

Fall's here, so is pollen

by Lynn Falco
Battalion Reporter

How do you spell relief? For hay fever sufferers, it's not easy.

Dr. Rupert Palmer, an extension weed specialist and hay fever sufferer himself, said ragweed — a major contributor to nasal allergies — is at its peak of shedding pollen; and that means a lot of runny noses, watery eyes and sneezing in Bryan-College Station.

Palmer said giant ragweed and Bermuda grass are the most abundant, hay fever-causing weeds in the local area. Their major blooming peaks are from the beginning of September to the middle of October, but sometimes they can continue to bloom as late as the first killing frost.

After a long, hot summer, a cool front often brings cool rain — the perfect time for weeds to bloom, Palmer said. The high pollen count in the spring and fall occurs because excess pollen, during its transfer from the male to the female part of the plant, gets carried up into the air by the wind.

Bermuda grass is a special problem on the Texas A&M University campus, especially between mowings, Palmer

said. When people walk through it, the wind carries the small seed heads up into the air.

People with hay fever will have a reaction when they come in close contact with either an area of giant ragweed or an area of Bermuda grass, Palmer said. He recommended that victims should stay inside as much as possible during the peak pollenation period and receive medical attention. He also said if victims must go outside, they should wear a surgeon's mask.

Dr. Claude Goswick, director of the A.P. Beutel Health Center, said nasal allergies are seasonal reactions, and the health center becomes crowded with allergy victims in the spring and fall.

"Of course when you think about it, spring is a long time around here, so is fall. So sometimes hay fever problems seem year-round," Goswick said.

But once there is a hard freeze, he said, there are no more problems — at least until the weather becomes warmer again.

A great number of students, who have seen allergists at one time or another take hyposensitization injections,



he said. These are shots that contain a small, diluted dosage of whatever the patient is allergic to. The shots allow the person to build up a tolerance — but not an immunity — to the allergen.

Goswick said allergy victims may develop asthma, hives and itching. Sometimes,

although rarely, they can develop swelling of certain areas of the body including the esophagus, lips, tongue and face. These systemic, allergic reactions could progress to affect the circulatory system or the respiratory system and sometimes, in extreme cases, cause shock.

Three's not the charm for Austin pair's house

United Press International
AUSTIN — Stan and Laura Moore counted their blessings when two speeding cars narrowly missed striking their home this past weekend, but their good luck didn't hold out a third time.

Late Saturday night, a car struck a telephone pole next to the Moores' duplex. A few hours later, another car smashed into a

tree across the street. But early Sunday night, the Moores' luck ran out when a third wayward vehicle plowed into their living room while the couple was watching television.

"Both (earlier) accidents made a lot of screeching and banging," Stan Moore, 25, said. "So when this one made a lot of screeching and banging, we

didn't think much of it until we saw the car come through the wall. Then it was sheer panic."

Although the Moores were pushed across the living room floor by the car's impact, they were not injured. The unidentified driver of the car was taken to a local hospital with undetermined injuries.

"We were lucky," Moore said.

FBI continuing to investigate Gulf's Baytown bomb scare

United Press International
BAYTOWN, — Four Colorado residents were held in two states Monday under \$1 million bond each for allegedly plotting to extort \$15 million from Gulf Oil Chemical Co. by threatening to blow up its largest plant — a \$1 billion facility east of Houston.

The FBI refuses to give any details in the investigation, which it said was still in progress. Agents refused to say if there were other suspects in the case.

"Investigation in other areas of the country is continuing," FBI spokesman John Joyce said.

Arrested Sunday in Durango, Colo., and charged with extortion were John Marvin McBride, 46, and his wife, Jill Rene Bird, 35. They were arraigned before U.S. Magistrate David West and ordered held under \$1 million bond each.

In Denver, the FBI said the arrests came after three search warrants covering three homes and one business were executed in the southwestern Colorado town.

Two other Durango residents, Theodore Duane McKinney, 45, a pack saddle guide, and Michael Allen Worth, 34, a private investigator, were arrested in Apache Junction, Ariz., Friday allegedly trying to collect \$15 million ransom.

McKinney and Worth, who was McBride's partner in a Durango gun shop and private detective agency, were charged with violation of the Hobbs Act barring criminal interference with interstate commerce. They were jailed in Phoenix in lieu of \$1 million bond each.

FBI agents said Sunday they were continuing to investigate any relationships the suspects had with Gulf. Authorities have said they thought whoever planted the bombs at the \$1 billion, 1,100-acre facility, which is Gulf's largest chemical plant, had a detailed familiarity with the layout.

Gulf spokesman Kirk Vogeley said late Sunday there were no immediate plans to put the Cedar Bayou plant — where five bombs were found Thurs-

day — back into operation. The shutdown last Wednesday cost \$1.5 million, he said, and each day the huge petrochemical plant remains idle costs \$300,000.

"There is no schedule on starting the plant back up," he said. "We've found no more bombs, but we want to be absolutely sure of the situation before we bring our people back in and start operating again."

Four Gulf executives received letters Tuesday threatening to detonate 10 bombs in the plant if \$15 million was not paid by midday Sunday.

Five bombs were found and neutralized by FBI, Army and police bomb squads and Sunday's deadline passed without incident.

An FBI affidavit filed in

Phoenix federal court indicated the case began to unravel Friday when Gulf security chief Bob Quintana received a telephone call from a man identifying himself as one of the extortionists.

The caller told Quintana to fly to Phoenix, land at Sky Harbor Airport, rent a station wagon and proceed to a bowling alley in Fairlane Shopping Center in Tempe, Ariz., and wait at a pay telephone for another call.

Neither FBI nor Gulf spokesmen would say whether Quintana had carried \$15 million or any money with him to Arizona.

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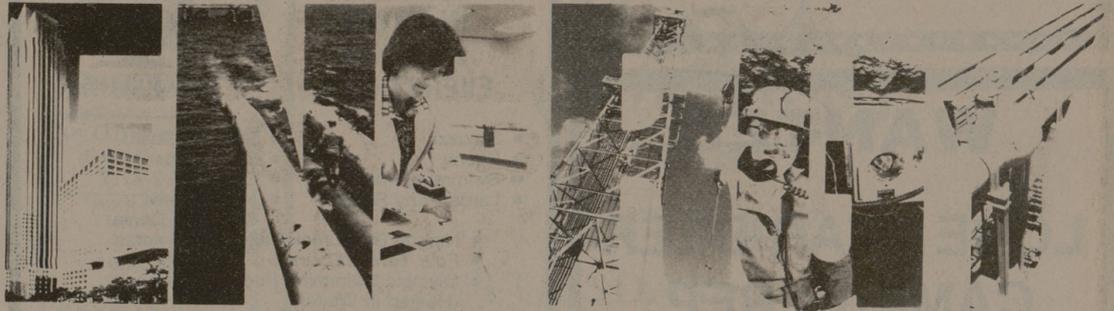
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