

'Shooting' animals at livestock show

A&M grad mixes veterinary medicine, photography at rodeo

By Sharon Maberry

STAFF WRITER

Photography and veterinary medicine don't have much in common. But one Houston man splits his time doing both.

Dr. Frank Martin, one of three official veterinarians for the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo, also shoots and develops most of the publicity photos for the event.

Martin began his photography career in 1974 as a Texas A&M freshman when he volunteered to take pictures at the Houston show, he said.

"I've worked as a volunteer for the stock show ever since," he said. "I walk around and take pictures of livestock or rodeo performances or anything else that seems interesting."

Martin entered A&M's College of Veterinary Medicine in 1976 and graduated three years later.

"In 1985, the administration decided a vet was needed in the Astrodome at all times during rodeo action and they hired me," Martin said. "My job as photographer kind of went along with everything else."

Martin said he processes and prints all his photographs, which the Houston press office keeps on file for use during the year and for publicizing the next year's show. He said the show receives about 1,200 requests each year from publications for pictures of specific events.

"It serves as a tremendous source of goodwill for the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo that you couldn't buy for any price," Martin said. "We send my pictures to different newspapers and a large percentage of them are run."

"They're also used for other purposes. For instance, an airline in Houston might want some shots of the rodeo in January. The press office can send them some of the pictures I took at last year's show."

"I've been told that one of my photos is in the current edition of World Book Encyclopedia."

As an official veterinarian for the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo, Martin examines rodeo animals before and after each performance for injuries or other problems.

"One rule we've enforced is not allowing indiscriminate use of electric shocks on rodeo animals," Martin said. "Some rodeos allow a lot of that, but we reserve the shocks for animals refusing to come out of a chute. An animal staying in a chute once it's open creates a dangerous situation for the animal and the rider."

Martin also oversees a livestock drug-testing program initiated at Houston this year to test sale animals for drug residues. The program is a result of random drug testing at last year's show, which indicated a problem with drugged livestock.

"We're the first livestock show to implement any sort of drug-testing program," Martin said.

Although the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo is a major part of Martin's life, it generally occupies him for only a few months each year, he said.

"In real life, I do some mobile (veterinary) work," he said. "Although I primarily practice on large animals, I also do some small animal work for elderly people or for those who can't afford to bring their animals to a clinic."

Martin said he wouldn't want to choose between veterinary medicine and photography.

"I like to do them both," he said. "I used to wonder if people would think I was wasting my veterinary education with photography. About a month before graduation (from vet school), one of my professors asked if I planned on continuing photography. I thought, 'Here it comes. He's going to tell me what a mistake it would be.'"

"But he really surprised me. He said he hoped I'd continue photography because I have a talent that shouldn't be wasted. Ever since then, I haven't worried about it anymore."

In Advance

Aggies go off campus for '90-'91 class ball

The Classes of '90 and '91 will have a semi-formal combined ball at the University Inn Friday from 8:30 to 12:30.

This is the first time the ball will be off campus.

Tracy Hammerstein, Class of '90 Ball Chairman, said, "Lately, the Class Ball attendance has not been as great as it was years ago. We thought it (being off campus) would attract more people."

Tickets are \$12 per couple or \$7 per person and are available in both the MSC and the Quad between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. this week.

Door prizes are to be given away at 1:30 p.m. Friday at Rudder Fountain. Those who have purchased their tickets will be eligible. Prizes include a limousine for the night.

Meeting to be held to discuss class agents

A mandatory meeting for May, August and December graduating seniors interested in seeking election to class agent for the Class of '89 will be Thursday at 6:30 p.m. in the Clayton Williams Alumni Center.

Requirements, qualifications and duties of class agents will be discussed by Bob Epstein, Class of '44, Association of Former Students vice-president for class activities, and Jim Jeter, Class of '70, associate executive director of the Association.

Voting is scheduled for the annual spring induction banquets sponsored by the Association April 4 and 5.

Seniors unable to attend the meeting may contact Katy Bradberry in the Class Programs Office at 845-7514.

Class agents serve five-year terms as members of the Association's Council. Class members elect one to three agents every five years to act as liaison between the class and the Association.

Distillery flash fire kills one, injures 2 at Port Arthur plant

PORT ARTHUR (AP)—Investigators Tuesday were trying to determine the cause of a flash fire that swept through a Fina Oil and Chemical Co. crude distilling unit killing one and injuring two others.

Killed in the early Tuesday morning fire was Albert J. Gage, 36, of Orange, said Capt. Ken Duhon with the Jefferson County Sheriff's Department.

Molly Toups, 30, of Beaumont, was admitted for observation at Park Place Hospital and was listed in stable condition, hospital spokesman Wendi Romero said Tuesday afternoon.

A third employee, Jimmy Womack, 32, of Port Arthur, was treated for minor injuries and released, Fina spokesman Hood Barnwell said.

The fire occurred shortly before 4

a.m., a fire department dispatcher said.

The fire was quickly extinguished by plant personnel and local firefighters did not have to respond, the dispatcher said.

