

Shrimp harvested in A&M venture

First commercial harvest of pond-grown shrimp was initiated this week by Partex Construction Co. in Bridge City.

The harvest is the result of a cooperative venture between the company and the Marine Advisory Program of A&M's Sea Grant Program through the Texas Agricultural Extension Service.

Six half-acre reservoir-type ponds are expected to yield 150 to 200 pounds of shrimp per acre. Sam Parish, Partex president, said the ponds are the first in the state to be set up as a potential commercial operation.

"We are still experimenting, however," he noted. "The yield from the ponds is expected to be 450 to 600 pounds of 30-count shrimp heads-on. We hope we can improve on the yield as we learn more about shrimp farming."

Jack Parker, A&M Marine Advisory specialist, and Don Kachtik, Orange County agricultural agent, have worked with Parish in setting up and stocking ponds. Post-larval white shrimp were caught from nearby Sabine Lake and placed in the ponds in July. Saline water has been pumped from the lake to the ponds.

"We have been feeding the shrimp a special pellet diet which we developed last year," Parker said.

The pellets are manufactured by the B&D Feed Mills in Grapevine. Shrimp are fed at the rate of about 10 percent of total body weight.

"Although this is our first harvest," Parish said, "we expect to be able to harvest two or three times a year."

The shrimp mariculture project is the result of experimental research ponds created two years ago by the Texas A&M Sea Grant Program. Marine advisory specialists have been working with shrimp ponds in the coastal marshlands near Angleton.

The shrimp ponds in Orange County complement the other land uses which Partex has employed in its 4,500-acre Lakeshore Farms, a coastal ranch near Bridge City.

"The ponds do not interfere with the other land uses here," Parish explained. "We also have some cattle on the land and a lot of wildlife."

"We are basically people oriented," he said. "We make use of this as a natural resource by employing land management concepts which permit us to use the environment without destroying it. The construction of the shrimp ponds is just another way to enhance the uses of coastal marshlands."

Detecting mercury in foods developed by A&M profs

The Texas Agricultural Experiment Station has developed a method for detecting low levels of mercury in foods and other products.

Dr. William L. Hoover, Dr. James R. Melton and Mrs. W. E. Howard of the Department of Agricultural Analytical Services devised the system.

Hoover and Melton described the technique, which involves flameless atomic absorption, during the annual meeting of the Association of Official Analytical Chemists just ended in Washington, D.C.

"Mercury, as one of the heavy metals, is one of the most dangerous pollutants in man's environment," Hoover pointed out. "Metals pose a serious pollution problem because they do not decompose, as do DDT and other pesticides."

"Those of us who drink polluted water or eat fish from a mercury-polluted source are in danger of poisoning. The damage that mercury does to the human brain and nervous system is irreparable," Hoover explained.

The chemist said the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) holds that any food source with more than 0.5 parts per million (ppm) may not be marketed. That limit was set because conventional methods could not reliably detect lower quantities of mercury.

The FDA's statement, in essence, meant that any detectable mercury in food would not be tolerated, he said. But any accumulation of the metal in the body, no matter how small the amount, is considered a potential health hazard.

A&M's new method is capable of detecting mercury in parts per billion (ppb), a sensitivity 1,000 times greater than conventional analyses. If mercury is present in the foodstuff, this technique can measure it.

Hoover and his associates have proved the new system by testing a large number of common foods, river and sea water, fish, shell fish, soil, grass, and even human hair and urine.

"If mercury accumulation in the body is detected early enough, the source of poisoning might be traced and eliminated. Since we now have the facilities to employ this method routinely, we feel that our laboratory can be of further service to the public," Hoover said.



FRENCH DIRECTOR Paul Mauriat leads his orchestra during Friday night's Town Hall performance. Mauriat and his group received two standing ovations before being allowed by the audience to leave the stage. (Photo by Randy Freeman)

Destroyer satellite built by Russians

LONDON (AP) — The Soviet Union has been testing a satellite designed to destroy U.S. military satellites, a British scientist said Monday.

He asserted that tests were carried out within the past two weeks with three Sputniks — Cosmos 373, 374 and 375.

Science experts said interceptor satellites could blow up U.S. military reconnaissance satellites and the navigation satellites depended on by America's ability to retaliate to a nuclear attack would then be made negligible.

The warning by Kenneth Gatland, vice president of the British Interplanetary Society, added weight to claims made by an American space expert and a British scientist last February.

A U. S. official said then that the Soviet Union had orbited and tested successfully a satellite that destroys other orbiting spacecraft. British space enthusiast Geoffrey Perry said Cosmos 316 was apparently able to intercept and demolish other craft in orbit.

