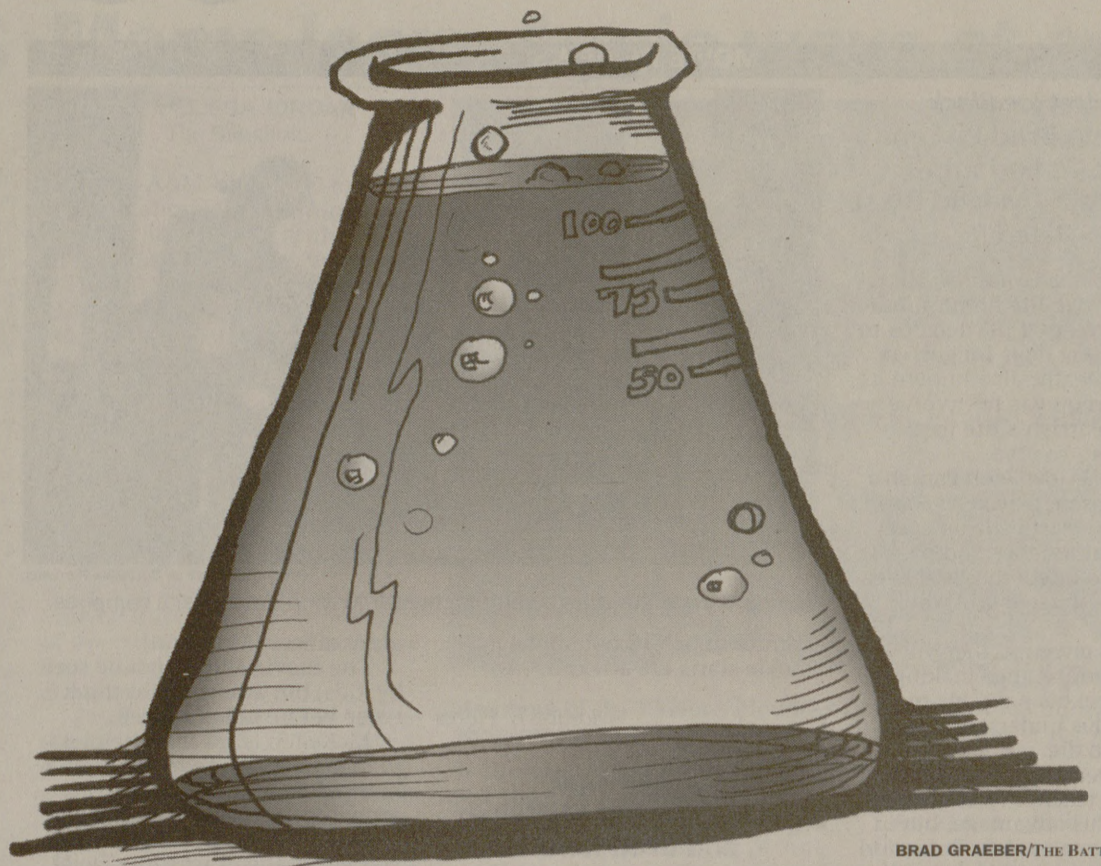


Making CHEMISTRY COOL

A&M professors conclude National Chemistry Week with demonstrations



BRAD GRAEBER/THE BATTALION

BY GRAY WHITTEN
The Battalion

Fireballs and flying foam filled a room of the Chemistry Building Saturday afternoon as National Chemistry Week ended with a performance of the Texas A&M Chemistry Road Show and an open house featuring hands-on demonstrations for all.

Three A&M chemistry professors, along with several student volunteers and staff members, worked together to make the day memorable for visitors making their way through the Chemistry Building between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m.

Dr. John Hogg, a chemistry professor who initiated the event at A&M, said he and some other professors had been doing demonstrations on an outreach basis at various area schools before the formation of the event known as the Road Show began several years ago.

The program takes scientific demonstrations to area schools in an attempt to increase interest in the sciences.

"BASF, Dow Chemical, Celanese and Monsanto gave us money for a van, and we were able to travel more," Hogg said.

Money was also donated by ARCO, and the project was expanded to include some full-time staff members, Hogg said.

"We don't have as much funding now, but we try not to charge the schools anything," he said.

The program is performed for students of all ages but focuses on students in the upper-elementary and junior-high levels.

Dr. Larry Peck, a chemistry professor at A&M, said he felt the program had more of an impact on the younger students.

"My favorites are the early junior-high classes. They are still enthusiastic about learning, and we have a greater impact on them possibly going into chemistry," Peck said.

As full-time college professors with workloads of their own, Peck and Hogg are not able to take the show to as many students as they once did, but the program is carried on by others when the professors are not available.

However, the schedule was not lightened because of a lack of demand, Peck said.

"We could be out everyday," he said, "but we have to try to limit the travel. Still, we've been to San Antonio, Austin and Dallas."

