

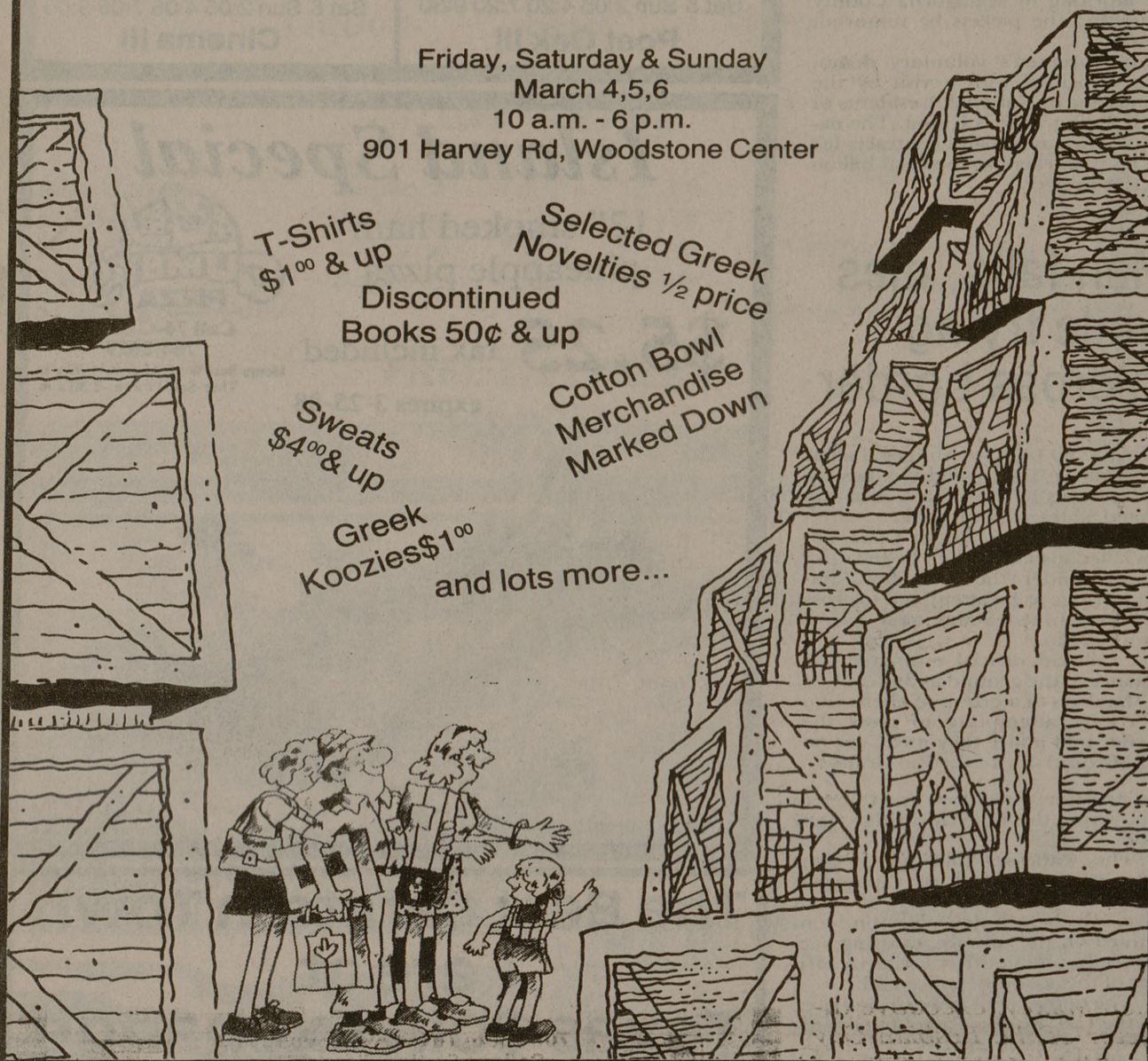
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New program provides forum for events, clubs

By Christina De Leon
Reporter

Aggie Update, a new radio program that allows Texas A&M students to broadcast information about A&M events and organizations, began airing on a local radio station last month.

The minute-long program, sponsored by the Texas Aggie Credit Union, is broadcast on KTAM-FM four times a day, Monday through Friday.

"The highlight is that student representatives come in and record it themselves," said KTAM News Director Marsha Carter, who coordinates and organizes the show. She says that each organization writes and broadcasts its own script.

The focus of Aggie Update, Carter says, is to report upcoming events and allow students to talk about a variety of topics — from personality profiles to the merits of their organization.

Scott Mendell, president of the Off-Campus Aggies, says his organization will concentrate their radio broadcasts on informing students about off-campus student activities and general membership information.

"We just tell them meeting and

"The highlight (of the program) is that student representatives come in and record it themselves."
— KTAM News Director Marsha Carter, coordinator and organizer of the radio show

event times and how-to-get involved information," he says.

