

TCU DAILY SKIFF

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Campaigns offer students participation

By Lucy Calvert
Staff Writer

With the Iowa caucuses in the past and Super Tuesday rapidly approaching, the presidential candidates are stepping up their efforts to woo voters.

And, while students are the youngest constituents, their involvement in politics is also usually the lowest of those eligible to vote, said James Riddlesperger, assistant professor of political science at TCU.

"People 18 to 21 years old do not feel as if they have as big a stake in the process as people who are older do," Riddlesperger said.

A sample taken this semester from a large liberal arts class indicates

many TCU students have a lack of knowledge about the candidates. While most could name at least three of the seven Democratic candidates, many could only name two of the six Republicans—Bush and Dole.

But students' lack of knowledge should not be surprising, Riddlesperger said.

"Frankly, students are interested in things other than politics," he said. During the 1972 election, however, Riddlesperger said students took a more active interest because the Vietnam War was still going on, and, because students were of drafting age, they felt they had a stake in the election's outcome.

But students today may also be waiting to voice their preferences un-

til they have more information about the candidates, he said.

"At this point, students are trying to figure out what to make of the different candidates. Many are waiting because they don't know enough about the different candidates, and others are waiting to see how candidates do in Iowa and New Hampshire before they vote in Texas," he said.

Student involvement is much the same this year as it was during the 1984 election, he said, but the issues as well as the candidates themselves are different.

He said this year offers a change because there is a contest in both parties, whereas Reagan was the dominant Republican candidate last time.

Other factors that make this elec-

tion different are the questions of U.S. involvement in Central America, the policy toward Soviets concerning reduction in nuclear weapons and the problem of how to get the federal budget under control, he said.

Riddlesperger said students should give issues the weight they deserve instead of focusing on the candidates' personal lives.

"On one level, they're very personal, non-related to government things. On another level, activities that people engage in are reflections of their own character, of their judgment under pressure and so forth," he said.

While students may not think their vote matters, or see any point in becoming involved in some part of the elections process, Riddlesperger en-

courages students to do so because "each (election) year is unique, and each is critical."

Debbie Yaniko, a freshman political science major, is one of several students trying to generate interest on campus by re-organizing the Young Democrats. She said they tried to start the group last semester but were unsuccessful because of the group's lack of guidance and experience. This semester, however, the group has a sponsor and is actively recruiting members.

"But Democrats are hard to find on this campus," she said.

Yaniko said group members are getting involved with local campaigns and voter registration.

Members roamed the Student

Center Feb. 8, getting students to fill out voter registration cards if they had not already done so.

"Some people didn't act at all interested. Others really cared but didn't know where to look (to register)," she said.

