

# Scientists: Africanized bees should reach U.S. by 1990

WESLACO (AP) — Swarms of potentially aggressive Africanized bees should reach the United States by early 1990, a scientist reported Wednesday.

Other researchers at the American Bee Research Conference reported that the bees are not losing their African genes as they edge their way northward.

The bees are moving north at the rate of about 300 miles per year, Jose Villa of the U.S. Department of Agriculture said at a conference at Texas A&M University's Agricultural Experiment Station 12 miles from the Mexican border in the Rio Grande Valley.

Villa, with the USDA's Agricultural Research Service in Baton Rouge, La., described the bees' movement as "a very dilute front that increases density through time."

Scientists have been concerned since the accidental release in 1956 of 20 to 30 swarms of African bees in Brazil. In colonies, Africanized bees tend to be more

defensive of their hives and will more aggressively attack humans and pursue them for longer distances than the European bees common in the Americas.

Their aggressive behavior has earned them the nickname "killer bees." Scientists say the Africanized bees' behavior makes it difficult for beekeepers to raise them commercially.

The Africanized bees have steadily moved toward the United States, and two years ago were first spotted in the southern Mexican state of Chiapas, Villa said.

He projected that the African-derived bees will reach Brownsville at the southern tip of Texas by March 1990.

Bee researchers and the bee industry in the United States have long assumed that the African genes would be diluted as they mixed with the European variety.

But Glenn Hall, a bee researcher at the University of Florida, reported studies of

bees in South America and Mexico showing that the African variety in the wild retains its genetic integrity.

"These findings are truly phenomenal and they are conclusive," Hall said.

The bees had virtually a total absence of European mother lines after 1,000 generations, Hall said, adding he prefers to call the wild swarms "African-derived" rather than Africanized.

Orley Taylor, an insect ecologist at the University of Kansas, said researchers do not know why the genetic makeup of the Africanized bees is not diluted more, as beekeepers had hoped.

"This African population ... is rapidly reproducing and truly self-sustaining," Taylor said.

"This African population is going to reach the U.S. virtually unchanged," Taylor said. "It's going to keep coming at us no matter what we do."

# Candidates defend stances on insurance, AIDS issues

Here is a look at the presidential candidates' positions on uninsured people and AIDS.

## The Uninsured

Dukakis, calling it a disgrace that the United States is the only industrialized country other than South Africa without universal health insurance, proposes to help 22 million of the uninsured by backing legislation to order all but the smallest employers to arrange health insurance.

Dukakis has also called for a \$100 million program to provide medical and nutritional care to 200,000 pregnant women who lack insurance or Medicaid coverage.

"I want to make sure that quality, affordable health care is the birthright of every family and citizen in this land," said the Massachusetts governor, whose state last April began requiring health insurance with most jobs.

While Dukakis has said this requirement would not cost the federal Treasury anything, Bush has labeled it a \$35 billion tax on business that could force thousands out of work.

The vice president said he wants to allow poor people to buy into the \$32 billion Medicaid program, which now covers 24 million of the needy.

He has not offered all the specifics, but Bush promises to press for mandatory Medicaid coverage for all children living in poverty, starting with infants.

The Republican would phase in affordable coverage for pregnant women and infants up to 185 percent of the poverty line, and eventually cover older children as well, according to a position paper.

Medicaid now covers less than half of all poor children, leaving 11 million unprotected.

But expanding Medicaid will not be cheap.

It is estimated that it would cost \$8 bil-

lion to \$9 billion to cover all uninsured poor people.

## AIDS

Bush said "we may have to spend even more" than the current \$1 billion budget for the fight against the deadly virus, but "money alone won't stop AIDS." He said education is crucial, including giving students the facts in a thoughtful, sensitive manner.

Bush supports legislation that would make it a crime to discriminate against AIDS patients and those infected with the virus. He said AIDS test results must be kept appropriately confidential.

Dukakis also supports a \$1 billion-plus AIDS research and education budget.

"As president, I will educate the public about both the facts and the myths of this terrible disease," he said. Children should be taught about the disease as part of a comprehensive health education program beginning in the early grades.



