

Coyotes and electric fencing quite a 'shocking' combination

By HARVEY LAAS
Battalion Reporter

A new means of predator control could lead to a shocking experience for Texas coyotes.

Dr. Maurice Shelton at the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station in San Angelo has begun a one-year study to test the effectiveness of electric fences in reducing the number of sheep and goats killed by coyotes.

Coyotes are the most destructive predators of Texas livestock. Shelton said the fences will be a humane way to controlling coyotes. They will use the standard type of electric charge that has been used on livestock fences for years. He said it will not hurt or kill the coyotes, but give them a weak shock to scare them away.

The experiment is funded by a \$25,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Science and Education Administration.

"Coyotes are in direct competition with man," Shelton said. "They eat everything from watermelons to sheep. Most barbed or net wire fences do not stop a coyote. They can jump, climb, dig or find a hole

to get past the fence." Shelton said the coyote problem has increased seriously in recent years. Coyotes are repopulating in agricultural areas where they have not been for years.

Coyotes are a serious problem throughout much of the southwestern United States. In California the coyote population is estimated at 500,000. Reports show that coyotes killed about 13,000 adult sheep and 51,000 lambs there in 1977.

Shelton's work will be headquartered at the Texas A&M University Research and Extension Center in San Angelo where he is based.

He will test the electric fences at several sites around Texas. The sites include Texas Agricultural Experiment Stations at McGregor and Spur.

Coyotes-kills will be compared among 10-acre control plots with conventional fences and experimental plots which incorporate the electric fences.

Shelton said several methods of modifying fences will be tested. One method involves putting a three-wire electric fence about two

feet outside the existing fence. Another plot will test the effectiveness of putting one electric wire eight inches from the ground along the bottom of the existing fence.

The study will also indicate if this practice is economically practical. Shelton said it will cost about \$300-

400 a mile for the electric fence modifications. He said a new conventional fence built well enough to have any chance of stopping coyotes costs \$3,000-4000 a mile.

"We feel reasonably confident that electric fences can reduce predator kills," Shelton said.

Space experts testing shroud

United Press International
TURIN, Italy — American scientists using the latest techniques of the United States space program worked around the clock Monday to unravel the mysteries of an ancient piece of linen cloth revered by many as the burial shroud of Jesus Christ.

The 25 scientists, including IBM computer technicians and experts from the Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, Calif., began their tests on the Shroud of Turin early Monday. They tentatively have been given four days to complete their work.

They are studying the shroud in a second-floor hall of Turin's 17th-century royal palace complex in top secrecy, with police sentries manning the gates.

The shroud is a piece of linen 4-feet, 3-inches long and 3-feet, 7-inches wide. It bears the negative image of a bearded man who apparently has been crucified, scourged with a whip, stabbed in the side and crowned with thorns.

Many Roman Catholics believe it was the burial shroud of Christ and that the image on it was produced by the radiance of his resurrection.

"Our aim is to discover what the image is composed of, its molecular breakdown and secondly what formed the image," said Kenneth Stevenson, an IBM computer scientist from Pittsburgh, who is acting as

spokesman for the U.S. investigators.

Also among the American scientists examining the shroud are Donald Lynn, an image-processing expert from the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, and scientists from the Los Alamos Testing Laboratory.

The shroud had been shown to the public for the first time in 45 years this summer in an exhibition, in Turin's San Giovanni Cathedral, that ended Saturday. An estimated 3.33 million persons saw it during the 43-day display.

Tests being carried out on the shroud included X-ray and X-ray fluorescence analysis, infrared thermal testing, spectroscopy, computer-enhanced photographic analysis, mosaic photography and ultraviolet light examination.

Scientists also were carrying out "celluloid tape tests," in which a strip of magnetized tape is pressed on the surface of the shroud and lifted off for examination of particles removed.

The Rev. Peter Rinaldi of Port Chester, N.Y., president of the U.S. Holy Shroud Guild, said the room where the shroud is being studied "looks like a control center for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration."

Also taking part in the scientific tests is Professor Max Frei, the Swiss criminologist who has studied pollen taken from the shroud for more than 12 years. He concluded the linen cloth is more than 2,000 years old and was once in ancient Palestine.

When the scientific experiments are completed, the shroud will be returned to its gold and silver case and locked in a chapel of Turin Cathedral where it has been held for the past 400 years.

