



Hunting with Joe Commando

Living off land: fun of the sport

My dad said I had it. He could see it in my eyes — Buck Fever.

I thought the glazed look was from three tests the week before Thanksgiving.

I knew he was determined. I prepared myself to spend the entire holiday in the mesquite trees of west Texas.

I had proved myself a marksman early in life, but I hadn't been on an actual hunt since childhood. All I could remember was darkness in the early morning and cold, freezing cold.

I got home on Wednesday and Dad had already made a spot on the trophy wall for a new rack. I felt the obligation. Deep guilt would have followed.

I also had to stop the harassment from Mom and my sibling rivals.

"She won't go. The sales start this week."

"Four days without a shower? Where will she plug in the hot rollers?"

They almost got me with the soap operas, but All My Kids could make it without me a few days. I knew if Dad could rough it, so could I.

Dad excused himself from the turkey feast 32 minutes after we began. He returned to the living room, wearing your basic camo-everything. I was going out in the woods with Capt. Joe Commando. He shook his head at my purple sweats and Kaepas.

Six hours later when we arrived at the lease outside of Junction, I wondered if

Kathi Cook

I could still pitch a tent. I was surprised when a trailer appeared out of nowhere.

"Does Mom know about this?" I questioned, thinking about all the stories of barbaric living on these hunts.

"I think I mentioned it," he mumbled. "It only sleeps four."

The wind was howling and the temperature was dropping as we unpacked. Numbly, I wondered when the last death due to frostbite had been reported in the county.

I tried to count my toes through the three pairs of socks I was wearing. One, two, three...six. Close enough.

Capt. Joe Commando asked if I was really that cold?

I chattered out, yes. He produced an outfit similar to his. Same size, too. Men's large. I'm 5'2", but insulation is insulation. Green is not my color either, but I suffered.

Commando has slipped into the woods. He returned to open the trailer door and the electricity flickered. The light revealed a color television, (I knew Doug Flutie wouldn't do it without me), a bathroom, stove, oven and kitchen area. This I could handle. It was a little cramped, but it was inside.

I rolled out at 4:30 a.m. (That's usually before I roll in at school.) I was wired, but images of the brush blinds I had heard so many hunters moan about ran across my mind.

The blind was not a pile of sticks at all, but a little house on stilts. It was complete with windows, carpet, a swivel chair and a heater.

I sat there in total darkness trying to

put the chainsaw murders out of my mind. I made a mental list of the nifty equipment Commando had outfitted me with.

- hand-loaded bullets. Check.
- .243 rifle. Check.
- binoculars with zoom lens. Check.
- special nylon trigger-finger gloves. Check.
- flashlight. Check.
- plastic bag for deer and game. Check.
- plastic gloves for field dressing. Me? Joke, right? Check.
- knife. Check.

I was ready for the big kill.

I didn't get a deer. I saw several does, but the image of Bambi's dad telling Bambi his mother would never come back to the thicket wouldn't let me shoot one.

We stopped at a smokehouse in town where a deer Commando had bagged earlier was being processed.

In the meat locker, deer carcasses with beaming hunters hovering over their prizes filled the room. One hunter was offering to sell his deer.

"Hey, Dad," I started, "I could maybe see how much he wanted..."

I thought about the empty place on the wall and my family, waiting.

A scowl crossed Commando's face.

"No, Kathi," he said. "It just takes the fun out of the sport. It is just too civilized."

Kathi Cook is a junior journalism major.

How the Democrats can make it worse

By Arnold Sawislak
Columnist for United Press International

WASHINGTON — During the years that Franklin Roosevelt held the presidency, Republicans made things worse for themselves by embracing the position that FDR's personality was the reason he was beating them every time.

That certainly was one of the keys to Roosevelt's political success, but by seizing on it to explain all their troubles, the GOP crippled itself for more than two decades. Instead examining what they were doing wrong, Republicans spent the 1930s and 1940s snarling at FDR and his works.

(Wendell Willkie was an exception to this, but he was never accepted by the Republican establishment and was in effect drummed out of the party after his one shot at making it over in 1940.)

The question now is: are the Democrats repeating history in 1984?