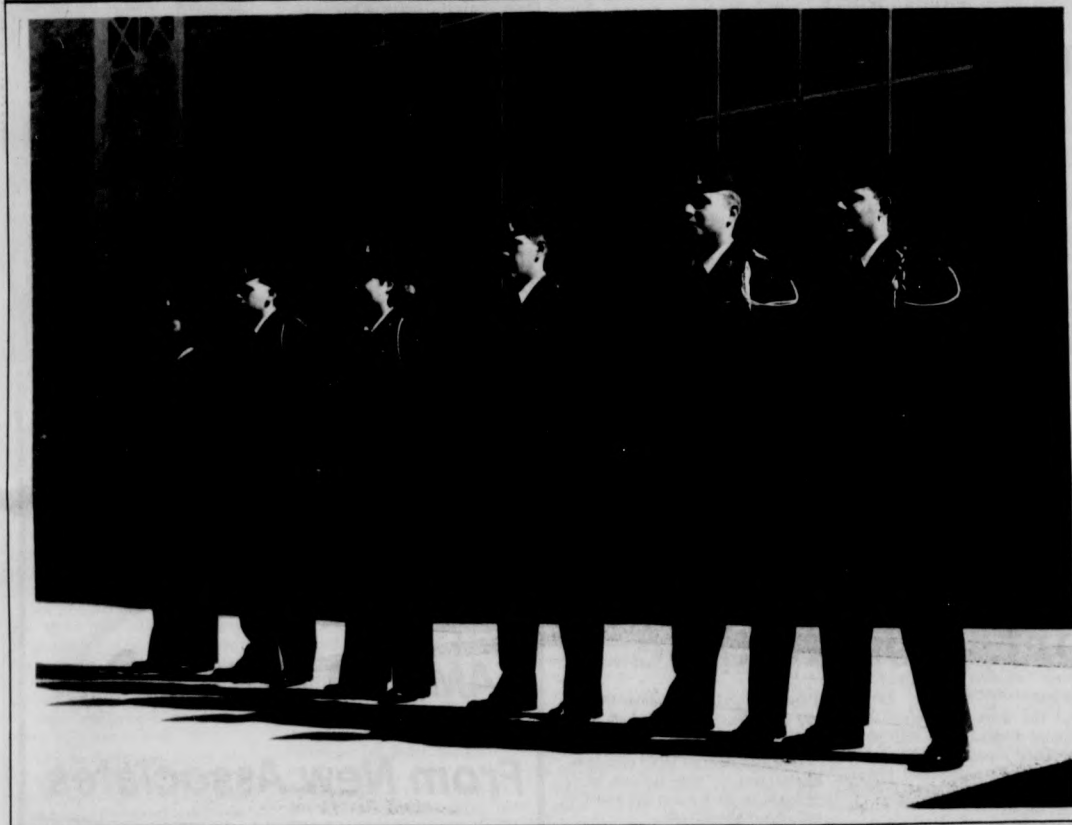
Yaniko said the group gathered about 50 completed forms.

But registering to vote is not the only avenue open to students who want to become involved.

"Call any candidate for any office anywhere, and they will find something for you to do," Riddlesperger said.

A list of presidential campaign contacts is available in the political science office.

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TCU Daily Skiff / Amanda Gossett

Standing watch - ROTC ushers stand at ease in front of the Student Center Monday waiting to usher in members of the TCU Women's Club. The club had their Valentine Luncheon in the Woodson Room.

House to give funds for APO

By MariCarmen Eroles
Staff Writer

Alpha Phi Omega, the National Service Fraternity got \$453 allocated from the House of Student Representatives to help finance its sectional conference.

Kathy Reuter, chairperson for the Sectional Conference Committee for TCU's APO chapter said everyone was excited about the conference because it would teach the members more about the fraternity.

The bill presented in the House meeting last week would have allocated \$593.60, but the amount was reduced before the bill was voted on.

The total cost would be less than \$1,000, and the chapter would pay for the rest of the costs, Reuter said.

Lee Behar, president of the student body, said bill 88-3 had passed because in his opinion the number of ayes and nays had been close.

Bill 88-4, allocating \$3,510 to the TCU sports clubs, passed by unanimous consent.

The bill will provide aid over and above what the members of each group contribute, said Andy Maxwell, sophomore pre-major and a member of the High Adventure Club.

This year the clubs came up with their own budget instead of having the Finance Committee do it for them, Maxwell said.

"We have specific needs, and this

'We have specific needs, and this year we made the budget so we would get what we wanted'

Andy Maxwell,
sophomore pre-major

year we made the budget so we would get what we wanted instead of what they (Finance Committee) wanted," he said.

Eric Anderson, Finance Committee chairperson, said last year the presidents of the clubs to come to the Finance Committee and present a budget, and then the committee would allocate what it thought was necessary.

Ann Winkler, chairperson for the Elections and Regulations Committee, said her committee was looking into prohibiting placing election posters on lightposts, trees and trashcans because it makes the campus look messy.

Sarah Normand, representative for Colby Hall, said the Food Services Subcommittee had spoken to Marriott and that it had agreed to look into providing steaks two nights a week for those students who wished to order them.

