

# Schools prepare students now for 'expected' college careers

GROOM (AP) — In this largely rural community in Carson County, teachers are preparing to send Travis Britten off to college.

But first, they've got to get him to second grade. Travis, 6, began first grade this month. In Groom, teachers said they work their lessons around the idea that the student is college bound.

Most of the time, they're right. "That's the way I teach my English IV class," Janetta Lamb, a room teacher, said. "They're college bound."

All 15 of the students who graduated from Groom High School in May have enrolled in college.

Principal Kenneth Sweatt said he is not surprised by the high percentage of students continuing their education.

"We'll be close every year," he said. "The community puts quite an emphasis on education. It's expected. Most of them go to school somewhere."

According to Sweatt, the graduating class comes close to 100 percent each year.

Stability, he said, is one of the key factors, with most students spending all 12 years in the Groom system.

Also, most of the teachers in the system have been teaching in Groom or several years, Sweatt said.

Judy Babcock, a Groom teacher

and administrative assistant who handles college counseling, said that going to college has become "the thing to do" among graduates in the community.

"The fear is that if they don't go, they're not going to have anything to do," she said.

Small schools, she said, seem to have an advantage in preparing students for college.

"Since there are just 15 students, it's easier for me to keep an eye on each one," Babcock said. "They don't get lost in the shuffle."

Sweatt said he believes a higher percentage of students from rural communities go on to college than do their metropolitan counterparts, in part, because vocational opportunities are not available at the smaller schools.

Officials from area districts of similar size agreed that rural district students were more likely to at least attempt higher education.

"We have this trend, too," Don Johnson, Channing High School principal, said. "We have a high, high percentage that go to college."

Johnson said that of last year's 12 graduates, 11 went on to college and one entered the military.

"We try to prepare them for college. Here in our neighborhood, there's not a lot for them to come back to."

Bill Mayfield, superintendent of Happy Schools, said that most students in his district attend college, but attributed it to the work of the schools.

"I think in a lot of cases they have more counseling in that area," he said.

Miami Superintendent Allan Dinsmore said that rural students in this area seem college-oriented, but that it is not a universal trait among small districts. He said the lifestyle and economic condition of the people in the community seem to be the determining factor.

"In Miami, the community and the people in the community value a good education," Dinsmore said. "They're willing to put forth the effort in materials and time."

In Groom, Lamb said students realize few opportunities exist in small towns.

"They see that there's nothing for them here and they've got to get away," she said.

Sweatt maintains that Groom educators do nothing out of the ordinary to direct students toward colleges and universities, but points to the newly adopted school motto as an example of the district's philosophy.

A sign outside the school reads, "Excellence Now. A commitment to the future."

Sweatt said, "I think we have an excellent little school system here."

## New Miss America: winning 'not luck'

ATLANTIC CITY, N.J. (AP) — Newly crowned Miss America Gretchen Elizabeth Carlson, a classical violinist and Stanford University student with hopes of law school, said Sunday she plans to become a corporate executive.

"I'm definitely an overachiever," she told reporters.

"This wasn't luck," Carlson, who entered in the pageant as Miss Minnesota, said of her selection as Miss America 1989. She added that she is not superstitious and brought no good-luck charms to the pageant.

Carlson, 22, of Anoka, Minn., performed a spirited violin solo titled "Gypsy Airs." She has been studying violin for 17 years, winning national and state competitions and performing a solo with the Minnesota Orchestra.

After winning a preliminary talent competition last week, she confidently told reporters parts of her performance were "exquisite."

Pageant officials took pains this year to emphasize that the judges were looking for an "articulate, educated, dynamic role model" and not a beauty queen.

Carlson was crowned early Sunday by her predecessor, Kaye Lani Rae Rafko. The selection of Miss America 1989 was delayed almost 12 minutes when judges had to cast new ballots to break a tie for second runner-up.

During the delay, Carlson said, "I'd lost confidence . . . I really thought it was all over at that point. I saw a judge look down at a book and look at a picture and shake their head and I thought, 'Oh, no, it's me!'"

Carlson is several credits away from graduating from Stanford with a degree in organizational behavior. She said she would like to attend Harvard Law School and become a successful corporate executive.

For the next year, she will tour the country promoting not only the Miss America scholarship program but also the products of the pageant's corporate sponsors, including underwear, orange juice, pantyhose and hair coloring.

Rafko, a registered nurse, used her reign to promote the nursing field.

