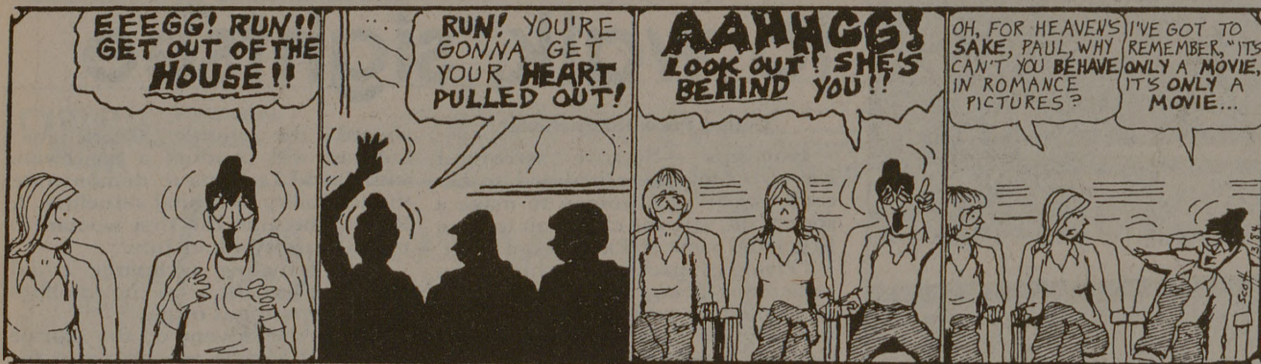


Warped

by Scott McCullar



A&M Agricultural economist studies Texas shrimp farms

University News Service
Smaller shrimp-farming operations don't have as great a chance for survival as the larger ones, says a Texas A&M University agricultural economist who is evaluating the economics of shrimp farming along the Texas Gulf Coast.

"The operations can be profitable, but they must be large," said Dr. Wade L. Griffin of Texas A&M's College of Agriculture. "Smaller operations aren't economically feasible based on the assumptions in my research."

"Shrimp farming is a potential new industry for Texas and is attracting a lot of new interest. It's not just landowners who are interested in converting their ranges into ponds," he added, "but entrepreneurs who don't own any land."

Griffin and other Texas A&M researchers are developing a simulation model which can provide prospective shrimp farmers estimates of output, per-unit costs of production and profits given certain knowns, such as the size of their facilities,

stocking rates and sizes, and the stage in the growing season.

Much of the work for the study, which is funded by the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration through Texas A&M's Sea Grant College Program, is performed by mariculture researchers with the Sea Grant program in Corpus Christi, Griffin said.

"We're looking at the status of the industry and will point to areas where shrimp farmers can get the most gain for the research dollar," Griffin said. "Very little is known about the feasibility of shrimp farming in Texas, and a small change in the operations can make a big change in profits. That's the bottom line — profits."

Griffin said while it is possible for shrimp farmers to raise two shrimp crops in a Texas growing season, it might be better to raise just one crop, especially when stocking shrimp that weigh less than a tenth of a gram.

"As shrimp grow larger the price

goes up," he said, "and one large crop of big shrimp will generally generate greater returns than two crops of smaller shrimp."

Successful facilities should have at least 250 surface acres of water, such as 10 25-acre ponds, to realize economies of size, said the agricultural economist, explaining that operating cost per unit of production are reduced with greater output.

The average per-acre investment cost for a 50-surface-acre facility is an estimated \$9,000, Griffin said, but with a 1,000-acre facility the per-acre cost of investment may be reduced to \$4,000. For the smaller facility, production cost is about \$6 per pound of shrimp, whereas with the larger system the average production cost would be about \$2.50 per pound, he said.

Griffin said while the economic analysis suggests the industry can be profitable, it doesn't take into account risks such as hurricanes and disease that can destroy a shrimp crop.

Texas man killed in accident

United Press International

FORT LUPTON, Colo. — Rescue workers using a crane took 12 hours Thursday to remove the body of a Texas man from the mangled wreckage of a twin-engine plane that crashed in a corn field.

A coroner's spokesman said the body of Wayne E. Carlson, 63, of Amarillo, Texas, was removed from the wreckage of the Cessna 421 about 6 p.m. The fuselage was so badly smashed that Carlson's body could not be removed with cutting torches, and a crane was used to pull the wreckage apart.

The bodies of two other victims, Beryle Brister, 56, and his son, Jerry, 30, both of Amarillo, were recovered from the wreckage Wednesday evening. Investigators determined neither of those men was the pilot, and returned to the crash site two miles northwest of Fort Lupton about 1 a.m. Thursday.

"After getting the first two bodies to the coroner, the sheriff found out they were not pilots," Weld County sheriff's Cpl. Mike Sykes said. "He figured, well, we've got to have a pilot here somewhere."

