

# Intercom

VOLUME ONE, NUMBER SIX

A STUDENT PUBLICATION AT COLLEGE OF THE MAINLAND

MARCH



Jane Freilicher poses for a self-portrait.

## Oberg offers unique teaching approach

By Steve Remollino

There is a celebrity in our midst, although people may not know it. Dr. Alcestis Oberg, or "Cookie" as she is known to her friends and students, is about as unconventional an instructor as any student could ask for. In addition to having been an adjunct instructor here at COM since 1976 (longer than just about any part-time person in the Humanities Division), Cookie also teaches at Texas A&M on Pelican Island and writes for "Science Digest" and "Texas Monthly."

Although she says that the "big money" is made by freelancing at magazines, she teaches because she enjoys it, not because the pay is fantastic.

Her magazine writing is an interesting aspect of her life, but her philosophies on teaching are the most incredible of all.

She commands her students with her "song and dance" as she puts it.

"It's the readiest way to keep their attention." It works. Just try to get into one of her literature courses. They are usually filled to the brim with students, both new and former. The evaluations that her students give her are also stupendous.

Rarely, if ever, has she gotten a poor critique from one of her students.

In addition to Cookie's innovative techniques in the classroom, her methods behind the scenes are also important. She refuses to follow what she refers to as "an idiotic curriculum"

in which neither the instructor nor the students benefit. If she sees that something is not working with her students, she'd rather change it than have her students bored silly. She often teaches interesting and normally untaught novels such as "The Hobbit" or "Dune" to stir new interests in her students rather than repeatedly teaching the same thing semester after semester.

To prepare for her life as an instructor and journalist, Cookie attended Northwestern University where she obtained her B.A., the University of New Mexico, where she obtained her M.A., and the University of Maryland, where she earned her Ph.D. When asked why she traveled so much to get her degrees, she replied, "When you're married to a military man, you have to be ready to travel." Cookie's husband, James, is the author of two books, "Red Star in Orbit" and "New Earths."



Cookie Oberg

## Artist visits COM

By Elouise Wilson

Public response to the lecture and reception for New York artist Jane Freilicher was well attended, according to COM Gallery director Jean Wetta.

Mimi Crossley, art critic for the *Houston Post*, moderated a question-answer session with the artist and Aladar Marberger of the Fischbach Gallery of New York City, New York.

During the interview, Freilicher admitted she did not like the abstract and kitchen sink style of art that was so popular during her student years and the style that she began developing, painterly realism, was in opposition to the accepted trendy avant garde

abstract.

Characteristics of Freilicher's work are bright floral still lifes, on slanted perspective tables against a window framing a vast landscape. Sound busy? They are! Her work has been compared to Renoir, Matisse and Monet.

The artist readily admits to a penchant for dead fish. These she paints on delicate china with sharp contrast of flesh tones and scales. The clear colors she uses in her still lifes and scenes reflect a Dutch influence; however, Freilicher claims her play on color is intuitive, not structured.

"You know," Freilicher said, "that the valid part of painting is the part that cannot be explained."

Her landscapes record twenty years of painting the view outside her studio on Long Island Sound.

Her last landscape of this view is a painted elegy. Her only statement to the destruction of this lovely view, a silent but a powerfully explicit one, into which she paints herself, with the addition of bulldozers plowing the land into housing tracts.

## New mall opening here

By Peggy Verkin

In the Fall of 1984, Texas City's new Mall of the Mainland to be located at FM 1764 and the Gulf Freeway will be opening.

Don Wesley, City Planner for the City of Texas City and Drafting Teacher at College of the Mainland said, "In addition, the main Mall will consist of one hundred and twelve stores including four major department stores and almost one hundred and ten acres of land will be used."

"In the process of developing the mall other negotiations are being made for a Walmart and McCoys north of the mall," added Wesley.

Paul Broadhead and Associates of Mississippi are the developers heading this project. Cindy Jones, a spokesperson for PBA said, "Before starting on construction of the mall there are many things to be done such as rezoning and several other technicalities." She also added, "It is premature yet to know what four major department stores will be in the mall."

Don Wesley said, "PBA has done

a wonderful job on their malls such as the San Jacinto Mall in Baytown and I believe they will do a terrific job on Mall of the Mainland."