Computers aid nursing majors

By Jennifer Romero
Staff Writer

Hospitals around the nation are updating their charting systems with computers, and TCU nursing students are doing the same.

Computers simulate the charting information that nurses previously hand recorded, said Patricia Scarse, dean of Harris College of Nursing.

TCU is thought to be the only university in the nation that has the computers as part of the education equipment available to nursing students, Scarse said.

"Nurses and nursing faculty must work constantly to keep up with changes," said Peggy Mayfield, associate professor of nursing.

Until Scarse saw the computers on display at a recent hospital convention in Canada, Patient Technology, Inc., the company that manufactures the computers, had never thought to introduce them to nursing schools. The computers were only hospital-orientated at that time, Scarse said.

"The company cooperated with us and made changes in the system," Scarse said. "It ended up being beneficial for both the company and TCU."

Mayfield said the changes included nursing new computer screens de-

signed to go along with a workbook she wrote for one of her classes.

The computers are used in the basic nursing skills lab and physical assessment courses.

"The computers act as a prompting mechanism if they (students) forget to take down information," Scarse said. "Accurate charting is important because of lawsuits."

Students like the computers because they are convenient and easy to use.

With the computers, you don't have to write down all the patient's information (vital signs, diet, weight, etc.), which saves a lot of time, said Ginger Walton, sophomore nursing major.

TCU nursing students said they will be better qualified to meet society's health care needs because of the computers.

"We will be ahead of other nursing students who don't have the computers to practice with," said Michelle Chase, sophomore nursing major.

Harris College of Nursing has four bedside computers serving eight patient beds, a printer and a mock nurses' station that stores the information from the individual computers.

A grant that would allow the college to purchase two more bedside units has been requested, Scarse said.

Students prepare for conventions

By Leanora Minai
Staff Writer

Preparation for the 1988 Democratic and Republican Conventions this summer continues today at TCU during a preparatory class with the film, "From the Floor of the Convention."

Eugene Alpert, chairperson of the political science department and faculty leader in charge of the academic side for the Washington Center, said the preparatory classes are open to the public and will introduce students to the background of presidential campaigns and convention processes.

"History is made at these conventions, and it's important that students have a chance to participate in history," Alpert said.

"From the Floor of the Conven-

'History is made at these conventions, and it's important that students have a chance to participate in history'

Eugene Alpert,
chairperson of political science department

tion" follows three delegates during the 1984 Democratic Convention. Each delegate supports Gary Hart, Jesse Jackson or Walter Mondale. The delegates discuss why they are there, what they are experiencing and their general reactions.

The classes are funded by a faculty development grant from TCU to rent films and prepare materials needed for the sessions, Alpert said.

Mark Johnson, freshman political

science major, said he hopes to make internship connections and to expand his knowledge of political parties and the government while he attends the Democratic Convention in July.

"In a sense, I'm using TCU for all I can get. It would be stupid to pass up a program like this because of all the connections or possible internships," Johnson said.

Cheryl Mann, a sophomore political science major, said she is attending

the Republican Convention in August for political experience. She said she wants to gain a better understanding of foreign and domestic issues and the Republican Party.

Alpert said 20 to 25 of the 200 students at each Convention will come from TCU.

"We're trying to teach students how to take advantage of being at the conventions by asking questions, interviewing, observing and analyzing the process," Alpert said.

Alpert's preparatory session today is at 2 p.m. and 6 p.m. in Room 203 of Sadler Hall. On March 14, Alpert will discuss "After Super Tuesday: The Search for Delegates" at 6 p.m. in Room 203 of Sadler Hall.

"We want students to remember this election as the one that got them interested in politics," Alpert said.

TCU man bachelor in the bidding

By John Arend
Staff Writer

TCU's Harry F. "Hap" Klinefelter can honestly say he is a wanted man after participating in last week's second annual Cystic Fibrosis Bachelor Bid in Fort Worth.

