

OPAS reports 'Cats' performance will come earlier than scheduled

By Stan Golaboff
Reporter

An Opera and Performing Arts Society representative told the MSC Council that Cats, originally scheduled for April 14-15, now will perform on April 12-13 because of routing problems with the company.

Tickets for the performance on the April 14 will be honored on April 12 and the tickets for April 15 will be good for April 13, MSC President Lisa Hartman said. "There will also be a chance for students to get refunds or exchange tickets for different performances."

The council met Monday night to consider revisions to their constitution and hear reports from different committees.

Jim Hart, vice-president for student development, discussed the creation of two new program awards to be given out during Parents Weekend.

Hart said that the two awards would recognize the outstanding new program of the year and the outstanding program of the year. There would be no minimum or maximum number of programs that would be honored. The student development committee would evaluate whether a program met the criteria for the award.

"One of the reasons we felt that there needed to be a difference between new outstanding program and outstanding program is because we wanted to encourage committees to branch out and try new projects," Hart said. "With these awards the development committee feels like there is a balance between individual awards and group awards."

Another change in the awards program during Parents Weekend will be the omission of the reading of

recipient's bio sheet. Instead the bio sheets will be printed in an insert

passed out at the awards program, Hart said.

The MSC Council considered revisions to their constitution and bylaws at their meeting Monday night.

"The constitution was last revised in 1984 and the council wanted to revise it so that the new council taking office in April will not be bothered with the details of doing the revisions," MSC President Linda Hartman said.

The council was given a copy of the constitution along with revisions made by the constitution and bylaws committee to study. The council agreed to vote on whether to accept the revised document at the councils next meeting on March 28, she said. Hartman said the council also

heard from Jim Reynolds about the MSC budget.

Reynolds said that it looked like the student services fees section of the budget would probably be \$15,000 less than expected, but he said he fully expects to get the money from a different source. He declined to name that source.

Reynolds also gave an update on the Foyryst Alumni Center renovation for the Runyon exhibition to be on show later in the semester.

Reynolds said as soon as the system officials approved the renovation plan, the physical plant workers would start with the work/draw stage of the project, which would probably be in the next two weeks.

The council ended the meeting after adjourning into closed session to discuss personnel matters.

Clue leads to suspect after 6 years

HOUSTON (AP) — While talking with investigators after she was robbed, a woman provided police with a clue leading to the arrest of a man in the unrelated murder of her brother nearly six years earlier.

Robin Barstow, 29, passed along some talk she heard in her neighborhood about her brother's death.

Neither family members nor police will say what the information was, but her stepfather credits her with staying on the case.

"She's the one that really deserves the credit for not giving up," the stepfather, Leo Akers, said. "She stayed with this thing after everyone else in the family had just about given up."

On July 22, 1982, a wrecker driver found the bodies of Gordon Brett Barstow and an acquaintance, Charles William Spencer, on a remote road.

After Barstow was held up nine months ago in a grocery store parking lot, she reported the case to police, along with the latest information she had heard about her brother's death.

After examining the unsolved murder case again with the new information, police were led to a 24-year-old suspect, Kyle Lewis Morgan was arrested Saturday on a charge of capital murder and was being held without bond in the Harris County Jail.

Family members say they are relieved to hear someone is behind bars for the crime.

"I had kinda given up hope," Nona Akers, Barstow's mother, said. "You would hear this and hear that, but nothing ever developed but frustration."

Barstow and Spencer had known each other for about five months.

Regional educators establish forum to help deal with gifted

By Page Goodman
Reporter

"One year ago, Brian, 7, could have been described as suicidal; he was withdrawn and hated school," said Dr. Norma Lu Hafenstein, coordinator of the University Center for Gifted Young Children and the University for Youth at the University of Denver. "Now, however, Brian has been analyzed as a gifted child. He is a happy little boy, involved in school activities and reading on a third-grade level."

The first Conference for Early Childhood Educators, held Friday and Saturday at Texas A&M, was set up to establish a forum in Central Texas to deal with gifted children from pre-kindergarten through second grade, and to help their parents and teachers better know how to deal with the abilities of children like Brian.

At the conference, called "Nurturing Precociousness and Identifying Advanced Ability in Young Children," Hafenstein, the keynote speaker, stressed working with the child as an individual.

"We must examine the children as individuals and let the program be initiated and fostered by the child," she said. "Their needs are different from others and different within themselves. We must provide services for individual abilities."

