

# Red-hot creamery cools off summer

By RENEE HARRELL  
Reporter

Even the summer heat can't compare with the red-hot "little creamery in Brenham" this year. Blue Bell Creameries, Inc., in Brenham, is freezing plenty of ice cream this summer and proud of it.

The praises from "Blue-Bell-aholics," as one Houston man calls people like himself who are addicted to Blue Bell ice cream, keep coming. And every letter that is written to Blue Bell is answered. That's all part of keeping the "little creamery in Brenham" image.

When one woman from Michigan was asked what she liked the most about Texas, she replied, "Galveston, the Alamo and Blue Bell ice cream." Another girl from League City, Texas, wrote the following letter to Blue Bell:

"Dear Blue Bell,  
Your ice cream is so good my pup won't eat anything but your ice cream. Here is a picture of Toshie Lyn eating her dessert." (Of course, this doesn't mean that Blue Bell is going to the dogs.)

One of the latest Blue Bell flavors, caramel turtle fudge, came out in April.

"When we have a new flavor that comes out, we order the number of cartons we think we'll need," says Jennifer Hall Eckermann, Blue Bell's public relations assistant. "Caramel turtle fudge was so popular we ran out of cartons. We're going to bring it back at the end of August."

Honey vanilla, which uses honey as its only sweetener, came out last year. This flavor has all natural ingredients, Eckermann says.

Other new flavors include strawberry cheesecake, which came out in May and pinapples 'n' cream, which came out in June. Eckermann says the latest flavor, chocolate mousse, will be introduced in August.

The most popular flavors, as you might have already guessed, are homemade vanilla and cookies 'n' cream. And, no, Oreo cookies are not used in the cookies 'n' cream although they have been used in the past.

"Last year we started using our own Blue Bell cookies," Eckermann says. "We wouldn't have changed if it wasn't going to be the same or better."

Sales have increased this summer, Eckermann says.

"Sales usually pick up around spring," Eckermann says. "When it starts warming up, sales pick up. They usually continue real high until it starts to cool off."

Blue Bell has 16 flavors that are on the market all year.

"We average about 40 different flavors in all and that changes from year to year," Eckermann says. "We have about 36 flavors in the half gallons."

She says some flavors are seasonal and others are rotated year round.

Blue Bell is a regional brand, serving 87 counties in Texas and one in Oklahoma, which is serviced by the branch in North Dallas. Blue Bell also serves one parish in Louisiana.

Tours are a big part of the little creamery in Brenham. This year they've been an ever bigger part.

"Last year we had about 14,000 people tour the plant," Eckermann says. "As of June we've already had 13,500."

In the spring school groups and senior citizens tour the plant. In June, Eckermann says, there are usually vacationers. The plant employs four tour guides.

Wednesday afternoon, 17 soccer players from Scotland and their American hosts from Bryan were touring the creamery. After walking down long cold corridors, they were taken to a glassed-in walkway. From there, they could see a maze of mixing tanks, conveyor belts and pipes in large sterile rooms where the ice cream is manufactured. At the end of the tour, the visitors were given complimentary ice cream cones.

The Scots said Blue Bell ice cream was good. But, they also said it is hard to beat Scottish ice cream.

One of the Scots, Morgan Cassidy, said that cookies 'n' cream was his favorite. "It's good," Cassidy said. "That's all I have to say."

Chris Warren, one of the American hosts, said the new strawberry cheesecake flavor was his favorite.

"If you haven't eaten Blue Bell ice cream, you've missed it all," Warren said.



Photo by Shelley Hoekstra

Charlie Wilding, a senior finance major from Bryan, delves into an orange sherbet cone on a hot Wednesday afternoon. Wild-

ing said Blue Bell's chocolate marble is his favorite flavor, but the orange sherbet runs a close second.

# Ferraro blasts Reagan

United Press International

WASHINGTON — Democratic vice presidential nominee Geraldine Ferraro accused President Reagan Wednesday of shirking a duty to the needy while fueling "a national shopping binge" by letting the federal deficit mount.

"We don't need government on any citizen's back in America," Ferraro said, "but we do need government on every citizen's side."

She spoke to more than 2,000 state lawmakers in her first campaign speech since she was nominated for vice president by acclamation at the Democratic National Convention last week.