Klinefelter, a staff psychologist at TCU's Counseling Center, was one of 32 bachelors to take part in the event that drew a crowd of nearly 1,300 people at the Hyatt Regency last Thursday.

The event showcased prominent

bachelors from Fort Worth and surrounding areas, offering attractive dates and some unusual adventures.

"My date will include a bouquet of roses and a before-dinner walk; a candlelight dinner and a concert and a horse-drawn carriage ride in downtown Fort Worth," Klinefelter said.

"No specific time was set for the date with the lady who received the date, but it probably won't happen for a few months," Klinefelter said.

The bachelors must complete their dates by April 11 according to the rules of the auction, a foundation

spokesperson said. Klinefelter did not want to say the name of the woman who would be his date because he had not contacted her.

This was his first year to participate, and he felt a little embarrassed parading around in front of all those people, Klinefelter said.

Nevertheless, the bachelors strutted their stuff and raised \$38,000 for the cause, officials from the Tarrant County Branch of the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation said.

"Nearly 56 percent will go toward

research, with the rest being divided among expenses and patient services," a Foundation spokesperson said Tuesday.

"The highest bid was \$5,000 for a date with Larry Chilcoat, a salesman with Profit Freight Systems, who offered a wine-tasting trip to a Texas vineyard," foundation officials said.

Dates with the bachelors ranged from a night on the town in Dallas to a photographic safari near Austin.

"It was definitely an experience," Klinefelter said. "But it is a real small price to pay to help such a good cause."

TODAYliving

Drug program stresses awareness

By Susie Steckner
Staff Writer

A bright yellow poster hangs in the office of Lori Weiss, with the letters R.O.A.D. on it and the words "Responsibility of Alcohol and Drugs" below the letters.

Also on the poster is a road sign containing the phrases "one way," "no outlet" and "yield." Beneath the phrases are the words "The responsibility is yours."

This poster was part of a campaign for Health Enrichment Week, a project sponsored by R.O.A.D. Workers, an organization devoted to helping students make responsible decisions about the use of alcohol and other drugs.

Weiss, the program adviser for alcohol and drug education at TCU, explained that this campaign is one of many that R.O.A.D. Workers hopes to hold to raise campus awareness.

Weiss came to TCU in October 1986. She wanted to begin a comprehensive program for the campus about drug and alcohol education.

"Two alcohol awareness programs

were already in progress when I came. One was student-based and the other was faculty-based," Weiss said.

The problem with the existing committees, Weiss said, was that the members would work on one week-long program and then the committee was disbanded. Weiss said there was a need for a year-long program.

"R.O.A.D. Workers was an outgrowth of the two alcohol awareness committees," Weiss said.

In the spring of 1987, the R.O.A.D. Workers program began. Weiss, with the help of a group of students that have either been recommended to her or that she has met, started the drug and alcohol awareness program.

"The goal of the organization was not to stop students from drinking, but to just be aware of the effects of alcohol and other drugs," Weiss said. "We want students to make responsible decisions."

Heather Masterson, one of the R.O.A.D. Workers, explained, "We're not saying 'just say no.' But we want people to be responsible."

Masterson, who had been recommended by faculty members to

Weiss, said that she had never been directly in contact with family members or friends who had drinking or drug problems.

"But when I learned that the goals (of the organization) were, it intrigued me," she said. "So many people are out of control; some can't sit down and enjoy a drink responsibly."

Another R.O.A.D. Worker, Trudy Scott, agreed that the goal of the group is not to tell students to stop using alcohol.

"We don't want to see our friends get smashed and drive home," Scott said.

"We're not placing judgments on anyone," Scott said. "I might have a drink in my hand at a party, but I'm going to act responsibly."

While the organization is still young, members have already organized and implemented a Health Enrichment Week project. Scott said that she is unsure of the total success of the project, due to lack of time for planning.

"But if it (Health Enrichment Week) helped only two people, that's enough," Scott explained.

Scott said that the first meeting this semester of R.O.A.D. Workers was a brainstorming session to find out where the group was headed.

