

Staw hats provide cool Texas comfort

By Dana Smelser

Battalion Reporter

With the onset of blistering summer weather, urban cowboys and ranchers alike are ready to hang up their felt hats and replace them with cooler summer straw hats.

The straw cowboy hat is more than fashionable head cover for summer; it provides shade and keeps the head cool on sultry summer days. Straw hats cost less than felt, but don't last as long.

Body structure and personality of the wearer, and quality, price and style of the hat must all be considered when choosing a hat.

A tall person should buy a hat with a wide brim and a tall crown, said Richard Wolf, manager of Gary's Hats in Houston. A smaller person should consider a less domineering style.

A shopper should consider where the hat will be worn; is it for work or show?

The "Urban Cowboy" look sports wide hat bands and plenty of feathers. It's a look that "the real old time cowboys wouldn't be seen dead in," Tom Lewis, manager of Court's Western Wear in Culpepper Plaza, said.

If the hat is for working, an open weave with more ventilation should be chosen, Lewis said, to keep the head cool.

The straw, which is made from jute or hemp, comes un-

formed from as far away as Taiwan, the Philippines, Ecuador, or China.

The best straws are panamas which come from Ecuador, Wolf said.

The best has its price, though. Depending on where the hat is purchased, the price of a panama can range from \$40 to \$100. That's a jump over the average price \$28 for other "quality" hats.

After choosing the type of straw, the shopper then decided what kind of crease he wants. The most popular are the RCA bullrider, the bronc rider and the cattleman's or alpine, Wolf said.

The bullrider and the bronc rider are similar; the bullrider has a taller crown and the brim drops down to the neck. The cattleman's is a more conservative style with the sides dimpled in. "Once a crease is in a straw hat, it's there to stay," Lewis said. A felt hat can be reshaped; a straw will break like cardboard if reshaping is attempted.

Straw does not keep its shape as well as felt. Consequently, a spring wire should be woven into the brim to help maintain its original shape, Wolf said. The hat should also be lacquered to help resist water and dirt.

This doesn't waterproof the hat, however.

"The hat will fall apart in the rain if it is soaked over and over

and over again," Wolf said.

If a hat gets wet or needs cleaning, wipe it off with a warm, damp cloth and a mild detergent, Kaye Dunn, manager of Brand's Western Wear, said.

Because straw is fragile, the hat should always be set upside down on its crown to resist the flexing of the brim, Wolf said. The owner should avoid handling the crown.

A working cowboy may not decorate his hat, but the urban types go in for accessorizing.

Feather hat bands have been popular but are on their way out, Dunn said. Depending on the quality and style, bands can run from \$5 to \$32. They are being replaced by single large feathers, which cost about \$4.

Recently, the most popular band has been braided horsehair, at about \$30. "It's a more conservative look and has a classy note of a real cowboy," Lewis said.

Above the band go the hat pins, which cost about \$4. The armadillo has been the highest seller in this area.

After the owner is ready to hit the town in his hat, he can purchase a gadget that allows his hat to ride safely in his truck. It's called a Hat Saver and costs about \$7.

With care, the hat should last about one summer, but mileage may vary with the amount of wear.

New flea market offers treasures

By Sharon D. Renfrow

Battalion Reporter

Come rain or shine, local flea market fans can satisfy their addiction to buying or selling trash and treasures at the People's Flea Market.

The grand opening of the flea market is May 17, at the VFW Hall on FM 2818 (West Bypass) in Bryan. It is the first venture of its kind in the Bryan-College Station area.

The day-long event begins at 11 a.m. and closes at 6:30 p.m. Over 55 local vendors will sell a variety of arts and crafts, or just junk, including gold, silver, costume jewelry, western wear, exotic birds, Mexican and Oriental imports, antiques, oil paintings, pottery, porcelain eggs, rummage items and even hair cuts. Snack stands will provide sausage, nachos, hot dogs, beer and homemade baked goods.

"I want to provide a place — a consistent market — for people who make arts and crafts to sell them," said Ronni Elmore, the driving force behind People's Flea Market.