Gatland said in an interview his deductions were supported by studies from the Royal Aircraft Establishment at Farnborough, center of Britain's foremost satellite analysis operations.

He said Cosmos 373, launched in orbit between 300 and 350 miles above the earth, was a target. Cosmos 374 was launched into orbit farther from earth, but it descended to the same height as 373.

Then Cosmos 373 blew up — apparently deliberately on a signal from the Soviet Union. Six large fragments from it have been identified, Gatland said.

He contended the aim could have been to destroy 373 by impact with the fragments. Alternatively, it could have been a test of a system to use radiation from a nuclear explosion to put a target out of action.

The Soviet Union is a party to a treaty forbidding the use of nuclear explosions generated from satellites.

A&M law students to meet with grads

Outstanding A&M students who plan to enter MBA and law school graduate studies will meet Nov. 14 with former students who have attended recognized business and law schools.

The fifth Business School Branch will be at the Memorial Student Center and the law school brunch will be at Wyatt's Cafeteria.

Arranged through the MSC, the brunches are educational service type activities such as the Student Conference on National Affairs and Great Issues.

Among graduates who will meet with students at the MBA brunch is Charles L. Parker, 1955 journalism graduate and executive vice president of Roberts, Inc. of Austin. Information about the various business schools, MBA programs and opportunities offered by the degree will be available.

Co-chairing the committee arranging the event are Charles H. Herder Jr. of Weimar, Carlton W. Karlik of West and Thomas C. Fitzhugh III of Waco, seniors in chemical and industrial engineering and geophysics, respectively.

Law school deans Garland L. Walker of South Texas College and Angus S. McSwain Jr. of Baylor will meet with students interested in future law studies.

Dean Walker graduated from A&M in 1943 with a degree in agricultural education.

Dean McSwain completed civil engineering studies here in 1944. Also representing the profession at the 9:30 to 11:15 a.m. brunch will be several well-known lawyers and businessmen with foundations in law.

Kirby L. Brown, political science major of Houston who is Student Senate issues chairman, said the event is expected to also become an annual affair to which selected students are invited.

"It will be a great opportunity to meet prominent A&M graduates who've already been along the path we're considering following," Brown said.

Working with him on the A&M-Rice football weekend event are Don B. Mauro of Bryan; Otter B. Denny Jr., LaPorte; John L. Sharp, Placedo, and Stuart L. Hawkins, San Angelo.

Cardinal Cushing dies in Boston

BOSTON (AP) — Richard Cardinal Cushing, the earthy, blunt, craggy-jawed Archbishop of Boston for a quarter century, died Monday at the age of 75.

Archbishop Humberto S. Medeiros, Cushing's successor, was at the cardinal's bedside when he died. Also at the bedside Monday were the cardinal's sisters, Mrs. Anna Francis and Mrs. Mary Pierce, and his brother John.

Cardinal Cushing had been in failing health for some time. The cause of death was not immediately disclosed. He died at about 1:30 p.m., approximately one hour after a bulletin was issued saying he was in critical condition "and failing rapidly."

The announcement said the retired spiritual leader of 1.8 million Roman Catholics was "suffering from the complication of

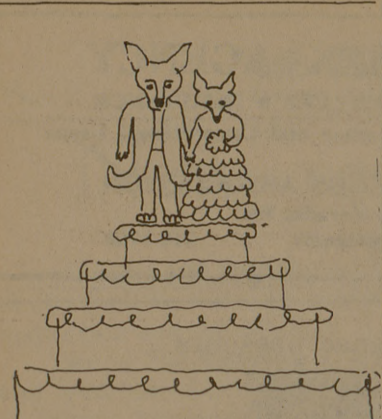
the long-standing malignancy with which he had been afflicted for years."

The funeral will be Saturday at 11 a.m. at Holy Cross Cathedral.

The cardinal had retired only last month from the post when he had come into international prominence in the era of the late Pope John XIII and the late President John F. Kennedy.

He was a devoted friend of both, and their open, innovative styles had brought the cardinal's own expansive, man-of-action ways into wider fields of influence.

A pace-setting ecumenist, Cardinal Cushing had helped spearhead the drive at the Second Vatican Council for its declarations upholding religious liberty and in repudiating deicide claims against Jews.

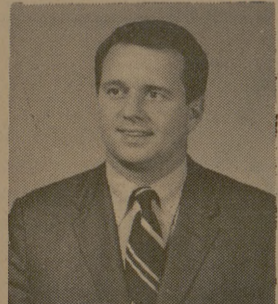


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