

## State and Local

# Holiday parade draws crowd in spite of tornado watch, rain

By Drew Leder  
Staff Writer

In spite of a tornado watch, occasional showers and a temperature that didn't exactly lend to the Christmas spirit, the Brazos County Chamber of Commerce Holiday Parade proceeded on schedule Sunday to the cheers of onlookers lining Texas Avenue.

Even Santa Claus braved the cloudy skies as he descended by parachute onto the Texas A&M Polo Field to mark the beginning of the parade.

The Confederate Air Force appeared with six planes flying in pairs, and although appearing a little later than scheduled, a hot-air balloon hovered over the area of the Texas Avenue-University Drive intersection.

The procession of floats, cars, mopeds, horses, bands and waving participants began their 2.1 mile trek down two lanes of Texas Avenue from the main entrance of campus to Villa Maria Road at 3 p.m. The last of the 122 participating organizations filed onto the track at 4:30 p.m.

Although 20 scheduled entrants didn't show up for the parade, Kim Autrey, a Chamber of Commerce employee who helped organize the parade, said she was pleased, considering the weather, with the turnout of participants and spectators. Autrey said the parade — the largest ever scheduled — came off without a hitch except for one stinky situation.

"The biggest problem is that a lot of people (with horses) don't have pooper scoopers," she said.

The Ross Volunteers were the first of the nearly 3,000 paraders to march along the wet avenue, spinning their weapons as they walked. Close behind, members of the Texas Aggie Band filed by to the sound of marching music.

Miss Texas A&M Melinda Fritz was perched on the back seat of a convertible, draped in a full-length gown with crown on head, smiling and waving.



Local children ride a float on Sunday.

Photo by Sam B. Myers

Many local politicians also trailed along, like state Sen. Kent Caperton of Bryan, College Station Mayor Larry Ringer and Bryan Mayor Marvin Tate.

Most of the organizations in the parade were judged by local members of the media on the creativity and overall appeal of their entries. The \$100 grand prize went to a city of College Station float that featured a huge papier-mache cat sticking its nose against a cage housing two obviously happy goldfish.

A group of postal workers dressed as letters took first place in the marching units category while the A&M Consolidated High School Band came away with the grand prize in the musical competition.

As would be expected at a holiday parade, the traditional Christmas theme was evident in several of the entries. There was a live manger scene, an old-time Christmas scene complete with tree, presents and eager children and a towering green grinch who didn't appear to be thrilled with a role in a Christmas parade. There was even a "Santa Claws," presented by Red Lobster, with pinners for hands. And, of course, the "real Santa" made an appearance on one of the floats.

Besides the usual holiday paraders, there were some participants that normally aren't associated with a holiday festival. Car club members cruised by in their holiday-decorated low riders,

blaring rock 'n' roll on the radio. Children marched to the rhythm of "just say no to drugs" and McGruff, the crime dog, sang anti-drug songs of cheer.

Like many of the onlookers, Bryan resident Bob Taylor and his young son Sean stuck out the brief rain shower at the beginning of the parade and sat along the curb for the duration. Taylor said the parade was worth getting a little wet.

"We're out here having some fun," he said. "I think the parade is great."

Sean also said he enjoyed the procession, but for him, seeing Santa was the best part of the day.

# Arab-Americans can influence U.S., speaker reports

DALLAS (AP) — Arab-Americans in recent years have exercised some influence in the United States, helping to overcome stereotypes, said a speaker at the 19th annual convention of the United Holy Land Fund.

"I think that up until five years ago, Arab-Americans had no influence in this country," Suhail Miari, president of the United Holy Land Fund, said Saturday.

"However, five years ago, Arab-Americans realized they have to organize somehow, through local clubs or national organizations," Miari said.

The three-day conference, which focused mainly on the plight of the Palestinians, was organized by the fund, a non-profit organization that solicits donations to help Lebanese and Palestinian families.

Mohamed Ghanayem, a spokesman for the group's Dallas chapter, said the fund last year raised more than \$250,000 to support health, social and educational institutions.

"We have active people, committed people, who, whether they are Palestinian, American or Arab-American, believe in helping the Pal-

estinian people financially as well as morally since these people have been subjected to negative measures," Miari said.

"I think we are a newly-emerging group trying to ameliorate the situation, to improve upon the image of Arab-Americans as camel-riders, women chasers, and money or war-mongers," Miari said.

Don Betz, dean at Northeastern Oklahoma State University, one of the non-Arab speakers and a long-time supporter of efforts to aid Palestinians, said such stereotypes rob people of the perspective they need to make astute political decisions.

The progress being made by Arabs toward assimilation into the American political system was equated by Miari with that of other ethnic groups.

