

Jingle Bells ...

Spirit of Christmas season comes to community with Holiday on the Brazos

BY MARIUM MOHIUDDIN
Staff writer

The last breath of hot summer air has disappeared with the clear blue skies. The leaves have changed color and are falling. Sweaters and coats are pulled out of boxes, and in settle the sniffles and coughs of the cold season. However, with the bitterness of the winter weather comes the lights, music, songs and festivities of Holiday on the Brazos.

Bryan-College Station has decked their halls with the Christmas spirit in preparation for the season.

The cities of Bryan and College Station have separately hosted many holiday events in the past. However, for the last two years, B-CS have combined the events to produce Holiday on the Brazos.

Holiday on the Brazos is a celebration of holiday sights and sounds. It includes concerts, theater events, balls, contests and a parade.

Anel Bow, program and special events supervisor for the city of College Station, said the community activities have been successful, and they hope to share the magic of the season with more visitors.

"Bryan-College Station is located in the heart of Texas," Bow said. "Many people will be coming here to see the George Bush Library and the lighting of A&M. We felt that they may like to see what we have here."

Bow said the holiday events promote community pride and allow the residents to show off their spirit.

"The Parade of Lights is a showcase of lighting and decoration," Bow said. "Local businesses and res-

idents decorate the exteriors of their homes or establishments. Trolley tours will be going through the community with a tape accompaniment. We want to show people that we are proud to live here."

Bow said the main attraction of the community is Christmas in the Park.

"In the last year we had about 125,000 people come to the park," Bow said. "We have added many things to the park. Every year we add another building to the Dickens' village, and we have added a new sidewalk system."

other performances."

Marilyn Martell, chair of public relations for the Junior League of B-CS, said they will be hosting a holiday charity ball amid the events of Holiday on the Brazos.

"The Junior League has traditionally held the charity ball in the spring," Martell said. "This year we are having it now to kick off the holiday season. The theme is Winter Wonderland, and it is a black-tie and evening-gown event."

Martell said the Junior League will be hosting three events: the Festival of Trees, the Charity Ball and Breakfast with Santa.

The events are open to the general public and will be held at the College Station Hilton. All the proceeds will go to local charities.

Many of the activities for Holiday on the Brazos revolve around giving back to the community.

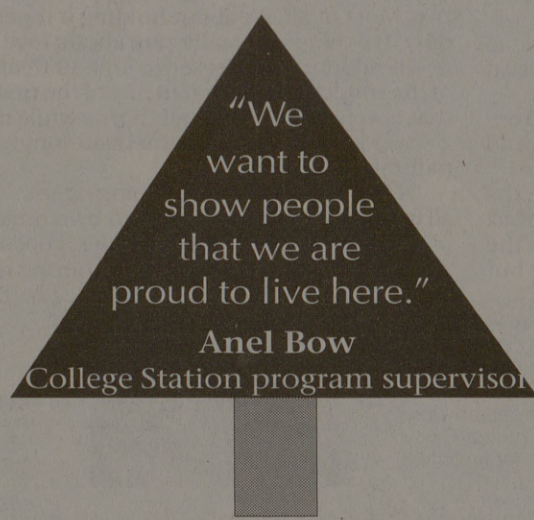
Penny Zent, chairperson of the Christmas Parade, said the parade has more to offer than kids in the back of a pickup truck driving down the street.

"We are not a big city," Zent said. "So our parades are not commercial parades with big floats and many advertisers. Our parade is made up of the community. They are our friends and neighbors."

Zent said this is the 71st year of the parade and has been a long tradition in Bryan-College Station.

"We have about 30,000-40,000 people attend the parades," she said. "This year the Grand Marshall of the parade is Robert Earl Keen. He was very excited to be in the parade. We have floats, bands, and drill teams and a lot more. The parade lasts about two hours and this year there are 116 entries."

Holiday on the Brazos and the events throughout the month have been a long tradition in Bryan-College Station — providing a jump into the holiday season.



"We have open house (over the weekend) for three weeks in December, where many local performers come to the park. This year we will have the A&M Consolidated Jazz Band, the College Station Junior High School Choir among



Jackson matures for the better with erotic sound found on The Velvet Rope

Music Review



America has watched Janet Jackson grow up from her days on the television sitcom "Good Times" to her albums Control, Rhythm Nation 1814 and Janet.

Miss Jackson — if your nasty — has matured yet again with her new album, The Velvet Rope. And boy oh boy, has Janet grown up.

Currently, in her new video, Jackson is sporting a bright red hairdo that is reminiscent of my sister's production of "The Crucible."

Besides the shocking red locks, Jackson is sporting some pretty

nifty body piercings. In an interview with Oprah Winfrey, Jackson said she has pierced her tongue, her nasal septum and her nipple.

Musically however, Jackson mixes some of the harder edge material like "If I Was Your Woman" from Janet with some of the softer ballads like "Again." The diversity of material has something for any music fan.

The album opens with the single, "Velvet Rope," an electronica influenced song that has a touch which is distinctly Janet.

Such musical experimenting is

what makes Janet arguably one of the most exciting mainstream artists today.

The Velvet Rope contains a hip-hop edge that was not quite so evident on past Jackson albums. Songs like "My Need" and "You" have a Sean "Puffy" Combs sound without Puff Daddy actually working on the album. A feat considering how prevalent Puff Daddy has been on MTV.

The personal nature of Jackson's lyrics have never been so shockingly honest.

Jackson explores bisexuality and S&M, and continuing with a theme of unusual sexuality, Janet sings about her relationship with older brother Michael.

The lyrics explore a sexuality Jackson flirted with in Janet, but in The Velvet Rope, she uses lyrics such as, "Tie me up tie me down / Make me moan real loud / Take off my clothes / No one has to know / Whisperin' / I wanna feel a soft rope burn."

PLEASE SEE JACKSON ON PAGE 4.

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