

THE BATTALION AGGIELIFE

HOUSTON RODEO ROUNDS UP AGGIES

By DAPHNE PHILLIPS
THE BATTALION

Former Texas A&M students interning at the Houston Livestock Show & Rodeo found it difficult to be objective about George Strait's wink or smile.

A&M is the only university that works with the marketing department of the rodeo. One of several jobs in the marketing department includes recording rodeo and star performances on video tapes and logging the actions and times in a book.

Laurie Hearn, a senior agricultural journalism and poultry science major, has worked for the rodeo for four years at the rodeo. Hearn said she thinks the rodeo invites A&M students to participate in this program because of the students' professionalism.

"Being Aggies, we are taught to have integrity and to be respectful," Hearn said. "We go there to work hard and do the job."

Dr. Joe Townsend, associate dean for the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, said work ethic is what the rodeo likes about A&M students.

"Sometimes, students will begin at 7 a.m. and won't stop until 10 p.m.," Townsend said. "Time does not mean a whole lot to journalists and they like the fact A&M puts in long hours no matter what it takes."

The internship program grows more each year. The program is open to all majors. About one half of agricultural journalism and journalism majors return to do the job again.

Rhonda Reinhart, a junior journalism major who worked last year, said she loved the technical part of the internship.

"I thought it showed another side," Reinhart said. "I had a part in what was going on behind the scenes. Even though the people were watching the camera, they were not watching me."

Students usually work three consecutive 12 to 15 hour days as writers and technicians. The writers write press releases and interview award winners. The camera and technical workers set up, take down and operate cameras and work the control booth. Both are paid \$4.75 an hour.

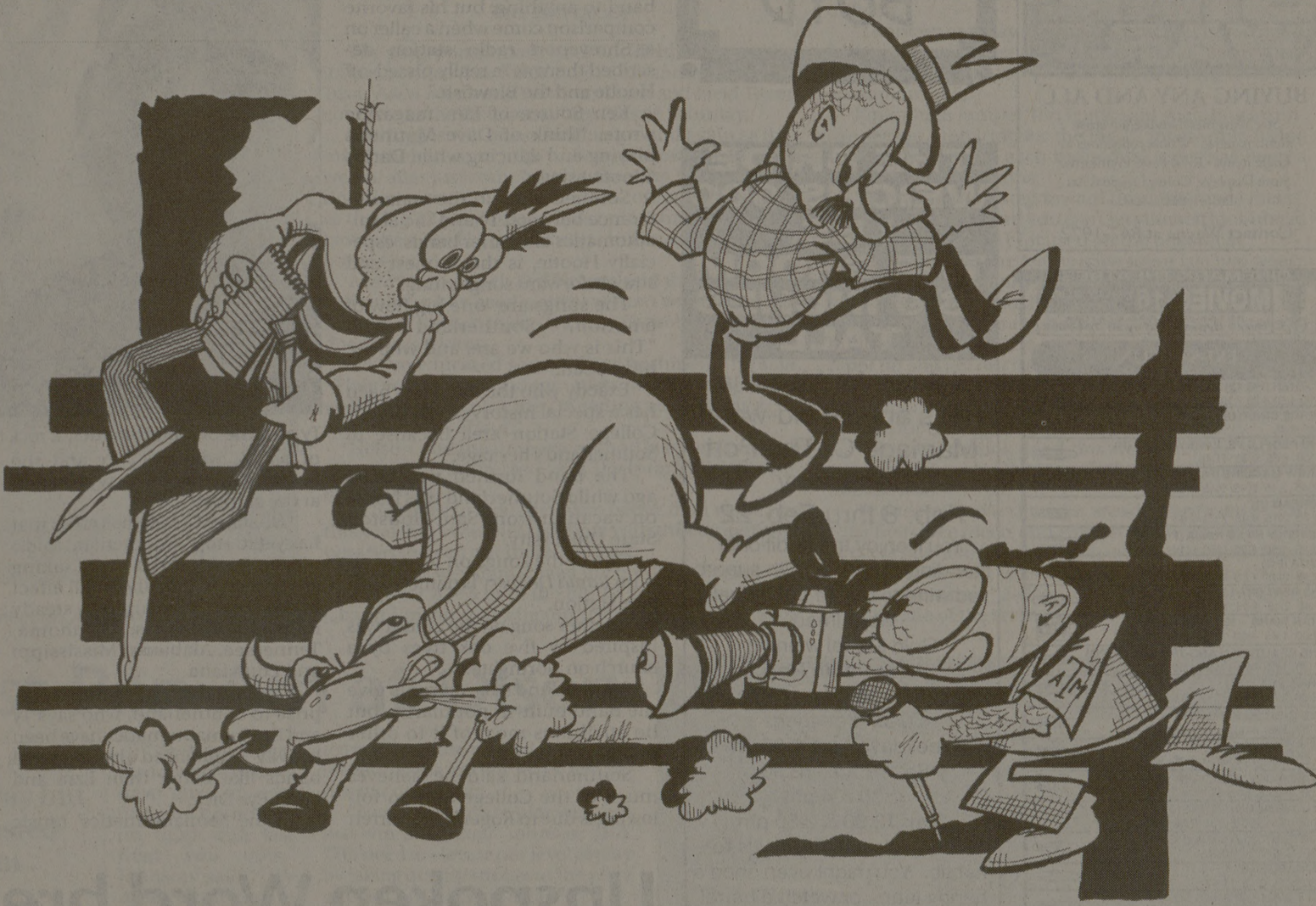
Blake Laceywell, a graduate student assisting in the College of Agriculture and a sponsor for the Agricultural Communicators of Tomorrow, said the first day on the job varies, depending on the position.