Carlson said she would like to focus on "education for the children of tomorrow." Specifically, she would like to see children receive more education on values, teaching children to be "less narcissistic."

"Today children tend to be more in love with themselves instead of being in love with other people," she said.

When asked what kind of Miss America she would make, Carlson laughed and replied: "A short one." She stands 5-foot-3.

Carlson, a green-eyed blonde of Swedish descent, admitted she lightens her hair with hair coloring but said contestants should not be allowed to change their bodies through cosmetic surgery, as some have.

Carlson also said she would like to see the Miss America pageant include a scholarship category. The competition now has talent, swimsuit, evening gown and interview categories.

## Dukakis tries improving defense issue image

Associated Press

Michael Dukakis, criticized for failing to spell out clearly his defense policy, conferred with Democratic congressional leaders Sunday on an offensive to improve his image. Running mate Lloyd Bentsen accused republican George Bush of kowtowing to the hard right in his choice for vice president.

While the Democratic ticket ended to campaign duties, Bush and his running mate, Sen. Dan Quayle of Indiana, spent a quiet day together, gathering their families for an informal lunch at the vice president's residence in Washington.

Bush planned to resume campaigning on Monday when he travels to New Jersey and Illinois.

Dukakis, who has taken a more aggressive stance in recent days, poked with congressional leaders in Boston about his image on national security and foreign policy issues and promised to restate my positions carefully this week.

The Democratic presidential nominee criticized President Reagan for his veto of a defense authorization bill that had bipartisan support,

and faulted the administration for its handling of the defense procurement scandal.

Dukakis suggested that the administration is searching for scapegoats instead of solutions to influence-peddling and the exchange of secret information at the Pentagon.

"What you see here is an example of the way we're going to make national security policy beginning in January 1989," Dukakis said.

The GOP nominee, dogged by questions last week after a defender of a former U.S. citizen convicted in Israel of war crimes resigned as co-chairman of his campaign's organization for ethnic groups, faced new criticism on Sunday in light of a published report about a man he appointed to a Republican National Committee job.

The Washington Post reported that Frederic V. Malek, whom Bush picked to manage the Republican National Convention and who later moved to the RNC deputy chair's post, had compiled figures in 1971 on the number of Jews among top officials in the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

## USS Texas ready for restoration

HOUSTON (AP) — The USS Texas has sat rusting in its muddy berth on the Houston Ship Channel for more than four decades, but as early as December the historic battleship will be towed to a dry dock where a \$13.5 million restoration effort will begin.

The Texas' once-busy gang plank is gone and deck stands empty after officials closed the stern of both world wars to prepare for the repair work.

The effort is meant to restore the ship to the overnight condition of the days when its 14-inch guns bombarded Iwo Jima and Okinawa. The USS Texas is the lone survivor of the pre-World War I dreadnought class of vessel named for the first battleship that was the first high-powered warship in the world.

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department spokesman Jim Eaves said the 74-year-old ship and naval museum will never again be seaworthy. But historians and others who called for major re-

pairs are pleased that the ship will be preserved for future generations.

"We have a unique piece of history," said Bernard Olive, a Baytown firefighter who founded the First Texas Volunteers, a battleship restoration group. "All of us should be proud that she's going to be restored."

"What gets me is sometimes people in the Houston area don't realize how gallantly she did serve in two world wars," Olive said. "She fought in North Africa, Europe and the South Pacific. She was a real workhorse."

Officials plan for tugboats to push the 34,000-ton vessel from its berth sometime in December and take it to a shipyard for repairs. While in dry dock, crews will restore the ship's hull, deck and masts, as well as repaint its gray hull navy blue — its World War II color.

Once completed, two-thirds of the ship's seldom-seen compartments, including the boiler room, dentist's office and officers' living quarters

will be open to the public, Eaves said.

A Houston company has already been working under a state contract to rig the ship with hoses and lines so workers can remove flammable oil residue from its 93 fuel tanks. The 573-foot-long ship, with its 12-story-high conning tower, cannot be towed until numerous leaks are welded.

In December, 1.7 million gallons of seawater and oil were pumped out, refloating the "Mighty T" for the first time since 1948.

Eaves said the liquids were used to settle the ship in its berth, but enacted a toll over the years. "The decision was made in good faith back then, but it hasn't helped in preserving her," he said.

Crews will soon begin dredging mud and silt to clear the way for the ship's scheduled departure and its expected return in late 1989.

After the first phase of the restoration project is complete, the Texas will return to an expanded and refurbished berth at San Jacinto State Park.

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