Wesley said, "New technology will be part of the new mall with a video tape monitor of everything inside the mall and the security will include the parking lot."

In addition lost children will be less of a problem because, "At each end of the mall there will be a different animal for children to be able to identify where they are at by the animal," added Wesley.

Don Wesley said, "We plan to work with COM on their cooperative education program to have students from COM work at the Mall of the Mainland." He also believes that, "There will be about 2,000 employees needed at the Mall." Wesley added, "The Mall of the Mainland will be a welcome addition to the community which is already making plans for its opening." Of particular interest in this project are those students studying Business, Marketing, Management and Retail courses at COM.

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# Second thoughts

## Oscars highlight dull movie month in March

By Steve Remollino

We're one-quarter way through the year and there really has not been anything incredible happening at the cinema. But, March is a big month because of the Academy Awards show on Mar. 29.

Before I give my picks for the major awards, let's take a glimpse at a few recent releases.

The first is "Making Love" starring Kate Jackson, Harry Hamlin, and Michael Ontkean. The story concerns a seemingly happy couple (Ontkean and Jackson) who find that their marriage is threatened by a third party (Harry Hamlin). It seems that Ontkean has been repressing his homosexual feelings for these long years and after meeting Hamlin these feelings turn to longings. Of course, this situation shakes his marriage and makes Kate Jackson so mad that she has to smash plates on her kitchen floor. Besides this infamous "china episode," nothing

spectacular ever happens. Neither Jackson nor Ontkean is very believable as the couple; but, Harry Hamlin does a pretty good job. The stars and producers make a valiant try with controversial material--notice the use of the word "valiant" instead of the word "successful."

A second feature which, surprisingly enough, delivers the goods it promises is "Swamp Thing" starring Adrienne Barbeau and Louis Jourdan. Based on a comic book character, the film tells the story of a scientist who is chemically changed into a half man/half vegetable. The film has many touching sequences as "old swampy" walks off into the sunset at the film's finish without his love, Adrienne Barbeau. (Sob!) Lavish cinematography, strong performances, and unusual make-up make the flick well-worth viewing.

We drop down, way down, in quality with "The Beast Within," a stupid horror film with what one might call the

"idiot plot syndrome." The story, such as it is, concerns one foggy night in Mississippi when a new bride gets raped by something in the woods. As it turns out, the rapist was half man/half cicada. Her son, thanks to this previous encounter, is a 17-year-old who has started acting very strange. Could it be that he too is a cicada-man? Yes, indeed. Soon son-of-cicada-man is shedding his skin and murdering the townsfolk in a horrible fashion. Bugman struts his violent stuff at a funeral parlor, a court house, and in a nearby swamp. At the end, he rapes some local tramp who wanders by. Oh lucky her! In 17 years she too will have a bug child. The story is dumb, the acting is dumber, and the make-up is just the pits. Quick, get the Raid!

plot is a direct rip-off of "Jaws" and "Jaws 2." And because of this fact, Universal Pictures is suing the pants off of the company that made this travesty. They needn't worry. "Jaws" was a masterpiece. This trash is a mess. It appears that a large shark (obviously made out of plywood) has landed off the coast of Georgia. If it's Georgia, why does the majority of the cast have Italian names and must have their dialogue dubbed in? The shark goes chomp here, bite there, munch here, crunch there and destroys one dock, one helicopter, six extras, one old boat, one teenager's leg, one old political candidate, one cameraman, etc., etc., etc. In one "heart stopping sequence" (Hah!) James Franciscus as novelist Peter Benton (writing a shark book as did Peter Benchley, author of "Jaws") goes diving with Vic Morrow (a poor man's Captain Quint who sports an accent that is either Irish, Scottish or Mongoloid). When Peter fails to come up from his dive, his wife (the worst actress to come out of Georgia or Italy in years) screams "Oh Peter, you only have three minutes of oxygen left." "Oh Peter, Peter." Oh brother! In the end the wooden member of the class Chondrichthyes (Thank you, Emmeline Dodd) is blown into sawdust. Oh well, all bad things, including movies, must come to an end.

Now, on to the Oscars. Here are my predictions for the major awards.

