

Weather forecaster predicts cold, wet east Texas winter

Associated Press
LUFKIN — The signs are all here, says G. W. Valentine — Lufkin is in for a cold, wet winter, possibly as severe as the winter of 1983, if not worse.
 Valentine, a forester whose hobby is predicting the weather by using animals and other signs of nature, has taught the skill 51 years ago by a uncle with more than 120 years of experience in his family. He was 94, an Indian, and very alert, Valentine said, and was known as the weatherman among the people in Cherokee County.
 In 1934, the old Indian, who himself had been forecasting for 64 years, started showing Valentine the signs — how the squirrels build their nests closer to the ground when a cold winter is coming and the moss in trees "knots up."
 "The squirrels will leave the hardwoods and get into the pines for more cover," Valentine said. He also said the animals' fur will be darker and thicker.
 Valentine makes most of his predictions about the winter months based on what he sees in August and September.
 "Anything that happens after Oct. 1 is not going to tell you much about your winter months," Valentine said.
 But when you see leaves curling in the middle of August and crickets and other bugs starting to seek indoor shelter in September, you know it's going to be cold, he said.
 "God has given them a sixth sense to take care of themselves," Valentine said. "They are not born in this world just to die."
 American Indians were the first weather forecasters, he said, and "percentage-wise, they are better than the National Weather Bureau."
 But people nowadays just aren't interested in perpetuating the art, Valentine said most of the oldtimers who did it for years are now dead and his own children do not share his fascination for forecasting.
 Some other weather indicators are tree bark, corn shucks, and veins in the leaves of trees.
 "Sycamores can tell you a whole lot," Valentine said. "They will put on an extra slough of bark when it's going to be cold." The color of the bark is also a sign, he said.

Slouch By Jim Earle



"I don't know why I can't lose weight — I've read all the books on exercise and diet."

Cisneros revives interest in regional airport

Associated Press
AUSTIN — San Antonio Mayor Henry Cisneros, reviving talk of a regional airport to serve San Antonio and Austin, is urging Austin officials to consider such a project.
 Cisneros told Austin delegates at a Chamber of Commerce meeting in San Antonio on Tuesday that a joint airport would be "instantaneous justification" for economic growth along Interstate 35 between the cities.
 "It would make the corridor a justifiable trading region in the eyes of the world," Cisneros said.
 Mayor Frank Cooksey of Austin, who attended the session but was not present for Cisneros' remarks, said he would request a meeting with Cisneros to discuss a joint airport.
 A joint airport has been mentioned for several years as a way to solve crowding problems at Austin's Robert Mueller Municipal Airport, but San Antonio officials had not encouraged the idea.
 Although Cisneros had said the joint facility was among his long-range goals, he told an Austin airport task force last year that Austin should not look on a joint airport as a solution to problems at Mueller.
 He said then that San Antonio would not need a new airport for 25 to 35 years. San Antonio just completed a \$110 million airport expansion.
 "The quickest way both of us can overcome our air traffic problems is with a combined effort," Cisneros said. "In Texas, Dallas is the hub, and it's difficult to get to San Antonio and Austin, and many corporations mentioned that in looking at this area for possible relocation."
 Cisneros said San Antonio and Austin need to encourage airlines to provide more direct flights between the two cities and such other major cities as New York, Chicago, Washington and San Francisco.

Friends

A&M Mentors hear student criticism

By KAREN KROESCHE
Reporter
 Amidst mounting assignments and numerous frustrations, students call their professors many things throughout the semester, but friend is not usually one of them.
 The Texas A&M faculty and staff members of the Mentors program would like to change that. Members hang signs on their doors with the Mentor logo to let students know they are available and willing to talk about anything.
 "We are faculty and staff members who would simply like to serve students as friends," Dr. Jim McNeal, coordinator for the Mentors program, says.
 The group met Wednesday evening to talk with students about ways the group can improve its services. Sophomore Camie Erickson, a bioengineering major, told the faculty and staff members that their major problem is a lack of exposure.
 "Most people don't know there's anywhere to go," Erickson said after admitting that she previously did not know the Mentors program existed.
 Dr. Bill Bassichis, an associate professor of Physics, agreed with Erickson, comparing the mentor to the Maytag Salesman, ready to serve people but lacking customers.
 "A lack of student participation is a major problem for us," he said. "It's a little disturbing to hear that people don't even know of our existence."
 Several suggestions were offered by the students who attended, including increasing public relations and informing students of the mentors' friendship policy.
 That policy, a willingness to listen, is the group's sole purpose, Bassichis said.
 The Mentors program originated in 1980, according to McNeal, with 25 to 30 members. Since then the group has grown to more than 300 participants and has been striving to reach out to the "lost and lonely" students on campus who have no one else to turn to, he said.
 McNeal, a marketing professor in the College of Business, stressed that the faculty and staff who volunteer as mentors do not try to act as professional counselors, but rather just make themselves available to students who want to talk.
 "We're not trying to take the place of anybody," he said. "We just want to be a friend."
 Mentors have many resources available to them, and one of their primary purposes is to let students know about people or programs that might be able to help them with their problems, McNeal explained.
 An article in the 1984-85 Enroll, a student handbook, described the group as "only one of many ways that TAMU faculty and staff demonstrate that they care about Aggies."

What's up

- Thursday**
TEXAS A&M EMERGENCY CARE TEAM: is meeting at 7 p.m. in 404 Rudder.
PHI LAMBDA UPSILON: is meeting at 5 p.m. in 229 Chemistry Building.
TAMU STUDENT ART FILM SOCIETY: is showing Pasolini's "The Canterbury Tales" at 7 p.m. in 103 Soil and Crop Sciences Building.
MSC TRAVEL: is meeting to have Aggeland pictures taken at 7 p.m. in the MSC lounge.
SOCIETY OF WOMEN ENGINEERS: is meeting at 7 p.m. in the Zachry lobby.
DELTA SIGMA PI: is meeting for elections at 9 p.m. in 150 Blocker.
TAMU SYMPHONIC BAND: is having its annual fall concert at 8:15 p.m. in Rudder Auditorium. Tickets are \$1 for students and \$3 for non-students.
INTRAMURALS: there will be an informational meeting for all basketball officials at 6 p.m. in 164 Read.
MSC CEPHEID VARIABLE: will show the movie "Things to Come" at 7:30 and 9:45 p.m. in 701 Rudder.
DANCE ARTS SOCIETY: will take yearbook pictures at 6:30 p.m. in MSC. Wear street clothes.
Friday
INTERVARSITY CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP: will have a banquet for graduating seniors at 6 p.m. in 206 MSC. Cost is \$10.
CO-OP STUDENTS REGISTRATION: Students scheduled to work on co-op in Spring 1986 must register now for their co-op course in the Central Co-op Office in 107 Harrington. For students who do not yet have their co-op job assignments finalized, co-op registration will continue through December 13.
Items for What's Up should be submitted to The Battalion, 216 Reed McDonald, no less than three days prior to desired publication date.

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