Details of The Big Event and the Swing of the Spring golf tournament are among the many activities Off-Campus Aggies discusses in the broadcasts, Mendell says.

Other organizations such as the Corps of Cadets, The Battalion and Student Government have also participated in the program.

Since the Aggie Update program began, Carter says, both A&M students and the local community have been supportive.

"The students we've heard from have been very positive," she says.

KTAM came up with the idea for a student radio program when KTAM General Manager Craig Par-

ker and Program Director Roy Garrett were considering ways better represent students, Carter says.

Although KTAM had regularly announced upcoming A&M events, Carter says the station believed more structured programming was needed to attract both student and listeners.

Laurie Heidbreder, an account executive for Advertising Associates, which represents the Texas Aggie Credit Union, says her agency believes more publicity of A&M activities was needed in the community.

"We felt there was a need to be aware of things that go on campus," Heidbreder says.

Although KTAM plans on broadcasting the show throughout the spring semester, Heidbreder says the Texas Aggie Credit Union will sponsor the show for as long as budget permits.

"It depends on the budget," she says. "It could be six months or weeks."

KTAM is uncertain whether the Aggie Update will be broadcast in summer as well, Carter says.

Experts discuss effects, risks of using nuclear power plants

By Shannon O'Neal
Reporter

The forces of nuclear power, business, science and consumers, lined up Thursday night to present their views in 201 MSC. Six authorities from several concerns in the nuclear industry gave their opinions in sometimes heated exchanges with one another and more than 50 students and faculty members at "The Economics and Safety of Nuclear Energy: A Public Forum," sponsored by the Texas A&M University Green Earth Society.

Bryan Baker, president of the Committee for Consumer Rate Relief in Houston, began the forum by questioning the economic sense of building nuclear plants when they produce a small ratio of the total power output.

"The South Texas Nuclear Power Project is the most expensive plant they have built," Baker said. "It represents only about 7 percent of their power capacity and has eaten up half to two-thirds of their net worth. That is a very small return."

Baker added that Houston Power and Light Company has a 46 percent power-reserve margin without the plant scheduled to come on line.

He said the fact that reactors are

expensive to build would not deter them from being built.

Other panelists said the high costs are not the industry's fault.

Jeff Pruitt of Gulf State Electric Utilities Company said the increase in cost was due to the effects of more government regulation and the larger and more powerful plants that are being completed now. Many of these plants have been designed and redesigned and built and rebuilt. The price had to increase, he said.

Dr. Frank Iddings, a professor emeritus at Louisiana State University and affiliate of the Committee for Energy Awareness, said although nuclear energy is not cheap, it has saved the United States more than 3 billion barrels of oil so far.

Stephen Fenberg, an editorial writer for the *Houston Post* and the *Houston Chronicle*, focused on another aspect of nuclear power, calling himself "a concerned human being whose survival instinct has been aroused."

Fenberg said there were 3,000 reported accidents in nuclear plants last year and many plants have alcohol and drug abuse problems. He said the Nuclear Regulatory Commission reported to Congress that there is a 45 percent chance of a se-

vere meltdown before the year 2000.

But Dr. K.L. Peddicord, an Alabama professor of engineering, said 3,000 accidents were really just portable incidents and therefore reflected the efficiency of nuclear safety systems.

Pruitt explained that the nuclear power industry has the only testing program where all employees are examined.

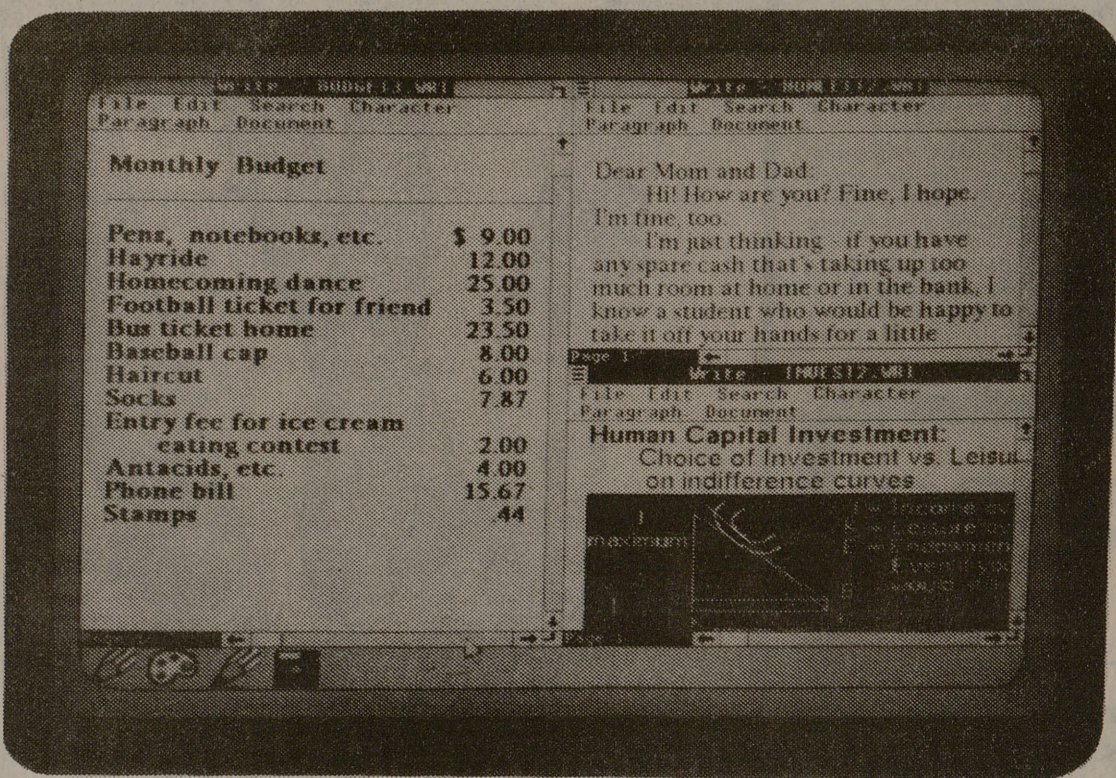
Concerns over safety were also in light of the recent Chernobyl nuclear accident in the Soviet Union, though others pointed out that a Chernobyl reactor was not the same type as U.S. reactors.