**Best Actor:** Henry Fonda, "On Golden Pond"

**Best Actress:** Meryl Streep, "The French Lieutenant's Woman"

**Best Supporting Actor:** John Gielgud, "Arthur"

**Best Supporting Actress:** Jane Fonda, "On Golden Pond"

**Best Picture:** "On Golden Pond"

**Best Song:** "Arthur's Theme" ("The Best That You Can Do")

Well, so much for March. Until next month, I'll see you in the movies.



## A letter to the editor

To the Editor:

I recently read in the Self Study Newsletter that the Organization and Administration Committee has recommended that "for the purpose of unity among the employees of COM that strong consideration should be given to the removal of the current faculty representative to the BOT. In addition, consideration might be given to review the rationale for seating a student representative."

This "act of unity" is really nothing more than one more refusal by certain individuals and groups to recognize the need and value of faculty input into the decision making process. It is in no way intended to unite persons on campus, but simply another blatant example of an attempt to diffuse and subjugate faculty's voice in the governance of the college.

As for the rationale for the student representative; if the committee cannot see the critical importance of this then they have simply lost touch with what we are all about here at COM; we exist for the student, not vice versa.

Sincerely,  
Bob Wennagel C.P.A.  
Instructor  
Division of Business

Editor's note: The following is a reply from Mitzi Brister, Student Repre-

sentative to the Board of Trustees, to Instructor Wennagel's letter.

I must confess, the proposal to remove the "faculty" and student representatives from the Board of Trustees did anger me at first. "How dare they remove the purpose of their job!", was my first thought. Then I began to get honest with myself--how effective are those representatives?

One person cannot honestly represent all of the students at COM. Besides, we never really had the chance to speak anyway. Under the steering committee's suggestion, Dr. Sundermann would be the speaker for the College at the Board meeting.

However, we must remember that the Board meetings are open and that under Article IX of the Board Policy Manual, any group has the right to present itself. I feel that these two safeguards--the open meetings and Article IX--are stronger chains of communication than the two representatives on the Board who seldom had the right to speak.

I am also inclined to believe that Dr. Sundermann would listen to any special group and then find what is best for COM. After all, don't we all have something at stake, like College of the Mainland?

# InterCOM

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# Healthy outlook

## Aerobics feature toning up, mass mayhem

By Ruth Wedergren

Aerobic dance is one of the most popular forms of exercise today because it provides fitness for the person who doesn't want to walk or jog, yet wants

the same benefits, says College of the Mainland Physical Education Instructor Becky King.

Begun in 1969 by Jackie Sorenson, aerobic dance is a combination of aerobics, or cardiovascular strength-



Participants in aerobics class seem to enjoy the 'mass mayhem' atmosphere.

## Marathon mania - How to prepare

By Robert Sweeten

Marathon mania has swept the country during the past several years and several people on COM campus were caught up in the draft.

Whether the weekend athlete enters road races, runs regularly, or just jogs occasionally, the question "I wonder if I could run a marathon?" eventually enters his or her mind.

Given the proper training and motivation, the answer probably is "yes."

To start off on the right foot, Barbara Crews, director of the Women's Center and marathon runner, has a few tips for the proper way to run a marathon and build the stamina to conquer the 26 miles.

Step One is to get in shape. A complete physical checkup is suggested. Early detection and treatment of such problems as flat feet or a high arch will save the runner from discomfort down the road. Just as important is the selection of well-padded and comfortable running shoes. Nylon shoes with rigid arches and thick heel padding to absorb the shock are recommended.

When the actual running begins, everyone should keep in mind certain guidelines. Warm up thoroughly. A

host of painful maladies await the runner who forgets to give his muscles a chance to prepare for hard work. Do not overdo it.

If a runner suspects an injury or has recurring pain, call a doctor. In less-serious cases, remember the runner's basic first-aid formula: "RICE" (rest, ice, compression, elevation). These four treatments will relieve most minor injuries.

Perhaps the most important thing to remember is to drink water. Dehydration can be fatal.

Crews, who started running four years ago, says running means having absolute control over her mind and body.

Step Two is to build the fitness level. Before training starts, a runner must assess his or her relative fitness. If someone considers himself a regular exerciser, he should be able to work up to a mile jog in a couple of weeks. Everyone should remember how fast one runs does not matter—it is the continual effort that counts, Crews said.