Ideas for a Drug Awareness Week, G.L.A.D.D. (Greek Leaders Against Drunk Driving) and the training of students to give presentations to student organizations, classrooms and dorms have all been discussed.

"Our organization is still in its infancy; we have no traditions yet," Weiss explained. "But there is much enthusiasm and there are a lot of great ideas."

The lack of tradition had been somewhat of a setback for the group, Weiss said.

"We have a general idea of what the group wants to accomplish, but the specifics are unsure right now," Weiss said.

Masterson explained that she didn't realize how hard it would be to start an organization.

"We need a full-time, first-priority commitment from students to get the organization off the ground," she said.

Students express election views

By Dina Rosen
Staff Writer

Although some TCU students may be asking "What election?" others appear to be informed of the issues in the 1988 presidential election and have their minds set on a particular candidate.

George Bush is likely to win the presidential race, said Kerry Thomas, freshman political science major.

"As of right now, I think that Bush will win easily if he can get away from the Iran-contra issue," Thomas said.

Thomas said he will probably vote for Bush because he believes Bush has the most experience, and also because he would like to see many of the policies of the Reagan administration continued.

Mitchell Fix, sophomore psychology major, agrees that Bush will probably become the next U.S. president.

"People don't like change," he said.

Fix said he plans to vote for Bush because a change in the government would not be beneficial to the country right now.

"We need to keep the momentum going," he said.

However, Cynthia Werner, junior political science major, said she plans to vote for Democratic candidate Michael Dukakis because she agrees with his stance on campaign issues.

"He's liberal yet moderate enough that he has a chance to win," Werner said.

Lisa Coleman, senior social work major, said she is undecided about who she will vote for but believes Republican Robert Dole has the potential to win.

"He's been around, he's well-known. So far he's been able to keep himself clean, and his wife has a good reputation," Coleman said.

Coleman said she thinks there is a great deal of apathy about this election because too many scandals have occurred.

"People don't want to commit to a candidate anymore," she said.

Thomas said another reason for the widespread apathy may be the nation's well-being.

"I think that many people don't see this election as very critical simply because of the prosperity that the nation has enjoyed over the past six or so years," Thomas said.

Fix said he believed the media were doing a good job on the whole, though both Coleman and Thomas saw room for improvement.

"They've been too busy picking up the dirt and not looking at issues," Coleman said.

She said the media should concentrate on what the candidates are going to do once they get in office rather than on what they have done before.

Thomas said he feels the media have been too eager to jump on the candidates in an attempt to create a scandal.

Cadets receive Army appointments

By Melissa Wills
Staff Writer

Nine ROTC seniors from TCU have received presidential appointments to the regular Army, said Lt. Col. Aubrey B. Stacey of military science.

This is the same standing given to West Point graduates, and it gives these cadets a career status in the Army upon graduation, Stacey said. It also gives them tenure and preference in assignment.

He said this was a record number of regular Army appointments for TCU.

"TCU sent 18 ROTC cadets for commissioning into the regular Army, and nine were selected," Stacey said. "Getting 50 percent regular Army appointments is unusual."

"Some schools only get one or two regular Army appointments."

Brian Dillingham, a senior cadet captain specializing in military intelligence, said he is excited about his regular Army appointment to Ft.

Huachuca, Ariz., the intelligence training center for the United States.

"I think it's great that I received regular Army appointment," Dillingham said. "It's like I graduated from West Point."

Stacey said although cadets are selected on a variety of criteria, such as grade point average, field of study and performance within the ROTC program, the major criterion is their performance at Advanced Camp.

Advanced Camp is a six-week-long camp that cadets attend the summer before their senior year.

"TCU ranked second out of all 90 universities at the camp and first out of all universities in Texas," Stacey said.

Stacey said Dillingham attended paratroop school to help prepare for Advanced Camp.

He also said the main reason TCU outperforms other schools in camp is because TCU cadets have the ability to perform well in groups.