The show is continually evolving, and the presentation of scientific demonstrations in one show rarely resembles the last.

Peck said a script is the farthest thing from the minds of the professors.

"We've just gotten by on trial and error and finding out which ones work and which don't," he said.

When they work, they really work, and the crowd in attendance Saturday readily applauded and participated.

Racquetballs and flowers were shattered, cast iron balls exploded into pieces, and a jack o' lantern spewed something resembling mutant scrubbing bubbles from its eyes and mouth.

The elementary-school crowd and its parents seemed to enjoy every minute.

The show was not all mysterious thrills.

As a legitimate scientific demonstration, a logical explanation for each demonstration was given, and the young crowd was always eager to offer answers to questions when prompted.

Liquid nitrogen, mixtures of hydrogen and oxygen and a calcium carbide-powered cannon were the means used to deliver the message.

Peck, Hogg and crew knew how to keep the attention of their audience, and the pace of the show never let up.

Peck summed up the excitement of the audience at the beginning of the show.

"I know some of you came here to see an explosion," he said.

Balloons compared to the ill-fated Hindenburg and the aforementioned miniature cannon provided flames and plenty of noise.

"It was fun — the kids like the colors and noises, so they have a good time."

— Dr. Wendy Keeney-Kennicut
Senior chemistry lecturer

Many areas of the Chemistry Building were open for exploration, and hands-on demonstrations included the chance for students to make multi-colored slime and to find out just how much gold is really in jewelry.

Dr. Wendy Keeney-Kennicut, a senior lecturer of chemistry and one of the organizers of the event, supervised the hands-on areas and said she was happy to see a good response this year at her first open house.

"It was fun — the kids like the colors and noises, so they have a good time," she said.

Keeney-Kennicut said the reaction to the interactive areas was positive.

Experiments showed participants how to prove black ink is not truly black but a composition of all colors.

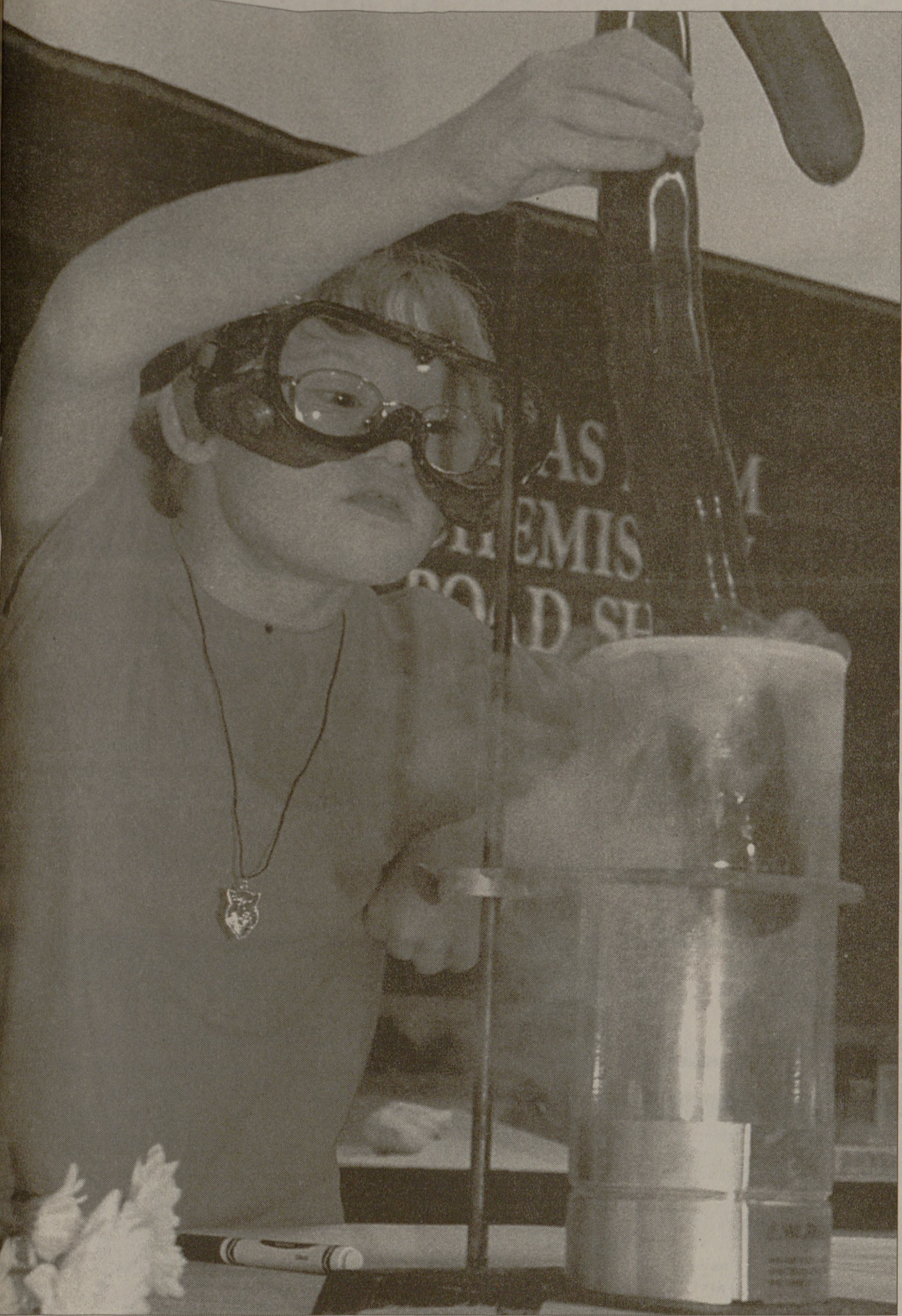
Student workers took on the task of supervising the crowd.