Step Three is the high mileage training. When a runner achieves a 40-mile-per-week schedule for two months injury-free, he or she is ready to start the countdown to the marathon.

ening exercises, and energetic dance movements. "You don't have to be a dancer," King pointed out. "The movements are simple and exercising to music makes it fun," she added.

Each program of aerobic dancing begins with a warm-up phase to stretch the muscles and slowly increase the heart rate. Next, the actual aerobic exercise takes place from 15-30 minutes and consists of almost continuous motion. Lastly, a cool-down phase occurs with walking and slow movement to bring the heart rate and muscles back to normal.

King noted there are some warnings and risk factors that apply to older persons considering beginning aerobic dance. Generally, everyone should have a check-up and an okay from their doctor for this type of exercise, but those over 40 should also have an EKG-Stress test to check heart rate during exercise.

Along with increased cardiovascular strength, aerobic dancing also helps trim and tone hips, thighs, waistline, upper arms, and legs. Blood circulation improves to carry a better blood supply to muscles, skin, and vital

organs. Aerobic dance also sheds pounds because the exercise burns a large amount of calories. Along with these physical benefits, people also begin to feel good about themselves and the way they look.

According to Ms. King, COM offers an aerobic dance class every Tuesday and Thursday evening from 5:45-6:45

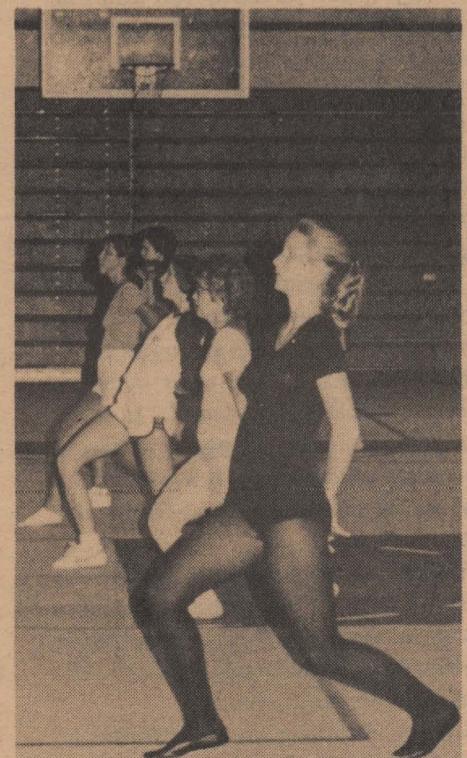
in the gym, in addition to credit classes. "We call it 'Mass Mayhem,' because we can get as many as 100 people in the gym doing aerobics," explained King. "It's open to anyone, any age, and only costs 50¢ a session. You pay as you come," she added.

"So far our 'Mass Mayhem' has worked very well. We have very knowledgeable instructors and the students seem to really enjoy it," she continued.

King also noted that there have been many spin-offs from aerobic dancing such as jazz exercise and rhythmic aerobics. "They all have a little bit different choreography, but have the same basic concept of cardiovascular health," she explained.

King doesn't see aerobic dance as just a fad exercise. "People say that aerobic dancing is a fad, but I don't think it is. It's already been around for more than ten years and is now in the height of its popularity. I think people will stay with it," she concluded.

Anyone with questions about COM's aerobic program or health precautions for aerobics should call the Physical Education Department at 938-1211, ext. 419.



Students line up and tone up during the aerobics class.

### Fiddler on the Roof--the making of a hit

By Robert Sweeten

Participating in the production of a play has long been a mystery to many. Like joining a secret society or fraternity, the world of the theatre and the people of it are a rare breed with the determination, desire, and talent to make a miracle happen and repeat it over and over again.

The current show, "Fiddler on the Roof," is still in the final stages of rehearsal, but what events have taken

place to get the production this far? Follow young Hopeful Actor as he leads us through all the stages of this event.

The first step is always the audition. Some 70 people vie for 30 odd parts in the show. In the case of our Hopeful Actor, the decision rests in the hands of three men: Larry Stanley, Musical Director; Carl Siberon, Choreographer; Reggie Schwander, Director.

When the auditions are over, the hard part comes--waiting. For our

Hopeful, word comes four days later via a phone call from Reggie offering him a part in the chorus. Hopeful jumps at the chance.