"TCU students have good social skills," Stacey said. "Students from primarily military schools like A&M have trouble assimilating with a heterogeneous group when they are thrown in with other students to perform."

Unlike the ROTC programs at other schools, ROTC at TCU encourages cadets to get involved in a variety of activities on campus in order to become well-rounded individuals, Stacey said.

"We have a higher percentage of students in the Greek system than the student body at large, and we have a number of sorority and fraternity officers," Stacey said.

Stacey said schools that are primarily military schools, such as Texas A&M and West Point, stress an environment that is too closed for students to develop interpersonal skills.

"A&M requires its cadets to wear their uniforms every day, as opposed to our one day a week, and we still outperform them," Stacey said. "Our cadets don't have to march around

and look stupid every day in order to learn the necessary skills."

Two years ago only two cadets were selected for regular Army appointments and six were selected last year, Stacey said.

"Since my arrival, production is up to 18 commissions now, and we expect to have at least 25 next year," he said.

Stacey said ROTC has improved because it has strived for quality.

"When I first came to TCU, I was not overly impressed with some of the students in the program," Stacey said.

"I feel I owe it to the American people, as a public servant, to eliminate students that don't have the quality to lead their sons or daughters in combat," he said.

Stacey said quality includes such things as poise, a good grade point average and the ability to lead and give instructions.

Alumni show support, donate time

By Angie Cox
Staff Writer

For many TCU alumni, Leaders in a Network for Key Students has offered a way to support their alma mater, not through monetary donations, but with their time.

LINKS is a volunteer program that uses alumni in most states as well as Europe, Venezuela and Canada to contact prospective students, said Karen Lind, an associate director of admissions and director of LINKS.

"We cannot afford, nor do we have the time, to fly to Florida, for example. But a LINKS member can because she happens to live in Sarasota, Fla. That's the reason we need LINKS people," she said.

LINKS, which has over 500 members, contacts about 1,800 students a year, Lind said.

"Their most common responsibility is calling prospective students. In most cases they (prospective students) are appreciative even if they are not interested in TCU anymore," Lind said.

But the work for some LINKS members does not stop with phone calls. They represent TCU at high school college nights and present awards to new TCU students at senior awards nights.

Maury Hicks, a 1974 graduate who now lives in Shreveport, La., presented the Chancellor's Scholarship to Sarah Bigger last May.

"It was special in that it meant the difference between a state public school and a private institution which

I feel is superior education. It gives me a real good feeling to help out," Hicks said.

Like many other LINKS members, Hicks chose to help because he is proud of his alma mater and wants to tell people about TCU.

"I wouldn't trade my years at TCU for anything in the world. And I wanted to give something back to my school," he said.

LINKS began in 1979 and has become a big role in the recruiting process, Lind said.

Students Continued from Page 1

Another alternative is to work with the election machinery itself.

Robert Parten, elections administrator for Tarrant County, said his office will hire students on a part-time basis.

"If a person just wants a little extra money and not a lot of responsibility,

it's certainly an opportunity to learn what this particular job in county government is all about," he said.

Among the positions available are working with computers, typing, filing and proofreading ballots.

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COMMENTARY

TCU displays no interest in electing future leader

By Doug Dowler
Guest Columnist



I have noticed this past week a definite lack of interest on the TCU campus concerning the race for the presidency of these United States.

Sure, people may have noticed that Bob Dole won the Iowa caucuses, and many remember that Pat Robertson came in second, but how many people have made up their minds yet as to whom they will support for president? Furthermore, how many people have started supporting their candidate?

Some people may disagree that he is the best-qualified candidate or may disagree with his stand on the issues, and that is all right with me. Fortunately, in this country we have the right to disagree.

Some people, however, have basically ridiculed me for getting involved in a campaign.

It angers me when people put others down because they stand up for what they believe in. I have been rather disappointed in this campus as a whole for its lack of involvement in anything.