"We are newly emerging on the American scene," he said.

Hassan Abdul-Rahman, a representative of the Palestinian Liberation Organization in the United States, said, "One can easily say there is increasing activism of Arab-Americans in the United States. They are becoming more involved in the American political process."

# Jackson says press labels him as loser despite polls

AUSTIN (AP) — Democratic presidential candidate Jesse Jackson says reporters too frequently classify him as a candidate who cannot win.

After a Saturday speech to a Texas Democratic Women's forum, Jackson said that even news stories about his strong showing in some polls sometimes label him a loser.

"There is a slant or a slander, a media slander, that I've learned to wear on my back," Jackson said. "No matter how well I'm doing it is said, 'But he can't win.'"

Jackson, Tennessee Sen. Al Gore and Massachusetts Gov. Mike Dukakis all brought their presidential campaigns to the Saturday forum that drew a crowd of 650.

Jackson told the audience, "You want a leader? You want a choice? You want a change? Here am I. If I can win, every Democrat can win because never again will race and sex and religion and excessive military appetite be a prerequisite for winning."

Jackson, Tennessee Sen. Al Gore and Massachusetts Gov. Mike Dukakis all brought their campaigns to the forum that drew a crowd of 650.

# STUDY BREAK

**FREE**

**BUY ONE PIZZA... GET ONE FREE!**

Buy any size Original Round pizza at regular price, get identical pizza FREE! Carry Out Only.

**Little Caesars Pizza**

B-M-12-7

Exp. 1-11-88

Save \$6<sup>18</sup>  
**TWO LARGE PIZZAS**

"with everything"  
10 toppings for only

**\$11<sup>99</sup>** plus tax  
Reg. \$18<sup>97</sup>

Good Mon.-Wed. Only  
Valid with coupon at participating Little Caesars. One coupon per customer. Carry out only.

Toppings include pepperoni, ham, bacon, ground beef, sausage, mushrooms, green peppers, onions. Anchovies and hot peppers upon request.

**Little Caesars Pizza**

B-M-12-7

Exp. 1-11-88

VALUABLE COUPON

With all the studying you have, you're entitled to a break. At Little Caesars you always get two pizzas, but you pay for only one.

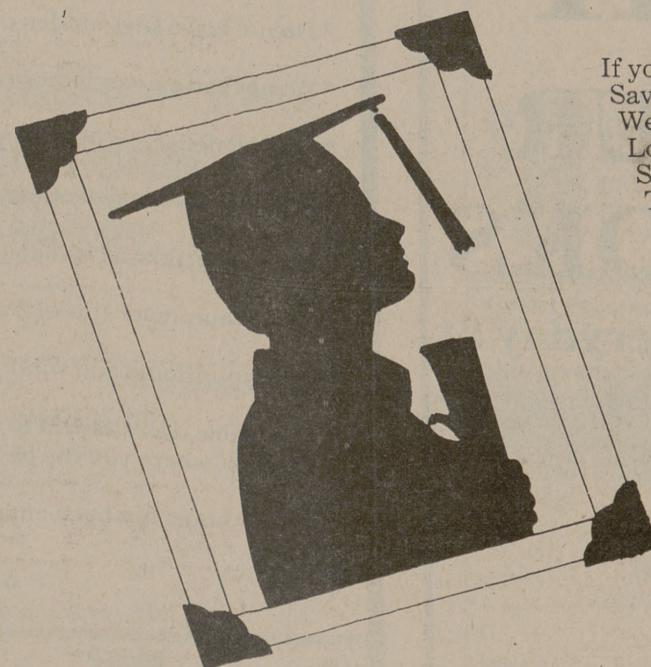
**Norhtgate** 268-0220  
**College Station** 696-0191  
**Bryan** 776-7171  
University & Stasney Outdoor Seating  
SW Parkway & Texas  
E. 29th & Briarcrest

**Little Caesars Pizza**  
© 1984 Little Caesar Enterprises, Inc.

## Ask About Our New 3-Day Loan Approval

FIRST FEDERAL STUDENT LOANS

Help for the high cost of higher education.



If you want to go to college, First Federal Savings & Loan Association wants to help. We offer Federally Guaranteed Student Loans administered by the Texas Guaranteed Student Loan Corp. to qualified students. The interest rate is currently 8%, far below current market loan rates, and you have up to 10 years to repay your loan. Plus, with our new application and processing procedures, we can now provide three day approval on your loan. Learn more about our guaranteed student loans. Information and loan applications are available now at First Federal.



**First Federal**

Savings & Loan Association of Beaumont  
409/268-8675  
3608 East 29th St.  
Bryan, TX 77805

An equal opportunity lender.