Larry Stanley will work with the cast first, teaching them all of the songs. This part is easy after a while, but painstaking hours are spent perfecting each and every sound. These types of rehearsals go on for approximately two weeks and then it is time to progress.

Enter Carl Siberon, the choreographer. Carl, a veteran of dance in

the United States and Canada, is working with these people for the very first time.

Finally, Reggie Schwander, the director, comes in to do his part. It is he who has the overall picture of what the show should look like. Due to this fact, the majority of the rehearsal periods are spent working with him. He pieces the entire show together and makes everything fall right into place. This task is a heavy burden because "Fiddler on the Roof" is a large show. At first, Hopeful and the other cast members can barely make it through the first act, but this changes rapidly.

Before anyone notices, the entire show is being run through complete with songs and dances. Run-throughs occur every night for a week prior to the first preview performance.

While the onstage work is going on, there is even harder work going on backstage. Sets have to be built and costumes have to be made. Jim Glenn, shop foreman for the theatre, is the man responsible for transforming the stage into a small village called Anatovka. Leah Gifford is the lady responsible for costuming the cast in authentic dress. The fruits of their efforts are the first noticed.

Hopeful sees those "old pros" lose that front as he works side by side with them--just ordinary people working together to achieve a common goal. The cast becomes a family. The bond of theatre people is so tight that nothing can break it. The strangers of the first night of rehearsal are now the friends that Hopeful will never forget. These people have shared something--the making of a hit.



Marvin Byrkett and Terri Malone contemplate marriage as their characters Perchik and Hodel fall in love in College of the Mainland Community Theatre's upcoming musical "Fiddler on the Roof."

### Welcome back, McCollum

By Steve Remollino

Although most COM students are anxious to complete required courses and get out of a junior college, some are excited to come back to their "roots."

Such a student is Doris McCollum, now a part-time reading instructor here in College of the Mainland's Total Learning Center.

After being a housewife for a good part of her life, Doris decided that a change was due, a change that would alter her life.



Doris McCollum

In 1969, Doris earned her Associate in Arts degree here at COM. Her advisor, Janith Stephenson, was so impressed with her work in her classes (classes that Doris now teaches) that she advised Doris to go into the field of education and become a reading specialist.

At the time, Doris said, she didn't feel she was ready to make a big jump from a junior college to an upper-level university--so she waited until 1975 to go to UH/CLC. In 1977 she obtained her Bachelor's degree and in 1980 she earned her Master's.

After achieving her life-long goal of graduating from college, Doris became an elementary school teacher at Roosevelt Wilson Elementary School in Texas City. She also took on the responsibilities of a reading instructor here at COM. When asked whether she prefers her college students or her elementary school students, Doris said, "I can't compare the two of them. I like them both too much."

When asked her ultimate reasons for going to college, Doris said, "I got used to the habit of going to school every September. Now that I'm a teacher, I still do."

Some of the guests slated for the show are COM President Dr. Justus Sundermann, "Fiddler on the Roof" choreographer Carl Siberon and Flamenco guitarist and Affiliate Artist Ronald Radford, Danaczko said.

"Not only will the show tell what is happening on campus, but students and community members will also hear pertinent information concerning programs, coming attractions and registration," she added.

"KYST is a Texas City station with a contemporary music format and operates with a frequency as strong as other major stations in the area such as KPRC and KTRH," she said. "In addition the station is very aggressive about expansion which makes it a good place to start our own program," Danaczko said.

"When the station came and asked us about doing a program we thought it was a good opportunity to have another avenue for reaching the community," she concluded.

Anyone wishing to contribute to "Mainland Beat" should call the Office of Communication Services at 938-1211, ext. 437.

### Theatre seeks funds

By Krissa Wilde

College of the Mainland Community Theatre has requested funds from the City of Texas City for a playwright series. The funds would come from more than \$52,000 available through the Room Occupancy Tax. This tax, more commonly known as the hotel/motel tax, is placed on all hotels and motels within the city.

Jack Westin, Theatre Director, said the theatre applied in November, 1981 for \$5,385 for the new playwright series. He further indicated that while no final word on the application has been received, he feels confident it will be just a matter of time before the funding is available.