

"William Faulkner: A Life on Paper" will be televised Monday on public television. (Drawing by Dean F. Wells)

Faulkner's light shines in TV film

With his own books, University Prof. Joseph Blotner has fanned the flames of — in his own estimation — a 20th-century Prometheus, writer William Faulkner.

And now, Blotner has even helped spark a television documentary on his literary hero.

"William Faulkner: A Life on Paper" will be aired on national public television Dec. 17. Local audiences can see the program, years in the making, 8:10 p.m. on Channel 5.

Blotner, a professor of English who is considered the world's foremost authority on Faulkner, served as an academic consultant to the documentary's producer, the Mississippi Authority for Educational Television.

THE FILM, financed by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, spans Faulkner's "life, work and inspirations . . . through filmed excerpts of his works, the individuals who played major roles in his life, and detailed accounts of his birth in New Albany, Miss., through his growing up in Oxford, Miss., to his professional stints in Europe, New York and Hollywood to his death in 1962," according to its creators.

Included in the documentary are interviews with Faulkner's friends, family

and colleagues, notably actress Lauren Bacall, movie director Howard Hawks, writers Tennessee Williams and Robert Penn Warren and Jill Faulkner Summers, Faulkner's daughter.

Blotner's role in the film — along with other advisors such as Cleanth Brooks of Yale University — was to "to make sure the film makers stuck to the facts and to supply expertise on Faulkner's books, as well as his life."

PAULKNER'S and Blotner's careers overlapped at the University of Virginia in 1936. Blotner was chairman of the Balch Committee, which recruited Faulkner as writer-in-residence at the university.

Although the two writers' relationship was initially a business one, they quickly discovered other mutual interests — among them flying and little league baseball. As Faulkner's friend, Blotner has insights into the Nobel Prize winner that exceed literary dimensions. "Faulkner, he was really shy, one exercised the kind of fact one would with a person who was sensitive . . . It was the kind of relationship you have with an older friend whom you treat with a certain respect and courtesy because of his age . . . also, I was aware of his being a great artist."

Included in the documentary are interviews with Faulkner's friends, family

Fire hazards increase during holiday season

State Police fire marshal officers advise Michigan residents to pay attention to safety precautions concerning indoor decorations this holiday season to lessen risk of fires in homes or other buildings.

Fire prevention needs serious consideration all the time, fire marshal officers say, but particularly so during December when there is a tendency to overlook or neglect this safety aspect of indoor living.

Past experience of firefighters shows there is a possibility of fires of the type that started a woman's bedroll dormitory fire at Alaboda Island several years ago, killing 10 women and injuring about 10 others. The rapid spread of that fire, officers say, was attributed to the use of flammable holiday decorations in the dormitory rooms and hallways.

To lessen the chances of harmful

fires in homes and other buildings in Michigan this holiday season, the fire marshal officers ask home and office residents to consider these aspects of fire safety for guidance:

- Are your decorations made of fire retardant materials?
- Have you taken fire safety precautions with your Christmas tree?
- Are your tree lights approved and fire safe?
- Have you overloaded electric circuits?
- Are you correctly using extension cords?
- Have you piled presents with flammable wrappings too close to candles, electric lights or illuminated ornaments?
- Have you decorated your fireplace with flammable decorations?

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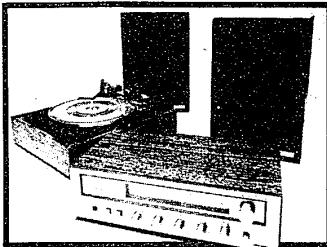
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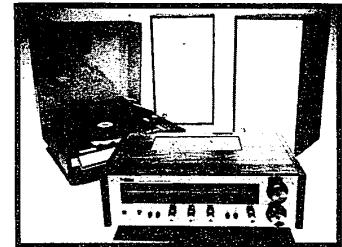
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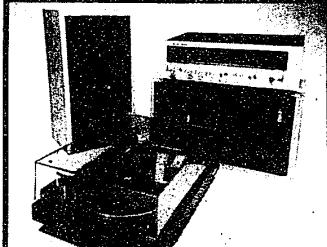
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