Dolly bustin' to get on stage

C&W honors its own

United Press International
NASHVILLE — Buxom Dolly Parton said she "busted out the front" of her new dress just before she was named Country Music Association entertainer of the year Monday night. But she said she would have "run on stage naked" to accept the award.

She didn't have to. She borrowed a mink stole from someone in the audience and bounced — well covered — onto the stage to collect her prize.

"I had this dress made hoping I would win," Parton said in her acceptance speech. "But a few minutes ago I was hoping I wouldn't because I just busted the front out of it."

"I guess it's like my daddy said — you shouldn't try to put 50 pounds of mud in a five-pound sack."

"It's nice and pretty to put on the mantel in case you have kids," she said about her award. "You can say, 'Look at what mommy did.'"

CMA and network officials made frantic last-minute changes in the schedule when singer Tammy Wynette, who was scheduled to present awards,

canceled her appearance hours before the broadcast. Wynette is recuperating from bruises suffered last week when she was abducted from a Nashville shopping center and driven 80 miles before being released.

Crystal Gayle, sister of long-time country star Loretta Lynn, was named the top female vocalist for the second consecutive year. "Don't It Make My Brown Eyes Blue," made famous by Gayle, won Song of the Year honors writer Richard Leigh.

Don Williams, the drawing "Gentle Giant" best known this year for his album "Country Boy," was named male vocalist of the year and skipped up to the stage wearing his cowboy hat and blue jeans, unlike most of the other performers who were decked out in tuxedos.

Ronnie Milsap, the blind pianist-singer who won top entertainer, album and male vocalist honors a year ago, claimed the album of the year award again.

The Kendalls — former St. Louis barber Royce Kendall and his teen-age daughter Jeannie — won single of the year honors for

"Heaven's Just a Sin Away," a lively and suggestive tune about a girl who declares "Lord, love me when I say I think I'm goin' in."

The Oak Ridge Boys, former gospel quartet turned contemporary country since originated during World War II, won vocal group of the year honors and their back-up group, The Oak Ridge Boys Band, named instrumental group of the year.

Kenny Rogers and Dottie West, who sang "Anyone Who Isn't Me Tonight," during a show, were named vocal duo of the year.

Roy Clark, a veteran of pick and singin' who has won previous CMA awards ranging from entertainer to comedian of the year, was back in the winner's circle again, chomping on a cigar and accepted the instrumentalist of the year award.

Louis Marshall Jones, a bar picker and comedian dubbed "Grandpa" at the ripe old age of 22 more than 40 years ago, was selected as the 31st person to be inducted into the Country Music Hall of Fame.

Motorcycle training first on city streets

United Press International
SAN ANTONIO — On Saturday mornings some local motorists are startled to encounter Julio Esparza herding a half-dozen motorcycle riders in bright orange vests proclaiming "student drivers" buzzing down city streets.

Esparza, head of the driver's education program for Edgewood School District, and his two associates are donating their time to probably the first motorcycle safety course in Texas in which the riders are trained on city streets.

Few can disagree that there is a need for motorcycle safety programs, especially with statistics that show motorcycle fatalities in Texas increased from 165 to 240 last year. San Antonio has reported 469 motorcycle accidents through August, with 81 percent of them result-

ing in injuries or death. The progress of Esparza's class may determine whether the Edgewood school board decides to make it a full-time program.

"I'm sure some of the other districts will take the lead also. But I wish they would hurry up and do something," said Esparza, who already has put 22 students through the 23-hour course designed by the Motorcycle Safety Foundation, headquartered in Maryland and funded by the five major manufacturers of motorcycles.

The soaring rate of injuries and deaths on motorcycles — much of it attributed to repeal of the helmet law — has led to skyrocketing insurance rates for the two-wheelers in Texas, and the high rates are working against starting programs such as the Edgewood experiment, according to Ed Johnson, an official of the Traffic Safety Center at San Antonio College.

One local dealer bought collision insurance recently on a 500-cc Honda and it cost him \$280 for \$250 deductible insurance, compared to

\$120 for his automobile. "That's ridiculous," he said.

Johnson and Esparza went to Austin last month in an effort to get the motorcycle safety course certified and to convince the State Insurance Board to grant the same 10 percent insurance reduction to cyclists who pass the course as is afforded lakes motorists who complete mandatory education instruction.

Johnson said Ned Price, chairman of the board, instructed his staff to devise a rate structure at a ease costs for educational classes south programs, reducing costs for graduates such instruction.