I can understand that people are busy with work and homework and tests and don't have time to actively campaign for a candidate, but there is no excuse for not looking at where the candidates stand on the issues or why others support a particular candidate.

I would urge everyone at TCU to watch the debate between the Democratic hopefuls tomorrow night on PBS and the Republican debate on Friday.

Both of these debates will be held in Dallas. Therefore, they are likely to focus less on farm issues than the recent campaigning in Iowa, and students can find out more about where

the candidates stand on issues that are important to them.

I would also urge you to call the party headquarters of both the Democrats and the Republicans and find out more about the candidates.

If you are interested, I would be more than happy to talk to you about Paul Simon, and I am sure there are others who will share their opinions of the candidates with you, but it is up to you to make up your own mind.

I urge all of you to think carefully about your decision and to decide for yourselves which candidate you support. It may be too late to register to vote on Super Tuesday, but it is not too late to have an effect on the result.

A few people getting involved can make a huge difference at this early stage of the election, and it is at this stage that we narrow the field and provide the candidates for the whole electorate.

This campus has over 7,000 students, if only one in four got involved in the election it could very easily change the way this whole county votes.

The key to our democracy working is that the people take the time to learn the issues and voice their informed opinions at the ballot box.



Letter to the Editor

I believe it was after I had driven around the TCU circle four times looking for a space that I decided to leave my hazard lights on and "just run in to check my mail." As soon as I stepped out of my car into the snow, I was confronted by a TCU police officer.

"But there's a car parked right there that you're leaving alone," I said as my fingers started numbing. "Yep. But there's people in that car. Yours is unattended." "Hmmm... you're right," I answered. "I left my life-sized, look-alike, blow-up doll at home." I considered the intelligence of this response, decided there wasn't any and left to check my mail. Call it pride; call it fear of

hypothermia. Either way, I wasn't in the mood to argue with the ear-muffled man. Two minutes later, I returned to find his partner in committed crime-stoppers writing a \$40 parking ticket on my car. OK, I was warned. My only qualm is this—his car was parked in the fire lane too, unattended, as he wrote up my ticket in two minutes. Andrea C. Wenning Senior/speech communication

Fat-free food hurts diets

By Lisa Touye
Columnist



It sounds like a dieter's dream and a low-fat dieter's fantasy. But it could also be a nutritionist's nightmare. Fat-free hamburgers, pizza, potato chips and ice cream will be possible within a year if some of the low-calorie fat substitutes under review by the Federal Drug Administration are approved.

But is it really an answer to the problem of high fat consumption, or is it merely a convenience for the junk food crowd?

Many foods that people crave are "quick fixes" like hamburgers, french fries and ice cream. Rather than search for something more nutritious in the refrigerator, people will pack the pantry with potato chips and peanuts even more when they are fat-free.

New fat substitutes would take away some of the guilt attached to eating those items. That guilt often kept people from overeating in the first place.

"Put in the phony fat, and we can eat all the potato chips, all the greases, all the ice creams we want, and we can get away with it," Joyce Nettleton, a nutritionist and author of "Seafood and Health" was quoted in the *Christian Science Monitor*.

"There's a place for those things in limited amounts or on infrequent occasions," Nettleson said. "The problem is that so many of our food choices fall into that category."

The NutraSweet Company's low-calorie fat substitute, Simplesse, has been submitted for approval less than a year after Procter & Gamble's calorie-free, cholesterol-free oil, olestra. Frito-Lay, Unilever and CPC International are also developing fat substitutes of their own.

Simplesse is ordinary milk or egg protein. The protein particles are small and roll over each other easily so that the tongue tastes the creaminess associated with fat. Simplesse can't be cooked so it is planned to be used in low-calorie dairy products like ice cream, butter, mayonnaise and cream cheese.

A problem with Simplesse is that many people are allergic to eggs and dairy products. Their reactions to ingesting eggs or dairy products range from a slight skin rash to a serious reaction involving paralyzed breathing passages and a trip to the hospital. NutraSweet will most likely have to put a label on products that would contain Simplesse informing the customers about this.