A fire department team cut into the twisted hulk and located Carlson's badly mangled body. The crane was brought in at daylight.

Eyewitnesses said the plane plunged into the ground about 5 p.m. Wednesday after one engine exploded in flight, tearing off a section of wing. Sykes said the plane hit the ground upside down, crushing the cockpit section.

A sheriff's spokesman said Carlson apparently had radioed for help shortly before the plane went down. The National Transportation Safety Board was investigating.

Around town

Science students must take exam

Any junior or senior in the College of Science who has not previously taken the English Proficiency Examination should plan to take the test Aug. 9 unless they have completed English 301 with a minimum grade of C. Students in the College of Science are required to pass either English 301 or the test in order to qualify as a degree candidate.

The English Proficiency Exam will be administered by the English Department. Students in the Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics and Physics Departments should register for the exam in 313 Biological Sciences Building before August 8.

Chamber sponsors computer seminar

The Small Business Council of the Bryan-College Station Chamber of Commerce will present a seminar on "Microcomputers in Small Businesses," Thursday at 7 p.m. in the Chamber of Commerce Building at 401 S. Washington. The cost is \$10 in advance and \$12.50 at the door. Please call the chamber office at 779-2278 for advance registration.

SPCA to hold dog bath and dip Sunday

The Brazos Valley SPCA will be having a dog dip on Sunday from 12 to 5 p.m. in the Manor East Mall parking lot. A flea dip will be given for a donation of \$3 and a bath and a dip for \$5. For further information, please contact the Brazos Valley SPCA at 779-6491.

Driving safety class offered

The Texas A&M After Hours Program will sponsor a driver safety course Aug. 3-4 and Aug. 10-11. This course may be used to have certain traffic violations dismissed and to receive a 10 percent discount on automobile insurance. Registration is from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. in 216 MSC. For more information, call 845-9352.

Police

(continued from page 1)

high. In 1982, 26 percent of officers who married before going into the field were divorced. The divorce rate among officers who married after going into the field was 11.2 percent.

McCoy said the relationship of stress to these problems can't be ignored.

But law enforcement officials can

learn to identify and control stress, McCoy said. For example, good nutrition and plenty of sleep can decrease the chances of stress-related illness.

"There's a heck of a lot to be said for meditation, or for just getting out and running around the block. It gives the body a chance to literally burn off stress."

McCoy teaches his classes the

techniques of self-hypnosis as a means of better coping with stress.

"We let them key in on their own particular fantasies and shut out the stress," he said. "Many of them don't realize how much stress they're under. The nature of their work is very stressful."

McCoy said that good communication skills are of the utmost importance in reducing stress. One of

the most important ways to cope with this problem is by talking about it, he said.

"Cops get very frustrated because there's often no one they can talk to," McCoy said. Officers often feel frustrated because they don't want to worry their families by discussing their experiences.

"The emphasis is on getting someone to talk to," he said. "A staff psy-

chologist is a damn necessity for every law enforcement agency."

Communication between officers and administrators is extremely important, McCoy said.

"Communication is often only one-way, from management to the officers, and many of them feel that they can't respond, which creates frustration."

Both McCoy and Stenning said

many state and national law enforcement agencies are aware of the problems presented by stress and are encouraging their employees to learn more about it. They emphasized being under stress doesn't necessarily detract from an officer's performance.

"Most cops are doing a great job," Stenning said. "Most of them are handling it."

Abandoned van yields cocaine valued at \$200 million

United Press International

HOUSTON — Two Highway Patrol officers at a roadside checkpoint found nearly half a ton of cocaine — valued at \$200 million — abandoned in a van, officials said.

The officers were checking drivers licenses at about 8:30 p.m. on Farm Road 2351 near suburban Pasadena at about 8:30 p.m., when a

van pulled to the roadside and stopped, said Department of Public Safety Capt. Jack Curtis.

"People will do that when they see a checkpoint sometimes, pull over and change drivers or whatever," Curtis said. "The officers were busy, and when they got a break, they went over and checked."

The troopers found the van aban-

"We weighed it, bags and all, and it came to 950 pounds. I can't remember a seizure that size in Texas."

donned, but inside they found 15 duffel bags full of cocaine.

"It was a complete surprise," he said.

"We weighed it, bags and all, and it came to 950 pounds. I can't remember a seizure that size in Texas," said Curtis, who has been a

narcotics officer 14 years.

Curtis said the street value of the cocaine was estimated at \$200 million.

"I don't know exactly what they'd be paying at the source, but that size loss is going to hurt somebody," he said.

He said a preliminary investiga-

tion revealed no clues as to the identities of the suspect or suspects. Officers were examining evidence into the night.

"We don't have a violator at this time, we'll be doing fingerprinting and tests on the cocaine and seeing where it came from," said Curtis.

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