"I think we'll get it. It's a motorcycle equivalent of driver's education," Johnson said. "It's a 12-hour classroom hours and 12 riding hours of instruction."

"We teach them the state things about riding a motorcycle. We teach them to avoid emergencies. We teach them emergency maneuvers. They learn how to form them on a range, how to over trash on a road, how to sudden lane change without yourself."

"I'm sure if the insurance companies took a good, hard look at program, they'd be more than willing to honor that (rate reduction). As it is right now, they just don't," Esparza said.

Local motorcycle dealers don't have the cycles for both Johnson's and Esparza's classes, just as automobile dealers furnish cars for driver's education.

The San Antonio College instruction was done at Kelly Force Base but Esparza went to city to take the students — many of them novices — out on the streets for their training, with one instructor riding in front, one instructor riding behind and six trainees in the middle.

Johnson said his pilot program charged each student \$20 tuition, a fraction of the \$75 per student cost of the program, due largely to insurance costs.

45 million stamps buy gorillas?


United Press International
MIAMI — If anyone has an extra trading stamps, the Dade County Zoo would like to have them to buy a gorilla.

The S&H Green Stamp company doesn't offer gorillas, but the Florida Zoological Society has been negotiating with the stamp company over the idea of purchasing gorillas — a male and two females — for the new county zoo scheduled for opening late next year. The cost is 45 million stamps — a demonstration of inflation.

The idea came from zoo director Dan Brennan who, as director of Erie, Pa., zoo in 1965 led a community stamp drive to buy a gorilla. That gorilla, 13 years ago, cost only 5.4 million stamps.

"The price of everything is going up. Why not gorillas?" Brennan said.

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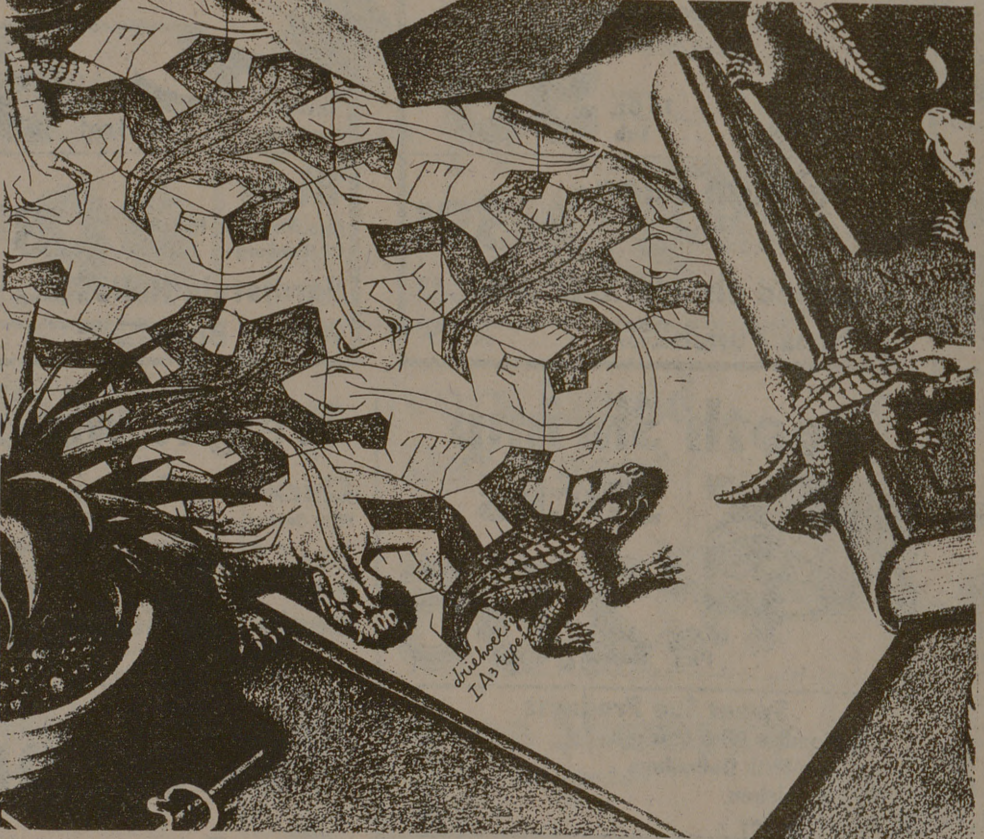
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