The answer is yes if the party tries to explain its 1984 defeat as nothing more than a victory of personality for Ronald Reagan. If the Democrats tell themselves they did nothing wrong and nobody could have beaten the old smoothie in the White House, they will blow the chance to learn something from their loss.

Will Rogers has been quoted as saying he didn't worry as much about things people didn't know, as about things "they know for sure that are dead wrong."

This points toward several areas in which the Democrats might profitably spend their energy in the next few years.

They could examine the government policies they have been espousing. Are the programs of the New Deal, the New Frontier and the Great Society still valid? Are there better ideas that Democrats can offer?

They also could take a cold, hard look at the political strategies they have used

in the last half century. For one thing, here are just a few examples of Democratic political "truths" that might be worth examining.

The South is Democratic. Not in a national sense, it isn't. Most Southern state and local offices are held by Democrats, but the GOP has a virtual lock on its electoral vote in presidential elections. Yet Walter Mondale wasted a lot of time trying to woo Southern voters that never were within reach.

Big Labor has big political clout. AFL-CIO is a legitimate player in presidential politics, but it can't elect a president and if it appears to become a dominant factor in the effort, its support will hurt more than help. That seems to have happened to Mondale.

Women have untapped political power. The gender gap exists, but the difference in male and female opinion or the selection of a woman as a presidential candidate does not seem to win a presidential election. Reagan got a larger share of the men than of the women, but most important, he got more of each than Mondale.

Young people are natural liberals. Youth and liberalism no longer are synonymous. Young people seem interested primarily in making their own way rather than embarking on crusades. Reagan spoke to that interest; Mondale and Geraldine Ferraro seemed uninterested in it and spoke to the young people of the 1960s.

The ethnic vote is dependably Democratic. Italian, Polish, Irish or whatever Americans aren't automatic Democrats anymore and haven't been since the suburbs bloomed after World War II. Their grandparents might have been loyal to the party, but that was in the days of big city political machines and bosses. The Democrats have just managed to assimilate the fact that machines and bosses are gone and now must accept that so are the voters they controlled.

Hats can say much about their owners' personalities

The semester is almost over. It's almost time to relax, almost Miller Time. Take a break; quit reading about the murders and who shafted who.

It's time to be a little less serious. If you have a hat nearby, put it on. Now, go find a mirror and look at yourself. Ask yourself, "What does this hat mean to me?"

Have you ever taken a moment to consider the meaning of all the different kinds of hats that people wear around campus? Well, let's take a look.

Probably the most prominent hat worn around campus is the military pants' cuff that is cut off and sewn up on one end called the bider. The color of the braid on the bider is a status symbol among Corps members. Underclassmen just can't wait to wear a white-braided bider, meaning "watch out, I'm an upperclassman."

Along with the tent-looking biders comes the military olive-drab combat cap. What a combat cap on a supposedly peaceful campus means, I don't know. You figure it out.

Next in line has to be the golf cap. Do the donors of these caps wear them to promote a "prestigious" country club or what? Tell me quick, "Who cares?"

I have to admit I own a golf cap from the Meadow Brook Country Club in Rapid City, S.D. Did you know that's where the South Dakota mens' championship is played? One more time, "Who cares?"

Have you ever noticed how the football and baseball caps that people wear correspond with the hottest team going, and as soon as the team loses a couple of games, break out the bugles and play Taps. See-ya-later, Lastros or Disastros (or whatever you decide to call your ex-favorite team).

Another favorite hat around campus is the ever-present and illustrious cowboy hat. You can see all kinds. Dirty ones, clean ones, felts or straws, colors from pink to black, you name it, and sooner or later you'll probably see it.

Some cowboy hats are so dirty, you would think the owner has been using it to wipe his oil dip stick with. I've watched my brother take mud and dirt and rub it into the felt on purpose. I think he's trying to win a dirty hat contest or something.

Some cowboy hats are so trashed out with hat pins and feather hat bands that they look like something won at a circus

Dib Waldrip

carnival. I don't know what they supposed to mean either, but please give me a break.

You can also see funny looking French berets that appear to be some form of a hat that has been run over the five o'clock traffic.