Procter & Gamble's olestra has been under review since last spring. Olestra passes through the body undigested and can be cooked in and fried in without calories being added.

Either fat substitute, if it is approved, will be welcomed by people who want to have their

cake and eat it too. But the question of whether synthetic food additives are a good move still arises.

For people who are on low-fat diets these products would be a godsend. They could have the occasional slice of pizza, juicy hamburger or ice cream sundae of their dreams.

But would they really eat those foods occasionally or would they have a free-for-all once they knew the foods were fat-free? The whole basis of their diets would be shot. If they can fudge a little on their diet with fat-free products, who is to say they will stick with the diet at all?

Every day, people who are weight conscious drink nutritionally worthless sodas, some with artificial sweeteners, because they have "only one calorie" rather than drinking milk or fruit juices, which have more calories, or water.

Some people, like diabetics, have valid reasons for consuming these sugar-free beverages, but most people do not. If people could learn to adapt their diets to cut down fats, rather than change the composition of their food these fake fats would not be needed.

Then again, in a body-conscious culture that wants it all and would rather change things than deal with them, these fake fats are more than a vanity, they are a necessity.



Death row delays, expenses make death sentence useless

By Nancy Andersen
Columnist



Willie Darden, convicted in 1973 for the murder of a furniture store owner, is walking Florida's death row once again.

If his crime differs only in the details from those of other condemned prisoners, he stands out for another reason. None of the other 1,982 inmates on the nation's death rows has had six cancelled dates with the executioner.

This month the U.S. Supreme Court will consider whether to hear Darden's appeal once again.

Whatever its merits, Darden's case typifies the ironic reason capital punishment should be abolished—it lacks finality.

The result is families of victims unable to put the horror behind them, killers drifting in legal limbo, clogged courts and skyrocketing costs to keep the condemned in prison and in appeal.

Darden's delays, for example, gave his lawyers time to find two witnesses who swear Darden could not have been at the store at the time of the murder. If the Supreme Court

accepts his appeal, Darden may be tried again.

Or take the case of Warren McCleskey.

Of the four men who robbed a Georgia store in 1978, killing a police officer in the process, only McCleskey got the death penalty. The most important testimony against him came from a man who had been in the jail cell next to him and said McCleskey admitted shooting the officer.

But, last December, a federal district judge threw out the conviction because of new evidence that the jailhouse witness was working undercover for the police. McCleskey is now entitled to a new trial without double jeopardy.

It took his lawyers 10 years the first time. Will it be 1998 before McCleskey receives a final sentence—execution or not?

Ironically, by 1998 one of his accomplices in the robbery, who only got a 20-year sentence, should be back on the street.

McCleskey and Darden might as well have life sentences, for keeping them locked away permanently is no more expensive than granting them 10 and 15 years of appeals. If the state must assume responsibility for taking a human life, then the price to be paid is time.

But cases that drag on for years aren't the only evidence that the

capital punishment system lacks both fairness and logic.

Consider the case of Robert Streetman, convicted of fatally shooting Christine Baker in her Kountze, Texas home. Streetman's lawyer contends Texas law kept the jury from weighing mitigating factors—including Streetman's mental illness—that might have meant a life sentence instead.

The U.S. Supreme Court will consider that argument in March, in a case brought by another Texas prisoner.

But for Streetman, executed in January, it will be two months too late.

No reforms tried so far have both preserved prisoners' rights and unclogged the capital punishment system. Some judges have tried to reduce the backlog of capital cases by streamlining procedures, requiring attorneys to raise all their claims at the same time instead of bringing a series of appeals.

But shaving a few steps off the process is hardly the answer. The only cure for the problems of the capital punishment system is abolition; yet public support for capital punishment remains so strong that Congress is unlikely to do away with it. Abolition won't happen soon.

Meanwhile, Darden and McCleskey keep waiting.

TCU DAILY SKIFF

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