



the UCAB

ITS WHEELS, TURKEYS, SUCCESSES and CRITICS
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To UAB or not to UAB. That is the big discussion.

For those who have not been through college via the activity circuit, UAB is short for Union Activities committees and the ten-man board which supervises their difficult and often thankless task of providing Sooners with a sprawling and all-encompassing program of extra-curriculars.

The UAB rode in on a wave of activity fever in 1942-43 when students were demanding a program to fill in the gaps in the University schedule. Today, however, a critical segment of the student body, breathing deeply of the beatnik aromas now afloat, feels the organized fun has mushroomed to ridiculous proportions.

Back in the early '40s a 20-man Board bossed the new program with assists from 200 student volunteers. This year more than 900 volunteers cram 50



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committees directing 23 activities. The guiding Board has been reduced to 10 members, but an overflow Council of from 20 to 25 has been added. With these changes the old UAB is now officially known as Union Activities.

The critics may tag the group "Useless Activities" and howl that its success is the result of prestige-seeking Greek organizations who push their members and pledges into busywork committees (incidentally, an Independent, Bob Garrett, was recently re-elected president of the Board—the first time in the Board's history that a president has been re-elected); but each year the program expands, and more and more students volunteer to put the activities across.

As public relations conscious as criticism has made the Board, Union Activities' success is still its best answer to its critics.

Real responsibility for the success or failure of each Union Activities-originated project rests with Charleen Caldwell, '53ed, '55m.ed, daughter of O. U. education professor Charles L. Caldwell, '25m.ed, and second O. U. alumna to hold the staff director's post.

THE first director was Virginia Reinecke, succeeded in 1946 by Mary Lou (Stubby) Stubbeman, '45bus, the highly-personable architect of Union Activities' solid foundations in method and goal. Stubby's success with the former UAB organization garnered her the directorship of the University of Hawaii Union Activities and led to her meeting and marrying Hawaiian airport administrator Gilbert Livingston.

The director and a secretary are the only salaried personnel on O. U.'s Union Activities staff. The amount of volunteer work going into the program allows the Board to provide the activities at rock-bottom cost, both the Union Activities itself and to the participants.

Profits from Sooner Scandals and special attractions such as last year's Kingston Trio performance go to offset the deficit in the other activities, making Union Activities roughly (very roughly) self-supporting. The expense bill for the total program last year was \$24,000.

The Popular Series, originated by Union Activities three years ago, brings front runners in the popular entertainment field to O. U., and thus far pays for itself. The Celebrated Artists history is a bit more rugged . . .

Union Activities saved this series of semi-

classical and classical performances from extinction two years ago when the University could no longer stand the deficit. The Board has been able to cut expenses, but the future of the attraction is still on shaky ground.

Union Activities' big money-maker is the much cussed and discussed campus spectacular, Sooner Scandals. What started as a run-of-the-mill variety show in smallish Holmberg Hall exploded into a major production in Oklahoma City's barnish Municipal Auditorium after students began demanding impossible week-long runs of the highly-polished, modern-times Scandals.

Ironically, Union Activities receives only about \$1,000 more from the combined showings at the Municipal Auditorium and at Norman than they did when Scandals showed solely at Norman. Profits from last year's show were \$3,000 and will be slightly less this year in that more was spent on props and less was taken in on ticket sales; last year's expenses, \$6,500, went for orchestration, outfitting the orchestra, transportation to and from Oklahoma City, building rental, lights, union help, etc., etc.

In the background, each of the performing groups has to foot its own bills, running into the several hundreds, for costumes, sets, and those countless little "incidentals."

To Scandalites, this is college. To the more economy-minded, this is too much money and takes too much time from already crowded schedules. To Union Activities, Scandals is a worthwhile and profitable headache.