Seven employees were on duty at the outdoor unit when the fire erupted, Barnwell said.

The unit will be shut down while damage is assessed, he said.

"I'm not sure what the employees were doing at the time, or why these particular people were injured," Barnwell said. "That will come out in our investigation."

The plant, owned by Dallas-based Fina, employs 450 people and produces about 110,000 barrels of oil per day, he said.

Operations were continuing Tuesday in other areas of the plant, Barnwell said.

Inmates make license plates by millions

HUNTSVILLE (AP)—Texas prison inmates last year stamped out 3.5 million license plates and printed more than 20 million annual license plate validation stickers, according to the Texas Department of Corrections 1988 annual report.

The items are among hundreds of thousands of products turned out by 29 prison factories and detailed in the report released this week.

The license plates and stickers are made at the 2,300-inmate Wynne Unit near Huntsville.

Other totals of products for the fiscal year ending Aug. 31, 1988 as listed in the report include 24 million yards of cloth produced at textile mills for manufacture of inmate clothing and 600,000 towels.

Garment factories at four prisons assembled 2.4 million items, including flags, janitorial bags, gloves, sheets and drapes.

At the Beto I Unit, inmates made 600,290 signs for state roads and highways, 207,746 reflectors and 444,075 letters and numbers.

The Central Unit turned out 2.56 million pounds and 870,443 gallons of soaps, detergents and wax products.

And the woodworking factory at the Ellis I Unit made 10,082 floor and janitorial brushes and mops along with 3,200 furniture items for offices and living quarters for state agencies.

In a letter to Gov. Bill Clements, Board of Corrections Chairman Charles Terrell said the highlights of the year were the winding down of the federal monitoring of the prison system and the start of the largest construction program in the history of the department.

"After 15 years of litigation and the threat of contempt findings as little as two years ago, this confirms the tremendous progress toward compliance with the court orders," Terrell said of the decision by a federal master to call for a final report in 1990 in the landmark Ruiz case, which spurred court-mandated prison reforms.

The construction plan, now under way, will add 10,000 beds to the crowded prison system, the nation's third-largest with more than 39,000 inmates.

"Those efforts will definitely aid the entire state's capacity dilemma—certainly an encouragement to the criminal justice system," Terrell said.

Of the 39,664 inmates at the close of the year, 17,199, or 43.4 percent, were black. White inmates numbered 13,688, or 34.5 percent. Hispanics totaled 8,658, or 21.83 percent.

Nearly 96 percent, or 38,050 inmates, were male, and nearly half of them—44 percent—were between the ages of 17 and 28.

The most common conviction—23.3 percent for men and 22.6 percent for women—was for burglary. Robbery was the next most likely offense with 21 percent of both male and female inmates.

More than one-fourth of the inmates either lived or were convicted in Houston, the state's largest city. Dallas, meanwhile, contributed 19.5 percent of the male inmates and 18.6 percent of the female inmates.

According to department figures, each of the 39,000 inmates cost taxpayers an average of \$32.66 per day, up about \$6 daily from a year ago. A decade ago, the total average daily cost was just over \$7.

Scientists poking noses into olfactory research

BOSTON (AP)—Scientists know a lot about smell. They know it weakens as we get older, it varies depending on a person's sex and ethnic background, and it involves more than just the nose. What they generally don't know is why.

"Within the scientific community, smell has always taken a back seat to the other senses, probably because we don't live in an olfactory world. We live in a visual world; a world of sounds," said Dr. John S. Kauer, a New England Medical Center researcher trying to determine brain function using the nose.

Last year he used video cameras and special dyes to trace the path of an odor impulse through the brain of a salamander. The work produced a "movie," or series of color-enhanced pictures, showing that the brain is "a parallel processor," handling many signals simultaneously—like a supercomputer.

The research may have implications for the study and treatment of brain tumors by helping differentiate between tumors and normal tissue.

Scores of researchers are poking their noses into such olfactory oddities as a link between premature decline in smell and Alzheimer's disease; a protein that ferries odor molecules through the nose; the fact that half of all people between ages 65 and 80 suffer major loss in the sense of smell; and the trait peculiar to some nasal nerve cells to regenerate.

"They're the only neurons in the human body that undergo this spontaneous renewal and spontaneous decay," Kauer said.

Some of the research in the field of smell is aimed not at medical advancement but at the bottom line. In Union Beach, N.J., Dr. Craig Warren heads a research and development team for International Fragrances and Flavors Inc., a company that produces scents for soaps, perfumes and other products made by hundreds of companies around the world.

Smell, Warren said, is the one sense for which the mechanism for perception is unknown. Scientists know how odor molecules are gathered by smell neurons but they don't know how a few similar types of receptor cells can distinguish between thousands of different odors.

Research suggests that the process of smelling involves more than the nose, Warren said. "When blindfolded, most people cannot discriminate a lemon from a lime or an orange from a grapefruit."

IFF regularly brings in dozens of smell samplers, usually women, to rate and react to fragrances, with emphasis on how the fragrances can alter mood. In the process, Warren has found that 10 percent and 15 percent of the subjects display a particularly acute sense of smell.