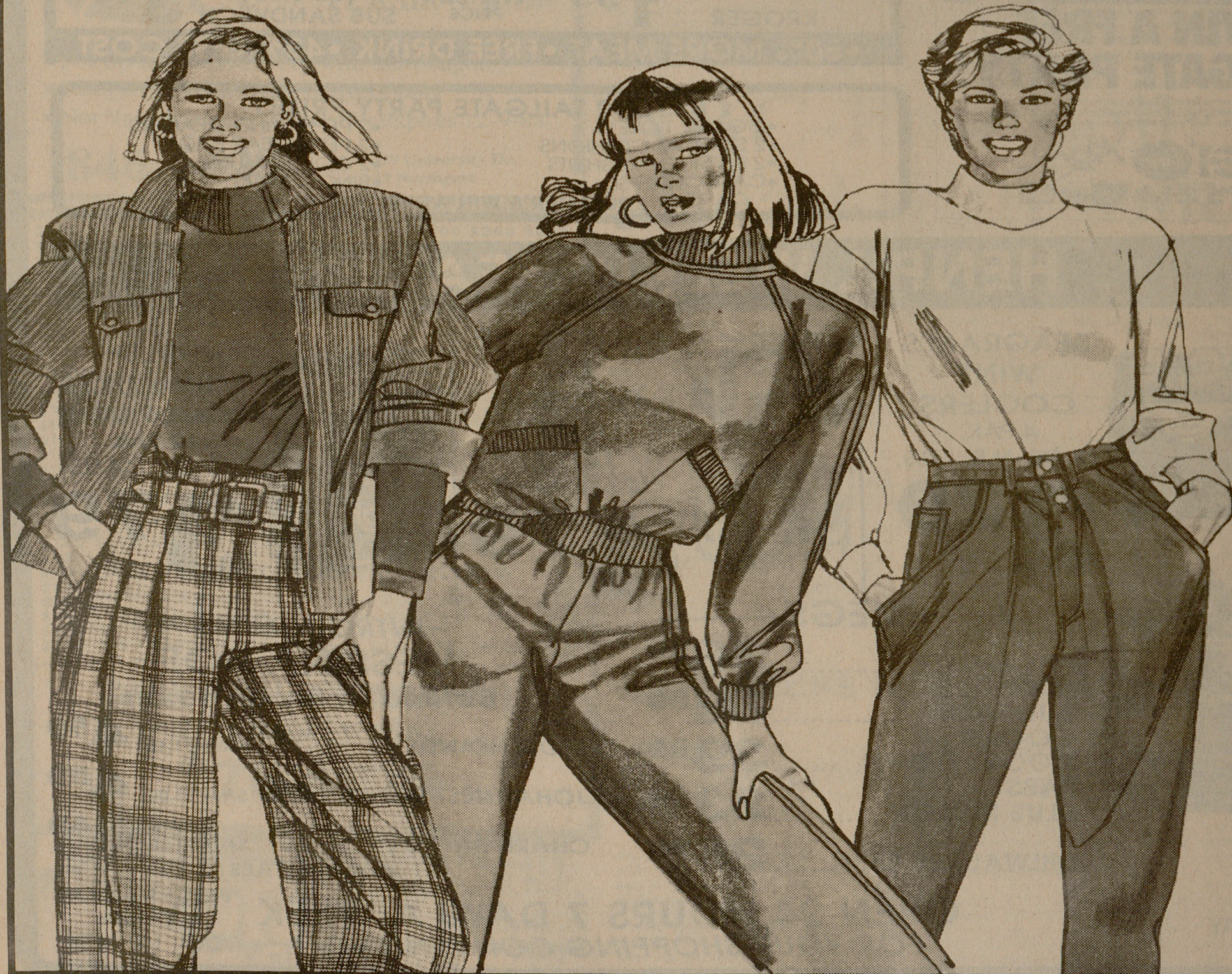
## Step by step

Wayne Mann, a senior horticulture major, checks his degree plan on the steps by the administrative offices in the Horticulture and Forestry Science Building Monday.

Photo by Phelan M. Egan

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