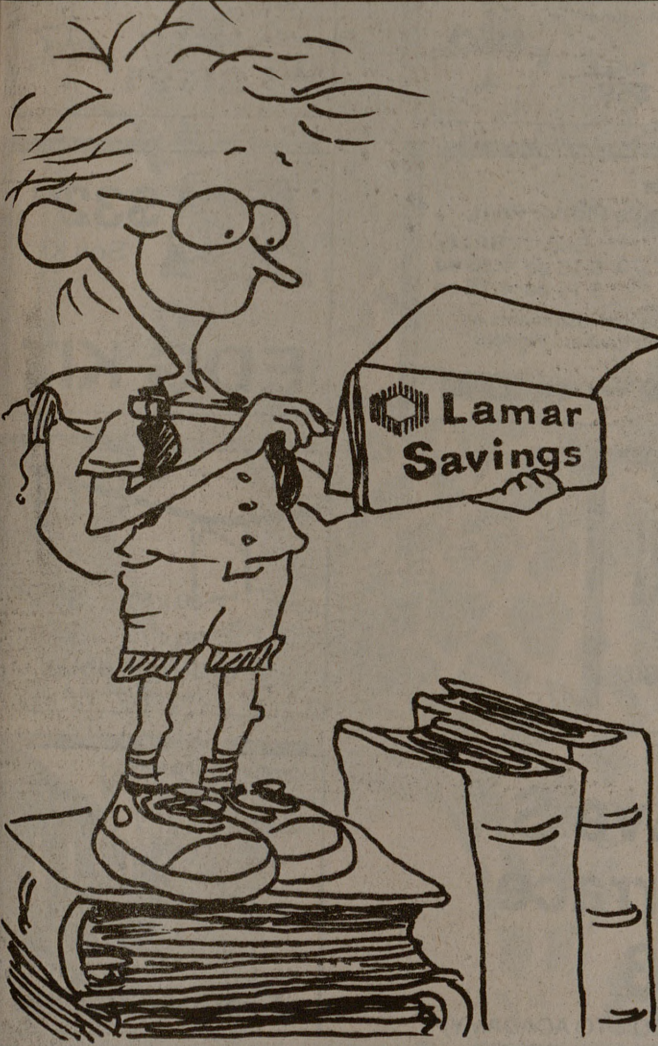
Maria Esther Jeiza, a spokesman

at the Social Security Hospital in the nearby town of Palau, said in a telephone interview that 17 miners had been rescued by early afternoon.

"Here we have six, and 11 more are in a very serious condition at the Social Security Hospital in the (nearby) town of Nueva Rosita," she said.

She said the explosion occurred at 8:30 a.m.

"We are expecting more injured," she added.



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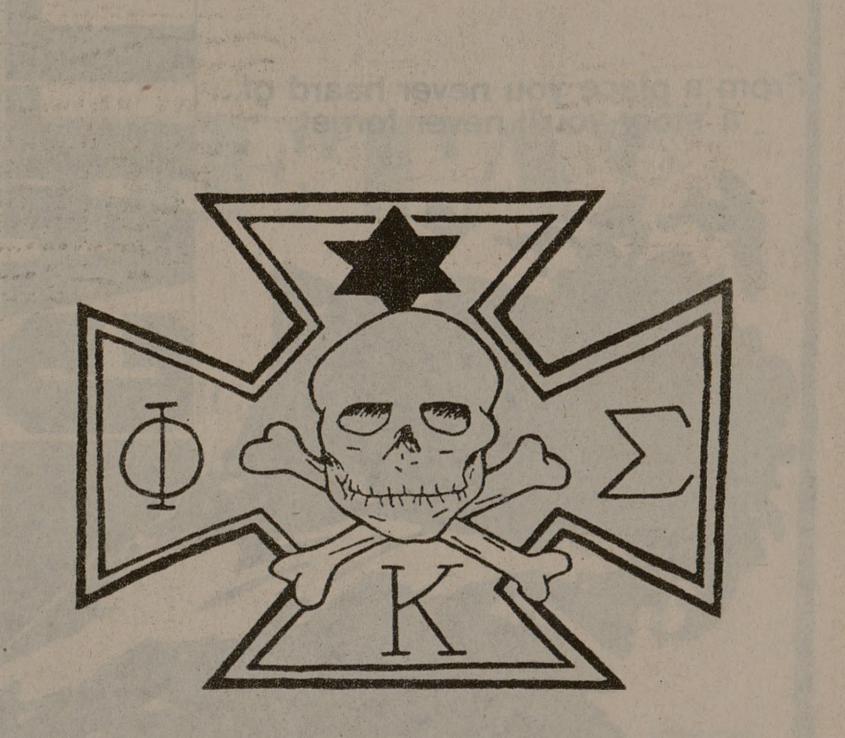
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