"Writers start at 9 a.m. on the first day," Laceywell said. "After that it could be 7 a.m. to 9 p.m., sometimes midnight."

"I got a chance to go through the bull-riding tapes in the previous night's performance and put a star by the ones that stuck out," Hearn said. "I kind of got to choose and edit them. It was neat seeing the nuts-and-bolts of it."

Not only does the experience provide on-the-job training, but it also gives students an opportunity to develop employer relationships.

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WEEKEND PREVIEW

Friday February 7

Reed Boyd, a country/rock/comedy entertainer, is performing at Chelsea Street Pub and Grill at 9 p.m.

Forsyth Galleries are presenting the Libbey Glass Collection and Life, Love and Death in **Winslow Homer's** "Winding the Clock" from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Jazztop, a rock band from Bryan-College Station, is playing at the Cow Hop at 9 p.m.

Just J, an acoustic guitarist from Bryan-College Station, is playing at Copasetic Cafe at 9:30 p.m.

Mike McAllister, a classical guitarist, is performing at Sweet Eugene's House of Java at 9:30 p.m.

Storyville, a rock band from Austin, is playing with **Lisa Tingle**, a rock musician from Austin, at 3rd Floor Cantina at 8 p.m.

MSC Town Hall is holding a Lunch Box Concert featuring alternative/rock band **Feed**, at Rudder Fountain at 12 p.m.

Theatre Arts Program is performing **Mother Courage** by Bertolt Brecht at the Fallout Theater at 8 p.m.

Storyville

Storyville

Storyville

MSC Film Society is showing **Romeo and Juliet** at Rudder Theater at 7 p.m. and at 9:30 p.m.

Trout Fishing in America, a rock band from Little Rock, is playing with **The Woodies**, a folk/rock band from Bryan-College Station, at the Dixie Theatre at 9 p.m.

Dante & Nash is playing to benefit the Muscular Dystrophy Association at the VFW Hall in Bryan at 9 p.m.

Eugene Eugene, a jazz band from Bryan-College Station, is playing at Sweet Eugene's House of Java at 9:30 p.m.

Forsyth Galleries are presenting the Libbey Glass Collection and Life, Love and Death in **Winslow Homer's** "Winding the Clock" from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Jazztop, a rock band from Bryan-College Station, is playing with **Ty & the Semiautomatics**, a rock band from Houston, at the Dixie Theatre at 9 p.m.

MSC Film Society is showing **Romeo and Juliet** at Rudder Theater at 9:30 p.m.

Sneaky Pete, a sing-a-long artist from Bryan-College Station, is performing at Fitzwilly's at 9:30 p.m.

Student Life Services for Students with Disabilities is presenting psychologist **Bill Haddock** lecturing on "Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder" in 228 MSC at noon.

Theatre Arts Program is performing **Mother Courage** by Bertolt Brecht at the Fallout Theater at 8 p.m.