But many of the children's abilities are overlooked and not dealt

with on an individual basis, Hafenstein said. When this happens, various problems occur within the child or from outside sources, she said. For example, some children are like Brian, some are too precocious and constantly correct their teachers and some constantly are being pushed by their parents, like Steven, she said.

"Steven reads intensely and all of the time," Hafenstein said. "He will not do anything else for fear of failure. The reason for his fear is that he is under constant pressure from his father. He is the kind of father who checked on the few items Steven missed on an achievement test, so he would not miss them next time."

A variety of other situations occur with gifted children.

Children who cannot get their work as perfect as they think it should be become inhibited and quit trying, Hafenstein said.

Many children deny their abilities because they want to fit in with their peers, she said.

Other children are disturbed because there is a discrepancy in their physical and intellectual development, Hafenstein said. The solution is to provide verbal expression and non-competitive physical activities, she said.

"Solutions vary because the needs

of the individual should be focused on; however, some things are necessary for every situation," Hafenstein said.

She urged educators and parents to teach children how to cope to keep them from hiding problems.

"There must be a purpose behind assignments and children will learn better through hands-on experience," Hafenstein said. "In a school in Denver, we had four-year-olds be grapes and go through a drawing of the digestive system on the floor. Difficult concepts, such as anatomy, can be modified for the young child. Also, by doing, they are not bored and will learn more."

"All of this information is useless, unless we do something. The responsibility is awesome and the potential of the child is immeasurable. You are nurturing the future."

Margaret Bryant, co-chairman of the conference, which was sponsored by the Gifted and Talented Institute of Texas A&M and the Region IV Education Service Center, said she thinks it went well.

Friday night Bill Wallace, recipient of the 1983 Texas Bluebonnet Award for his children's novel, "A Dog Called Kitty," spoke. About 140 teachers and parents attended the conference.

"It will definitely be worth doing again," Bryant said.

Texas A&I one of few colleges to offer course in mariachi music

KINGSVILLE (AP) — On page 183 of Texas A&I's catalog, the university with one of the nation's best science programs lists a one-hour course in experimental joy — mariachi music.

Always opened with a "grito" — a shout — the spirited folk music of Mexico is catching on throughout the United States as pop star Linda Ronstadt's mariachi album climbs the charts.

The colorful music richly layered with brass, strings and voice has been largely ignored by most North American university and college music departments. Only a few, including the University of California at Los Angeles, offer mariachi studies, said Eliseo Torres, vice president for student affairs. But at A&I, which in October 1987 was recognized by U.S. News and World Report as having one of the top science departments in America, the mariachi course has been part of the curriculum since 1978 — when mariachi music wasn't popular even in South Texas.

Merced Garcia, a Kingsville mariachi musician, said mariachi music became extremely popular in Mexico in the '30s when a group called Mariachi Vargas, of Tecalitlan, Jalisco, became prominent.

Garcia said the leader, Caspar, wrote many of the mariachi classics, including "La Negra," "El Rey" and "Sabor A Me."

Bands range in size from five musicians to no more than 12. They play violins, trumpets, bass guitar and the vihuela, the small string guitar that originated in the Aztec culture, Garcia said.

Her band partner, Mary Lou Gonzalez, was among the first mariachi students at A&I.

Gonzalez said she remembers asking people if they wanted to hear mariachi and the reply would be, "Not really."

But times have changed, she said. "There's a new crowd today, and Linda Ronstadt is helping make this music national."

The A&I course played matchmaker in renewing South Texans'

love of mariachi music. It started with scholarly and cultural aims.

Thomas C. Pierson, who was chairman of the music department in 1978, said he proposed the course because there was a void in mariachi studies and materials.

"A lot of mariachi music does not exist in the printed form and students have to listen to the recordings so they can learn the songs."

Pierson said he felt mariachi studies also would recognize the Mexican-American aspect of bicultural South Texas.

Torres and I.Q. Viduarri, now the dean of students, recruited an accomplished mariachi musician, Juan Ortiz, of San Antonio, to start the university course. Ortiz ran the program for a year and a half before returning to San Antonio to resume playing professionally and teaching in the public schools.

When he started the A&I program, there was no shortage of students interested in studying with him. "The students were receptive," Ortiz said.

Champion steer brings \$85,000 to FFA student

HOUSTON (AP) — A 1,253-pound steer named "21" brought Jay Dee Johnson of Elgin \$85,000 at the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo after his animal was named grand champion.

Johnson, 18, representing the Elgin Future Farmers of America, was named champion Friday night and his steer was sold Saturday to retired Houston building contractor Tommy Steele and his wife, Mary. The Steeles paid \$10,000 more than last year's grand champion.

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