Elmore moved to Bryan eight months ago, and being a flea market addict herself, realized that the area needed one. The people of Bryan-College Station are ready for one, she said.

Elmore began organizing the flea market in February. She designed the yellow

brochure found in stores and banks around town and distributed them at out-of-town flea markets. During Brazos de Dios, she met many local artists.

The first applicant came in March, and since then she has filled the VFW Hall to near capacity.

"If I run out of room inside, then I will rent spaces outside," Elmore said.

The 8-by-10 spaces in the main hall rent for \$15, and for \$20 in the lobby. Concession stands are \$26. Each space includes a table and chair. The vendors set up from 8:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. and must clear their area by 7:45 p.m.

If the grand opening is a success, Elmore plans for the People's Flea Market to be held on the third Sunday of each month.

Elmore said she hopes to make People's Flea Market similar to the one in Canton, near Dallas. The market there is about 107 years old, but not until the last six years has it developed — it now has 3,000 vendors and 60,000 people come from all over and provides 25 percent of the city's budget.

"That's what I want to make here — the Canton of Central Texas," she said. "I want to make it so that once a month everybody will come from everywhere and can buy anything."

Friday the 13th: creative killings

By Scot K. Meyer

Battalion Staff

Sigh. What can be said about the movie "Friday the 13th, Part 2" that hasn't already been said

about all the other films of the "bleed-and-scream" genre? Not much.

Basically, if you liked "Halloween," "Terror Train," "My

Bloody Valentine," and all the others, you will like this film. You couldn't help it; it's pretty much the same film. (I know, you've heard this before.)

Let's pretend for a moment that this is a new kind of film, and that none of us have ever seen anything like it before. Okay? This will not be easy, since the film starts with footage from the classic "Friday the 13th" (part one). But anyway ...

Once upon a time there was this camp counselor (female) who survived all the blood and gore of your basic-psychopath-infested-summer-camp. The killer was the mother of a little boy who had drowned because careless counselors had been making love rather than watching boy swimmers.

Mother hacked up all the counselors she could find, until she was beheaded by our survivor. Cut to our survivor sitting in a canoe in the very lake where little boy Jason drowned, and (everyone scream) watch as SOMEONE NASTY LOOKING JUMPS OUT OF THE WATER AND PULLS OUR SURVIVOR UNDER!

Our survivor is found in the lake, still alive, and taken home. The nasty someone was not found.

This is told in the form of our survivor's nightmare/flashbacks. Our survivor is alone in a house. The camera follows our survivor around the house with

worried) and opens the fridge, only there's this severed head in there and even as we are recoiling in horror SOMEONE STICKS AN ICEPICK IN OUR SURVIVOR'S HEAD!

Whew. This is followed by the opening credits. That's right folks, we've only just begun.

The rest of the plot goes something like this: pause, suspenseful music, false alarm, bloody murder, pause, music, false alarm, etc., etc. until our murderer tries to kill someone but fails. Followed by killer chasing would-be-killee for a while until ... but, no, I won't tell you the ending. Not that it's any major surprise.

The plot may be a little weak, but then it's really not the selling point of this movie. The previews say "the body count continues," and the previews are right. The killings come at about 10-12 minute intervals, and although it's really no surprise who gets killed, the filmmakers have a lot of fun making you wonder when and how the killings will take place.

Even though it's all done with camera tricks and sudden movements, the film does manage to make people jump. And if you like to jump, you'll probably like this film.

MOVIES

tight, claustrophobic close-ups. Jerky camera movements, as if the camera itself were an intruder.

Survivor gets into the shower. Camera walks into the bathroom; right up to the shower curtain. Shower curtain PULLED VIOLENTLY ASIDE AND ... our survivor simply gets out and grabs a towel. At which point the phone rings AND SOMEONE HANGS UP, and our survivor is nervous. Someone is obviously in the house with our survivor. She wanders through the dark house with an icepick in her hand for a good two or three minutes, when suddenly she walks by the window and SOMETHING JUMPS IN! But it's only the cat, so our survivor puts down the icepick so she can feed Kitty (no longer

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