Baker said he was living in Europe when the Chernobyl accident occurred and radiation levels 100 times the normal background level were not uncommon.

He asked if the effects of the accident could be predicted and pointed out that the results of incidents years ago only now are being appreciated.

Iddings said these fears were baseless and drew parallels between the stories told now of nuclear power and the fears people had when the train and automobile were introduced.

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Agency owner accused of fraud vanishes from cruise ship Galaxy

AUSTIN (AP) — A San Antonio travel agency owner who Texas officials allege bilked customers out of \$5 million disappeared from the cruise ship Galaxy shortly before a mutiny of its crew in Central America, passengers say.

Fernando Inigo of San Antonio left the ship in the predawn hours in Puerto Quetzal, Guatemala, promising crew members he would re-board in Costa Rica with money to pay them, passengers told the *Houston Chronicle*.

Inigo and his wife, Lorna, are two of five defendants named in a lawsuit filed last week by the Texas attorney general's office against Golden Cruisetours Inc. and two of its affiliates.

The three other defendants — Fernando Mendrillo, Fermin Gutierrez and Manuel Fernandez — maintain postal boxes in San Antonio but have unknown addresses in Spain, officials said.

Assistant Texas Attorney General Raul Noriega said he had visited the Inigos' house in San Antonio and that their neighbors have not seen the couple for several weeks.

They appeared to have taken

some possessions and left, Noriega said.

Their child was removed from school, and the family's cars still sit in the driveway.

Morris J. Kirschberg, attorney for Golden Cruisetours, declined to comment on the case this week but did say through a secretary that he has not had contact with the Inigos since the lawsuit was filed.

After the vessel left Costa Rica and passed through the Panama Canal, the Galaxy's captain had all passengers leave the ship in Panama City on Feb. 21.

The Galaxy is owned by Global Cruises of Panama, one of the affiliates named in the suit, of which Inigo owns 5 percent, Noriega said.

"He (Inigo) was very nervous," Galaxy passenger Dorothy C. Hayes of Houston told the *Chronicle*. "We were told he wasn't feeling well."

Hayes said Inigo talked with her and other passengers before leaving the ship.

"He said that he had to leave in Guatemala to meet with his bankers (in Guatemala City) and then he would catch up with the ship in Costa Rica," she said.

He never showed up, she added.

In a letter to the Associated Press passenger Peggy Enger of Lakewood, Colo., described conditions on the ship when passengers boarded Feb. 11 in Acapulco.

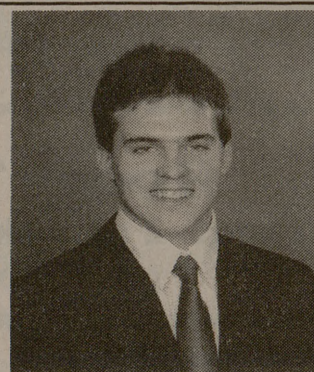
"We entered into the main lobby. It was filthy, carpet was oil streaked, it smelled of diesel fuel," Enger wrote.

Because of failures in the air conditioning system, cruise officials said only 50 passengers could sail, she said.

Enger recalled that announcement, in which she said cruise officials told passengers: "We want you to think of this as a real adventure. The air conditioning breaks down again, and we have no assurance it won't, we will make some arrangements for you to sleep on deck for safety reasons, we will tie you down."

"I couldn't believe under the conditions that anyone would have signed up."

She and her husband decided against sailing with the ship, which she said left port a day behind schedule Feb. 12.



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