In the midst of Union Activities' bigger entertainment splashes, numerous less publicized activities are plugging right along—everything from leadership training conferences, designed for more chiefs and fewer Indians; the travel bureau, a ride-sharing system for weekend and vacation journeys to the old homestead; bridge and billiard tournaments; free Friday night dances and 35-cent movies for the economy-minded.

The entertainment is not for the student alone, however. For Mothers' Day, Union Activities puts on University Sing and for the Dads, a barbershop quartet contest. Last year an estimated 25,000 persons took advantage of Union Activities programs, students, faculty, parents, and Norman and Oklahoma City residents.

One of Union Activities Director Caldwell's pet projects, a World Problems Series, is on tap for O. U. when and if sufficient funds can be rounded up. The proposed program would bring outstanding national and international leaders to the campus for free lectures on world problems.

Union Activities' schedule is constantly being revised to meet student demands. In 1953 the first of five between-semesters ski trips to Aspen, Colorado, was launched. Three years later the UABers packed up for South Bend to witness the rout of the Fighting Irish. European tours have filled the last two summers, and Sooners spent spring vacation in sunny Mexico last year (this year Sun Valley)—all courtesy of the Union Activities without benefit or cost of travel agent.

Some other bright idea projects have not fared quite so well. One of the more legendary old UAB fiascos started as a perfectly bang-up Thanksgiving stunt, labeled a "Turkey Toss." It seems a multitude of student turkey-catchers assembled on the Union lawn to grab their Thanksgiving dinner on the wing, dropped from a Union window.

Supposedly turkeys can fly when forced to, and these birds had little choice. They were still putting up a pretty good fight when they landed in the waving arms of the waiting gourmets. The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals was unhappy with the University; the University was unhappy with the UAB; and the "annual" Turkey Toss was eliminated post-haste.

Director Caldwell still jokes about the pre-Caldwell affair, quipping that O. U. officials solemnly remind her of the Turkey Toss whenever one of her charges comes up with a slightly-out-of-the-ordinary brain storm.

It's an easy joke in that student volunteers, no matter how industrious, would have had a hard time putting across programs as ambitious as those of the Union Activities without some firm support, primarily from its organization parent the Oklahoma Memorial Union, who hovers over Union Activities finances and keeps its soaring plans (or falling turkeys, as the case may be) under control.

Also, in many individual instances, Union Activities has turned for aid to O. U. alumni and has not been disappointed.

When Sooner Scandals cried for a hall with more seating capacity, Lee B. Thompson, Sr., '25ba, '27Law, of Oklahoma City, pitched in to get the show moved to Municipal Auditorium. Jim C. Mayfield, '28ba, manager of the Union Book Exchange, has been trouble shooting for the Scandals for years, while John F. Malone, '37ba, secretary of the Norman Chamber of Commerce, is practically perennial as a show judge.

But all this outside help and even Miss Caldwell's professional supervision is aimed at turning projects over to the students.

Union Activities attempts to rear its own guiding lights by giving the freshmen the experience which will develop the personal leadership they in turn can pass on to others.

Annually the Board must decide what is to be done with the nearly one-thousand applications for committee posts. Interviews with each applicant and applicants' consequent dedication and ability (or lack of it) usually thin out the staggering ranks of applicants. But since few are chosen for the Board itself, the playing-favorites charge is bound to follow.

THIS is probably the sulking source of most of Union Activities criticism, and Director Caldwell's greatest contribution has been to make Union Activities elastic enough to considerably cool the jealousies and encourage the ambitions of its ever-increasing list of Board hopefuls.

But even bigger and better committees draw criticism nowadays. If the activity revolt among collegians gains momentum, Union Activities may be in for some rough sledding. Its past success, however, suggests that its critics will find themselves beguiled into joining a Union Activities Critique committee which will award cups for its most eloquent critics.

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STAR SIGHT

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were. But they didn't show it. And they didn't jump the first freight out of the country, and then try to ride a gravy train back in when the going got rough somewhere else. Am I supposed to be some kind of god, just because I've got a degree? Or do I have the inalienable right of being just a human?"

