

FOCUS

Entertainment supplement
to The Battalion

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Children learn to live with nature at day camp

By Denise Richter

Battalion Staff

Why does a duck have a flat bill?

Why are snakes important?

Children in the Bryan-College Station area are finding out the answers to these and

Before each program begins, possible hazards and the way to avoid them are explained.

other nature-related questions through the Summer Nature Camp, a program of the Brazos Valley Museum of Natural Science.

"We're trying to make children aware of the world around them," museum programs director Andy Woods said. "We want to educate them in a fun way."

Activities at the camp include aquatic studies, nature walks, live animal studies, environmental awareness games and nature crafts.

The program emphasizes outdoor safety, Woods said. Before each program begins, possible hazards and the way to avoid them are explained.

"We always have some injuries like insect stings and scrapes but nothing major," Woods said. "Because we spend a lot of time outdoors, we can practically guarantee fire ant stings, but nothing more serious than that."

Five camp programs are held during the summer. Three two-

week sessions are held for 7 to 12 year olds and two one-week sessions are held for 4 to 6 year olds. The last camp session for 1981 begins Monday, July 20. Contact the museum (779-2195) for more information.

"The younger children (4 to 6 year olds) can be taught just as much as the older group," Woods said. "We get concepts across to them by using living animals."

"For example, by showing them live snakes, we can show them that you can't always tell a poisonous snake from a non-poisonous one and because of that, you should leave all snakes alone. As in all of our programs, we stress safety along with respect for other living things."

While the summer nature camp program is only for children, the museum sponsors other programs designed for adults. One adult program planned for the fall concerns energy and the human influence in the Brazos Valley, Woods said. Programs on insects, birds, reptiles, astronomy and other science-related topics will also be offered, he said.

The cost for these programs varies depending on the materials used, he said, but is usually \$5. The adult program is usually held for 1½ hours on three consecutive Saturdays.

The museum is also used as a laboratory by Texas A&M University museum science students, Woods said. University students work on exhibits, programs or teach classes in natural science or natural history, he said.

The museum was founded in 1961 by the Bryan-College Station branch of the American Association of University

Women. It is a non-profit, educational organization designed to emphasize the relationship between people and the natural environment through exhibits, classes, lectures, field trips, special programs and tours.

Groups interested in touring the museum should call ahead, Woods said. During the school year, the museum averages four tours a week, he said.

Museum exhibits are only part of the tour, Woods said. "The concepts that we are trying to get across are presented by the tour guide. The exhibits only give the kids something to look at while we talk."

Exhibits include living animals, artifacts and stuffed animals donated to the museum by taxidermists. The museum will accept any contributions of relevant materials, Woods said.

The most popular exhibit with children is the touch-table, Woods said. Shells, snake skins, a stuffed squirrel and cotton rat and a 150-million-year-old fossil of a turtle can all be found on the touch-table. "The touch-table

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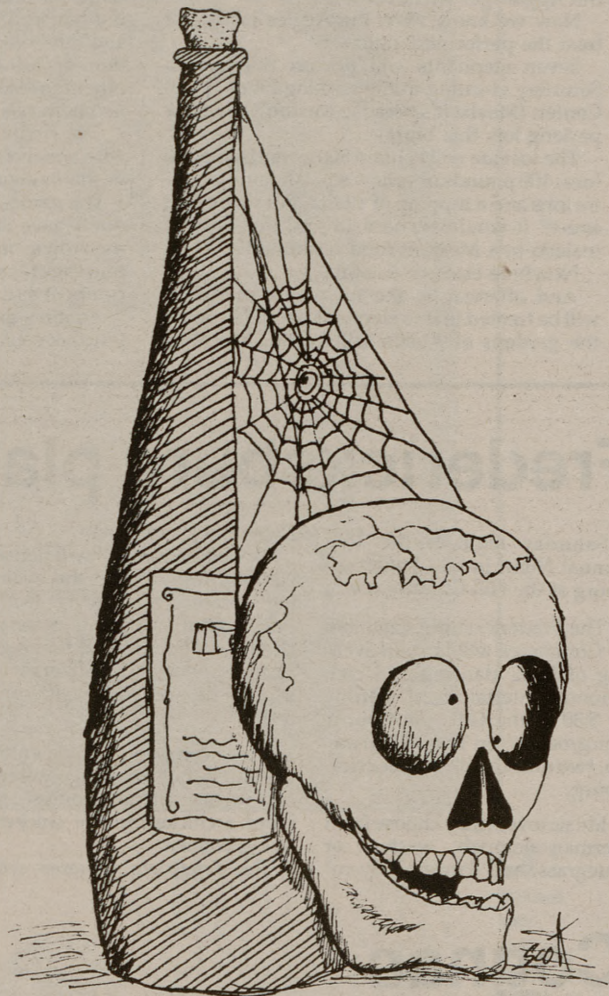
gets the stuff out of the cases and into their hands," Woods said.

Since the museum is a non-profit organization, it has to be supported by private sources. The museum receives funds from the United Way, the Aston Foundation, a private, non-profit foundation for the arts and humanities, and from individual contributions.

People interested in supporting the museum can become members. Membership services include a quarterly newsletter and special bulletins, special discounts at the museum gift shop and reduced fees on all museum programs.

Membership categories are: student — \$5 contribution; associate — \$10; family — \$20; contributing — \$35; supporting — \$50; sustaining — \$100; donor — \$250 and patron (lifetime member) — \$1,000.

The museum is open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday and from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday. It is closed on Mondays.



Vintage cognac for sale in U.S.

United Press International

Would you spend \$3,750 for a decanter of cognac more than 100 years old?

One thousand consumers in America and 200 more elsewhere in the world will have a chance to do just that when Sam Jay Aaron and Marc Platt introduce the first of their potable collectibles this fall.

"It's the ultimate Christmas gift product," the two New Yorkers said in a recent interview.

"It's a novelty," Aaron added.

Ordinarily cognac that old is used by French distillers to blend with younger wines.

This lot is irreplaceable because it was made from pre-phylloxera grapes. French vineyards were devastated in the late 19th century by phylloxera, a plant disease. American rootstock grafted on to save the

surviving vines changed the character of the grapes.

The cognac Aaron and Platt bought for their Le Chateau du Vin, Inc., was the last reserve of unblended, pre-phylloxera cognac from the venerable firm of Hardy, in Charente, France.

Aaron said it will be first in a series of remarkable wines and spirits offered to investors, collectors and connoisseurs through retailers licensed to sell spirits products.

Aaron estimated the cognac itself is worth \$1,500 to \$2,000 per 25-ounce bottle. The rest of the price covers a handcut crystal decanter by the prestigious French firm of Daum, a handcrafted, velvet-lined silver oak presentation case, a signed, numbered lithograph by French artist Carzou and certificates of

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Jelly Belly makers can't meet demand

United Press International

OAKLAND, Calif. — President Reagan's proclivity for Jelly Belly jelly beans is a boon to Herman Goelitz Inc., which has experienced its biggest upsurge in business in 103 years of candy-making.

The firm, with production facilities in Oakland and North Chicago, now produces about 18 million of the diminutive confections daily.

However, that isn't enough

to satisfy a sky-rocketing demand created by media disclosures the president is an avid Jelly Belly fan.

"We've taken aggressive steps to bring supply in line with demand and expect to accomplish this goal within the next eight months," said Goelitz' President Herman Rowland.

The Jelly Belly jelly bean was introduced in 1976.