Unspoken Word, a rock band from San Antonio, is playing with **Fysher**, a rock band from Bryan-College Station, at 9 p.m.

Big Otis, a blues/Motown/soul artist from Houston, is playing at 3rd Floor Cantina at 8 p.m.

Saturday February 8

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More to B-CS than A&M Downtown Bryan, conventions draw visitors to area

By KAREN JANES
THE BATTALION

A family in San Antonio loads up the minivan in preparation for its annual family vacation. They are not headed to Disneyworld, the mountains of Colorado or even the Grand Canyon. No, this family is going to College Station, Texas.

The Bryan-College Station area is growing in popularity every year as a travel destination. Dick Forester, director of the Bryan/College Station Convention and Visitors Bureau, attributes this growth to location.

"Bryan-College Station is in close proximity to most of the major metropolitan areas in Texas," Forester said. "People are taking shorter trips. They're looking for different places to go. They've already been to San Antonio, Austin, San Marcos, New Braunfels, the hill country and Six Flags."

People visit the Brazos Valley for its historical and cultural significance. The state was born in Washington on the Brazos State Park, and downtown Bryan is home to many historic buildings and businesses.

The Bryan-College Station area is an inexpensive travel destination. Forester said visitors get more for their dollar here.

"This is an affordable place to come to," he said. "The average daily rate is considerably lower than it is in other areas our size, and it's certainly lower than in the major metropolitan areas."

Texas A&M University is the primary tourist attraction in the area. People come to visit friends and relatives at A&M, tour the campus and attend special events such as Parent's Weekend, football games and graduation. Forester said many former Aggies come to Bryan-College Station for re-

unions or to make their "pilgrimage" back to Aggieland.

"The largest area we draw from is Houston, then Dallas-Ft. Worth, then San Antonio," Forester said. "Oddly enough, we get a lot of travel here from Washington, D.C."

Forester said a lot of international visitors come to Bryan-College Station. Most of them have children at A&M and are here to see the University and the area.

Barbara Moore, Bryan Main Street Project assistant, said all kinds of people visit downtown Bryan.

"You'll see young families with children, college students, retirees and everyone in between," Moore said.

Visitors to Bryan-College Station find plenty to do. Messina Hof Winery is one of the more popular attractions in the area.

"We have one of the best wineries in the state," Forester said. "It attracts about 100,000 people a year."

Pam Richardson, Messina Hof's marketing assistant, said a lot of people visiting A&M also go to Messina Hof.

"A&M brings in lots of visitors," Richardson said. "It's something else to do in Bryan-College Station besides the University."

In addition to winery tours, Messina Hof hosts the annual Harvest Feast, the Run Through the Vines in April and the Marriage of the Port this month.

Downtown Bryan is pulling its weight in the tourism industry. Events such as the Mardi Gras Celebration, the Diez y Seis Festival and the Hometown Christmas Celebration each attract thousands of people to downtown Bryan.

Conventions, meetings and sporting events play a crucial role in the tourism of Bryan-College Station.

"There are an awful lot of conventions and meetings that come here," Forester said. "Those kind of

things draw a lot of people."

After Reed Arena opens, more conventions and sporting events will come to Bryan-College Station. Gymnastics meets, volleyball tournaments and men's and women's basketball tournaments have already been booked for 1998.

On a year-round basis, 69 percent of the available hotel rooms in Bryan-College Station are occupied.

"There are times," Forester said, "and they're becoming more and more frequent, when you can't find a room in this town. And it's not just football weekends anymore."

Julianne Clos, General Manager Assistant at the College Station Hilton Hotel and Convention Center, said the Hilton is often full.

"The average daily rate has gone up because of the increase in the number of visitors," Clos said.

Bed and breakfast inns are also increasing in popularity. The Vintner's Loft at Messina Hof currently consists of one suite.

"We are expanding the Bed and Breakfast because of demand," Richardson said.

The restaurant business of Bryan-College Station supports the booming tourist industry significantly.

"We've got every kind of restaurant you could possibly want," Forester said. "The restaurant business in this community is incredibly diverse and very strong."

The opening of the Bush Presidential Library is expected to cause a further increase in travel to Bryan-College Station.

The opening of the library will make Texas the only state in the U.S. with two presidential libraries.

"The future of Bryan-College Station tourism looks great, especially with the Bush library coming," Clos said. "We are all excited about that."

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