Some folks wear caps with some lude phrase written across the front. It's too bad these folks don't realize how ignorant they appear wearing that trash.

Hats can be very personal and important to the owner. Some hats almost come security blankets for some folks really doesn't matter what anyone thinks about your hat. All that matters is what it means to you.

Merle Haggard was right when he sang, "I wear my own kind of hat."

Dib Waldrip is a junior journalism major.

LETTERS:

Beating Longhorns enough for Aggies

EDITOR:
Jackie and Team:
Who needs cotton anyway?
Thanks for beating t.u.

Steven R. Hart
accompanied by 117 signatures

Aggies love to hate Cassavoy

EDITOR:
First, I'd like to say a few words to the sports editor everyone loves to hate, Ed Cassavoy. Hey, Ed, do you remember last week when you picked Texas to beat our Aggies by 75 points? Do you? Well, you were wrong. You were off by exactly 100 points. Take your foot out of your mouth, eat your words, and resign your editorship, please. A bleeding-heart liberal two-percenter like you should have never landed the job in the first place.

Now that that's out of the way, I feel confident that I speak on behalf of the other ninety-eight percent of the student body when I say congratulations to Coach Jackie Sherrill and the Fighting Texas Aggie Football Team, especially the seniors. Your domination of Texas was the biggest A&M over t.u. point spread since 1925, and 37 points is the most ever scored by the Ags against the sips.

Let's make it a habit.

Adam D. Hartman, '87
accompanied by 20 signatures

EDITOR'S NOTE: Ed Cassavoy is no longer sports editor for The Battalion.

Starting with Monday's paper, he is The Battalion's city editor.

Aggie bonfire should be maroon

EDITOR:
If the Aggie bonfire is supposed to be the ultimate manifestation of Aggie Spirit, then why are the flames it produces orange (burnt orange, at that)? I would think that a chemistry department with people capable of finding an economical way of producing hydrogen or producing a dog comb that kills fleas could produce a chemical treatment that would cause the bonfire to burn deep maroon.

Frank Irwin, '81

Music critic should be more gracious

EDITOR:
To: Miss Katherine P. Hurt:
First of all I would like to know who gave you the power to be music critic for The Battalion. From reading your article it is obvious you have as much musical experience as my two-month-old nephew.

You must first realize that each individual vocal group is unique and outstanding in their own way. Vocal Music is an extra-curricular activity and the people in the groups are in them because they want to be. Many hours of hard work and practice go into each performance in order that we may share our special Christmas gift to you. My opinion is that you learn to accept gifts more graciously.

In closing, I would like to try one more time to wish you a Merry Christmas.

Mike Marino, '86

Dead Zips stomp pregnant woman

EDITOR:
As you know, there is an Aggie tradition called the Elephant Walk. This is supposedly for the graduating seniors to show that they are no longer an active part of A&M's 12th Man.

I believe that traditions are good things, as they give a certain spirit and unity to those involved. However, this particular one has gone too far.

I am a relatively new employee of Texas A&M and I am still learning about the traditions around here. Well, believe me, I learned about the Elephant Walk the hard way.

On my way back from lunch Tuesday, I was engulfed by these "dead elephants." I couldn't get away from them, and by the time it was all said and done, I had been hit by a flying toy pistol and pushed to the ground. That probably doesn't sound too bad, but considering that I'm 8 months pregnant, it certainly wasn't very good!

Now, I don't begrudge anyone a good time. However, when having a good time gets to the point of abandoning one's senses and pushing pregnant women around, then I think someone needs to step in and take a closer look at things.

Is this the kind of behavior our universities condone from the supposedly future leaders of our country?

Shree Crane

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Opinions expressed in The Battalion are those of the author or the editor, and do not necessarily represent the opinions of Texas A&M administrators, faculty or the Board of Regents.

The Battalion also serves as a laboratory newspaper for students in reporting, editing and photography courses within the Department of Communications.

Letters Policy

Letters to the Editor should not exceed 300 words in length. The editorial staff reserves the right to edit for style and length but will make every effort to maintain the author's intent. Each letter must be signed and include the address and telephone number of the writer.

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