Rachel McConnell, a sophomore chemistry major, said while the day was a busy one for the student volunteers, it was fun for them as well.

"I really enjoyed working with the cute little kids," she said. "We showed them how to make slime and foam hands."

As the Open House continues to grow and National Chemistry Week reaches more young people, the professors say they will continue the program for the students and for themselves.

"We've probably done these a hundred times," Hogg said, "and I still enjoy them."



ROBERT MCKAY/THE BATTALION

Laura Harding, a fifth grader at Oakwood Intermediate, helps out at the Texas A&M Chemistry Road Show Saturday. Harding is plunging an inflated balloon into a beaker of liquid nitrogen. The show concluded the chemistry department's participation in National Chemistry Week.

Dating at A&M comprised of modern as well as traditional roles

BY BETH FOCHT
The Battalion

Modern dating could not be exactly defined as boy meets girl, boy asks girl out on date and the two fall in love.

But at Texas A&M the roles of males in traditional dating are still prevalent today.

The following are two dating patterns that can be seen at A&M.

Situation one — it is Friday, and Joe Aggie is sitting in his introduction to Aggie classes, where he meets Jill Whoop.

Joe asks Jill to go on a date that week-end. Joe and Jill go out to a nice dinner, watch a movie and end the date with a night kiss and a promise to talk later that weekend.

When someone imagines a first date, the former could be considered a more traditional way of dating.

Situation two — Joe Aggie is out with

his buddies at the local Friday-night establishment. Joe meets Jill Whoop, who is also out with a group of her friends, that night.

The evening progresses, and they plan to go on a date the next night to the hot party that has been talked about all week on campus.

They decide to meet up at the party where their friends will be joining them.

Others may imagine a first date to happen such as this scenario.

Neither is a wrong way to date, and both are common dating habits at A&M.

Joanna Ward, a senior biomedical science major, said a more traditional way of dating is still common at A&M.

"Students still go on traditional dates," Ward said. "We also have great variety of options on what to do on dates."

Dinner, a movie, a concert, the local comedy show or even getting a cup of coffee are some options for dates in the Bryan-College Station area.

"In fact, traditional dating is strong,

the way we meet each other is just different," Ward said.

Ben Adams, a senior business analysis major, said the way Aggies meet is normally not in random settings.

"Most people meet through friends and introductions through friends of friends."

— Ben Adams
Senior business analysis major

"Most people meet through friends and introductions through friends of friends," Adams said. "People meeting through classes by sitting next to each other or working on a group project are also a common way people meet."

Dinner and a movie are still a typical date, but money might be a factor in non-traditional dating, Adams said.

"If the guy and girl care about each other and really like each other, money is not an issue," he said. "They can get creative on their dates, like going on walks in the park and/or keeping the outing to a minimal cost. You don't have to have a lot of money or spend a lot of money on a date if it comes from the heart."

The explanation behind why the way people meet and date is different in college is difficult.

In *Psychology, Behavior in Context* Lyle E. Bourne Jr. and Nancy Felipe Russo said dating behavior is based on various learning behaviors and past experiences.

Bourne and Russo said these behaviors, from witnessing successes or failure with dating personally, or watching friends in their relationships and dating, can affect behavior and how each person chooses to date.

Bourne and Russo also said dating

failures can heavily impact the way people date in the future.

Ward said she believes where people are in their lives with needs and wants and what they are looking for in relationships affect how they date.

"There are some people who are just looking for a good time with several casual relationships," she said. "Others are looking for more serious relationships. I mean, a lot of people meet who they are going to marry in college."

Adams said people go on dates in groups to get to know the other person better before they date one on one.

"Many people are not comfortable enough to go on dates one on one," he said. "People are not so nervous in groups and might have the opportunity to be more themselves."

Whether people meet in bars, class or date one on one or in groups, dating is a difficult thing to deal with.

A&M students are not dating in ways that are abnormal, just in ways to fit their needs.