At the opposite end of the spectrum are those with no sense of smell.

Mary Brooks, 35, of Philadelphia, took an uncommon route to this fairly common problem. Beginning in 1972 she began to experience what amounted to smell hallucinations; she thought she smelled an unpleasant odor when there was no odor present. Years of anguish and unsuccessful treatment finally led to brain surgery in which her olfactory nerve was removed, ending her hallucinations but leaving her incapable of smelling.

"It can be very dangerous," she said. "I've already burnt things in the oven and I didn't know it and there are smoke alarms everywhere. But on the other hand it doesn't bother me not to smell because I still sense that I'm breathing and smelling the same as you are."

Brooks' doctor was Richard Doty, director of the University of Penn 10513901sylvania Smell and Taste Center. Patients include the aged and professionals like wine tasters, firefighters, police officers, gas company workers, inspectors and cooks whose lives and livelihoods can depend on the sense of smell.

"There have always been problems that people had and they've had no place to turn in the past," Doty said. "It's a frontier of science which really hasn't even been touched on."

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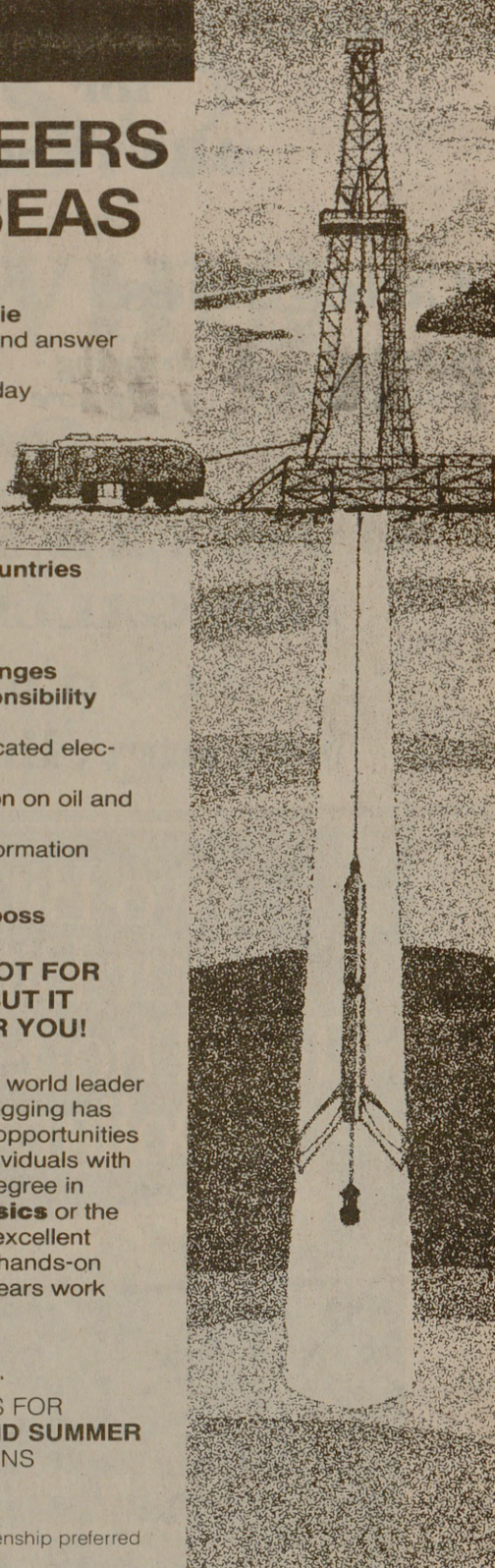
INFORMATION MEETING*
Date: March 1, 1989
Time: 7:00PM - 9:00PM
Place: 607 Rudder Tower

INTERVIEWING
March 2, 1989

*All candidates must attend Information Meeting

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Entrepreneur loses monopoly on plastic dinosaur market as popularity of reptiles rises

MOSCOW, Texas (AP)—Strangely enough, Dinosaur Gardens owner Don Bean hates the fact that the extinct creatures have gained widespread popularity in the late 1980s.

"It used to be that if you wanted to buy a toy dinosaur, you have to come to us," Bean said. "But now you can get dinosaurs anywhere."

Since Bean opened his folksy dinosaur park in July 1981, he has sold plastic dinosaur toys and other curios.

Lately, souvenir sales are less than 30 percent of what they were a couple of years ago, because all manner of variety and toy stores now carry their own lines of dinosaur items. "Back then, we didn't get near as

many people through the park, but we sold a lot more in the shop," Bean said.

So Bean is naturally apprehensive as he prepares the park for this year's March 4 season opening.

On this day, he is figuring out how he can repair Smilodon, a fiberglass sabre-toothed tiger with a tooth that was snapped off last year by some mischievous tourist.

Bean says he is going to have to do something to figure out how to pick up souvenir sales.

He has an idea and figures he will give it a shot. "Yeah, crystals," he says, picking up a box of sparkling quartz crystals. "I heard people are really buying these things."