"At ease, Sergeant," Andrews laughed to lighten the tension, then turned to go home. "Rest up for the next couple of days."

Martin watched Andrews' slight figure until it disappeared out of the halo thrown by the streetlight, then he himself headed home. The gray branches of the trees along the campus walks cobwebbed a winter sketch. Soon the jonquils would bloom. Maybe spring would bring the recharge Andrew had said he needed. And maybe Tim was right, too. Maybe this would be the last spring here on campus.

The new semester began the following Monday and Martin did not face it with the same sense of challenge with which he had usually greeted a change of term. He was sullen, almost resentful and was almost tempted to wire Tim that he was ready for the job in the plant. His personal identity had been annihilated by a young man who was just a name to him. Even before they had clashed, Martin had been defeated by him; and when the time arrived when Professor John Martin could no longer regard a student as just a name in search of knowledge, the only possible solution was resignation from the staff.

He walked into the classroom and sat down. Without looking at the faces, he ran his eyes over the names on the sheet of paper. Adams . . . Brown . . . Blair . . . Forrest . . . Henderson. He could not bring himself to look at any of them. He knew how most of the faces would look . . . young, with that air of confidence that is a gift nature has given youth to hold in escrow against the day when he meets his first Bataan face to face. Even without looking at them, Professor Martin knew which one was Henderson. He sat alone, deliberately, leaving a chair between himself and the others.

Martin had started to open the text when it occurred to him that young Forrest had not yet arrived. He glanced at his watch. He was almost afraid to speak, fearing the angry resentment would loose itself.

The door opened and young Forrest walked in. Professor Martin turned his head to look at him and the old feeling so akin to sickening terror closed in on him. It was ROTC day. Forrest was wearing his

army uniform. It had always been this way. Professor Martin would forget which day of the week the uniforms would show up in class, then suddenly there they were and there, too, was the old trapped feeling.

Martin closed his eyes for a moment, shutting out the long days and nights that spelled Bataan and prison camps and the gradual weakening of his eyes. He swallowed hard and fought the black film that seemed to shimmer in front of him.

But the small cry from Henderson brought him abruptly back to the classroom and he turned and for the first time looked at the turncoat's face.

Henderson had half-risen from his chair at the sight of Forrest in uniform, and now he slumped back, as panic-stricken as a jungle animal trapped in the darkness of a pit and awaiting the sound of footsteps. If there had ever been an arrogance or contempt in him, it was gone at that moment when Martin first dared to look at him, and that would be how he would always think of him, conscience-trapped and waiting for the sound of footsteps closing in around him, following him, circling him.

He is the weak one of the lot, Professor Martin thought, a strange pity filling him. He is the laggard who will have to be carried over the bad spots. Every Monday he will have to live this hour of hell, terrified by the uniform he has betrayed and worn now by a young man who has no idea why anyone should fear his particular Monday garb. The name Henderson mean nothing to these freshmen, even the ones who might possibly remember Korea but have forgotten Bataan.

Ex-Sergeant John Martin, who did remember Bataan, took off his glasses and shined them. Somehow in polishing he removed the sergeant's stripes and replaced them with the words he had remembered that night on the campus after learning that the turncoat would attend class there: "Ideals are like stars; you will not succeed in touching them with your hands, but like the seafaring man on the desert of waters, you choose them as your guides, and following them, you reach your destiny."

He put on the glasses that were *his* battle scar. He looked at Forrest's army uniform, then at Henderson's white face. His identity returned to him. He was professor John Martin, who would some day take his family on a vacation to Mexico, even if they could buy no silver souvenirs.

"You're late, Mr. Forrest," he said crisply to the young man in uniform.

"I'm sorry, sir," Forrest said.

Professor Martin nodded. He took a deep breath and the class became quiet. It was a comfortable silence, one that reached far beyond springtime.