



Halftime entertainment

Tanya Crevier, dubbed the world's best female basketball handler, entertained the crowd at G. Rollie White Coliseum during the Lady Aggies basketball game against UT.

Stew Milne/THE BATTALION

Eastern states endure unusually high January temperatures

BECKET, Mass. (AP) — A tepid drizzle fell Monday as Bob Ronzio's pickup bumped and slid on the dirt road. Then he saw the sea of mud where his street meets the highway. Out he climbed, sinking boot-deep in the mud. "It's next to impossible," he muttered angrily, turning his truck around to look for another route.

It's a typical scene from spring in New England. But this is January, and Ronzio, a Boston resident who owns a second home in western Massachusetts' Berkshire Mountains, is bewildered by record-breaking high temperatures.

Temperatures in the Northeast that are normally in the 20s and 30s this time of year have soared into the 50s and 60s since Friday. Springlike weather also has made an early appearance in parts of the Midwest.

Blame it on El Nino, a big pool of warm water in the Pacific that has brought devastating rains to California and helped warm much of the nation by keeping the jet stream and frigid Arctic air far to the north.

In Wisconsin, above-normal temperatures and no snow have closed snowmobile and cross-country trails. The state's tourism agency has been reduced to touting wintertime diversions like eagle watching. "It's like it should be spring.

This should be March," Sally Loos said Monday, peering at an empty parking lot outside her Hammer Down Bar in Mosinee, Wis.

In New York's Adirondack Mountains, bears that normally should be hibernating are being kept awake by the warm weather and continue to forage for food, said state biologist Lou Berchielli.

Worried gardeners are flooding an information line in New York City, wondering what to do about bulbs that are peaking through the ground early.

The answer: Don't worry. If the bulbs come up and cold returns, the plants may have leaves with damaged yellow tips in the spring, but the flowers will be fine, according to Sally Ferguson of the Netherlands Flower Bulb Information Center in Brooklyn.

The balmy weather closed some ski areas, turned dirt roads into muddy lakes and brought people out in shirtsleeves.

In Maine, some areas saw especially dramatic leaps in temperatures. In Dover-Foxcroft, the minus 26 recorded last week had climbed to 51 degrees by Sunday, a 77-degree shift in less than a week.

Peter Geiger, editor of the Farmer's Almanac in Lewiston, was basking in the glow of his weather forecast.

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Minorities: Scholarship programs questioned

two groups are excluded. In fact, when Hardman first filed a complaint with Justice Department officials last July, the university said in its own investigation summary last October that the school could not

change the policy without conflicting with Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board guidelines.

"Any change in the definition should originate with the coordinating board so that we re-

main in compliance with state policy," wrote Dan Robertson, Texas A&M's director of graduate studies.

But the board says it has all been a terrible misunderstanding. They say there's nothing that

forbids universities from allowing American Indians or Asians to qualify for state-funded financial aid programs for minorities.

Coordinating Board General Counsel Lynn Rodriguez said the universities' policies — many in place for 10 years or more — may simply be the result of a misunderstanding.

"It's beginning to look that way," Rodriguez said. "There's

nothing we have published or promulgated that would restrict financial aid to African-Americans or Hispanic-Americans."

Coordinating board officials could not provide figures on how much money is available under the set-aside program, but A&M's share alone is nearly \$4 million.

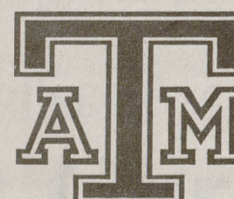
A&M officials said they will look at the issue again in light of Rodriguez' clarification of

the policies.

Hardman became aware through her student activities that American Indian and Asian students are not eligible for minority set-aside funds, particularly the Texas A&M presidential achievement awards that provide at least \$2,500 a year for undergraduates and \$12,000 a year for graduate students who apply.

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