Before flying back to Washington, D.C., Ferraro also made a brief stop in Boston's largely Italian-American North End neighborhood, where she was greeted by a throng of cheering, flag-waving admirers in the shadow of the historic Old North Church.

Rep. Ferraro chose the occasion to lash out at Reagan's insistence at his Tuesday news conference that there is not "one single fact or figure" to prove he is unfair.

"There are some things that the president should be told," she said, reeling off the results of four studies showing otherwise.

She said a Congressional Research Service study released Wednesday showed 560,000 people dropped below the poverty line because of 1981 budget cuts in means-tested federal aid programs.

Another independent study by the General Accounting Office this year said cuts in welfare left 500,000 more families without benefits.

"This is not an attack," she said, to some laughter from the audience. "It's the facts, that's it."

She said the first thing Mondale would do as president would be to tackle Reagan's "greatest failure" — the \$180 billion federal deficit he promised to eliminate. Bitterly, she blamed Reagan's tax cuts and suggested the economic recovery is a sham.

## Today's Almanac

On this date in history:

In 1847, Liberia was declared a republic — at that time, the only sovereign black-ruled democratic nation in Africa.

In 1941, General Douglas MacArthur was named commander of U.S. forces in the Philippines.

In 1967, four days of racial rioting in Detroit ended with 39 dead.

In 1982, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi arrived in the U.S. to meet President Reagan, the first Indian head of state to do so in more than one decade.

A thought for the day: Aldous Huxley said "There is no substitute for talent."

# Contempt charges against parents dismissed

United Press International

HOUSTON — The Texas Court of Criminal Appeals in Austin Wednesday dismissed contempt of court charges against a Houston couple who refused to testify to a grand jury investigating their son in the shooting death of a female letter carrier.

Harris County District Attorney John Holmes said the ruling dealt a serious blow to the state's efforts to investigate the June 7 killing of postal carrier Debora Sue Schatz.

In a 6-0 opinion, with three judges not participating, the appeals court dismissed \$500 fines and indefinite jail terms assessed against Bernard and Odette Port, who were cited for contempt of court last month after refusing to testify before a grand jury investigating their son, David.

The 17-year-old high school ju-

nior is charged with murder in Schatz's death.

The court found fault with the contempt order and the way it was processed. It decided the case on procedural and jurisdictional technicalities, rather than ruling on defense requests to firmly establish whether parents can be forced to testify against their children.

Holmes said the ruling allows the Ports to snub justice.

"We still have options, but I think the practical effect of this is that the Ports have said to heck with you and gotten away with it," Holmes said.

Defense attorney Randy Schaffer had asked the court to use the case to decide on the existence of a parent-child privilege, much like a husband-wife privilege in which spouses do not have to testify against each other in most cases.

The court, however, declined to

*"Considering the alternatives, this is the best resolution at this point short of the court reaching a decision on the parent-child privilege."*

address the issue and instead focused on legal technicalities.

"Considering the alternatives, this is the best resolution at this point short of the court reaching a decision on the parent-child privilege," Schaffer said. "That is a constitutional question and they did not need to address that because they found other errors that precluded them from addressing the issue."

The court decided that the con-

tempt order was invalid because it held the Ports in contempt of the district court instead of the grand jury.

Holmes said the ruling contradicted previous rulings on similar cases.

"It is perplexing to us," he said. Both sides agreed, however, that the ruling left open the possibility for the state to pursue the Ports' testimony via other legal channels.

Holmes declined to reveal the state's strategy, but said the state was considering several options.

The grand jury considering the case expires next week. Holmes said the grand jury could be extended or the case could be presented to a second grand jury. If the Ports still refused to testify and the matter was sent back to the Court of Criminal Appeals, the earliest ruling on the issue could come in October — which

would push the state beyond the limits of the state Speedy Trials Act in prosecuting Port, Holmes said.

Regardless of the state's actions, Schaffer said the Ports are adamant in their refusal to testify against their son.

Port remains free on \$20,000 bond. The youth is named in a criminal complaint for murder, but he must be charged in an indictment or a felony criminal information before he can stand trial on the charge, Holmes said.

Meanwhile Wednesday, a small group of letter carriers staged a picket outside the downtown post office in request of an armed guard to accompany those who deliver mail in the Ports' neighborhood in west Houston.

Spokesman John Smith said the agency had studied the proposal but determined it unfeasible.

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