



Former student named Miss Rodeo 2004

By Natalie Younts
THE BATTALION

Texas A&M in May.

Harvey, a senior agricultural journalism major, came one step closer to realizing her dream when she was named Miss Rodeo Texas 2004 on June 25 in San Antonio.

Winning the 40th annual Miss Rodeo Texas state pageant allows her to enter competition for the national Miss Rodeo America title which will be crowned Dec. 4



HARVEY

in Las Vegas, Nev.

Chaddick said that she, Harvey and Cori Willett, who graduated in December with a degree in political science, became roommates soon after meeting and are now best friends. Chaddick said she is confident that her friend will win the national title.

"If anyone could ever win Miss Rodeo America it would be her," Chaddick said. "She has such a passion for rodeos and horses and cowboys."

Willett, who was on the A&M equestrian

team, said that her and Harvey's passion for horses helped them bond and contributed to their friendship.

"We both really love horses and love to ride," Willett said. "That was something that she and I could kind of talk about all the time."

Miss Rodeo Texas Inc. is an annual pageant for 19 to 24 year olds who are judged on personality, appearance and horsemanship.

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Tour de College Station



Brian Willis • THE BATTALION

Robert Rose, Class of 1993, adjusts the spokes of a Torelli road bicycle at his shop, Cycles Etc., which is located on University Drive. Rose

is a former member of the Texas A&M Cycling Team and is currently standing in third place in the Brazos Valley Cyclist Time Trials Series.

Duncan Coffee to begin offering Fair Trade variety

By Lacy Ledford
THE BATTALION

Duncan Coffee executives may decide to offer Fair Trade coffee at Texas A&M, depending on the success of online Fair Trade coffee sales this summer.

Fair Trade Certified coffee is a partnership between consumers in North America and producers in Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean that guarantees small coffee farmers a fair price for their

harvest, access to credit and direct access to American markets.

Jay Arekere, secondary adviser for A&M's Texas Environmental Action Coalition, said that former TEAC member and A&M graduate John Chisenhall began campaigning on behalf of Fair Trade Coffee about a year ago. Chisenhall's goal was to see that Duncan Coffee Company began selling Fair Trade Coffee on the A&M campus.

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Fair Trade Coffee

Duncan Coffee, A&M's coffee provider, is offering varieties of Fair Trade Certified coffee.



- Fair Trade is a partnership between consumers in North America and producers worldwide.
- Guarantees fair prices for small coffee producers in developing countries
- Agreement also guarantees access to credit and access to American markets
- A&M expressed support for Fair Trade coffee in a University resolution

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SOURCE: JOY AREKERE, TEAC

THE PLANT FROM HELL

Soda Apple Weed, known as "Sodom's Apples" and "The Plant From Hell" for its devastating effects on farmland, has now spread to East Texas.

- The weed is perennial and very difficult to kill.
- It overtakes grazing land, killing grass.
- An outbreak could increase beef prices due to the cost of treating the weeds.
- Originally from Brazil, the weed struck Florida in the 90s and made its way through the South to Texas.

ANDREW BURLESON • THE BATTALION
SOURCE: MARY KETCHERSID, EXTENSION SPECIALIST

Killer weed may be problem for ranchers

By Chelsea Sledge
THE BATTALION

Even when Yoda was a freshman living in the dorm, he kept a little potted plant. Chris Mueller, a senior finance major, is affectionately called Yoda by his friends for his extensive knowledge about plants.

"My parents own a whole lot of farm and ranch land in south Texas," Mueller said. "I have always had plants wherever I live and probably always will."

For Texans such as Mueller, the recently discovered tropical soda apple weed is of deep concern. The weed, also known as "the plant from hell" and "Sodom's apples" was recently discovered to have infested Jasper County, located just north of Orange.

"The county agent from Jasper County called me in late May," said Mary Ketchersid, an Extension Specialist. "I identified it and said 'You're absolutely right! It's soda apple.'"

Soda apple is a weed with round leaves and thorns on the top and bottom. The stem is sprinkled with cat claw-shaped thorns, and fruit that looks like a watermelon about the size of a quarter grows beneath the leaves. Often the weeds can be confused with horse nettle, but the flowers on horse nettle are usually purple, Ketchersid said.

This weed causes a problem because it is perennial and extremely tough to kill. "It takes over and the grass doesn't grow," Ketchersid said. "It's covered with thorns and the animals eat the fruit which spreads the weed. In effect you lose your land. It's an expensive situation."

To average consumers, this weed could have little effect on their lives. The cattle industry, the largest industry in Texas, will be hit the hardest. If the problem cannot be contained, the price of

beef could increase due to the cost of treating the weeds, Ketchersid said.

"In an extreme situation there could be a quarantine on Texas beef," Ketchersid said. "But we are nowhere near that."

Soda apple originates in South America, particularly in Brazil. The seeds were deposited in Florida in the 1980s and infested the southern states. However, until May the weed was not in Texas.

"It's been coming toward us from Florida, and we've been watching it actually," Ketchersid said.

The weed is thought to have been carried to Texas during the drought in 1998 when some hay, which may have been contaminated with the weed, was purchased from Louisiana.

"I heard some stuff about this weed at home. I

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NEA endorses Kerry for president

By Ben Feller
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — The National Education Association, the nation's largest union, endorsed Democrat John Kerry for president Monday, the final touch in its campaign to drive up school spending and reshape the biggest education law in decades.

The NEA, a 2.7-million member group composed mainly of teachers, is out to advance its agenda on everything from testing students to halting private-school vouchers. The union is mobilizing its money and forces for Kerry — targeting political staff in 15 swing states, going into schools to rally its members, and joining liberal groups to organize a massive night of political house parties.

Kerry, who is scheduled to speak to the 9,000 delegates at the NEA convention on Tuesday, was endorsed by 86.5 percent of them. The Massachusetts senator offers many teacher-friendly promises the union likes, but he also advances ideas the NEA has long opposed, such as paying bonuses to teachers based on student test scores.

Although a quarter of NEA members identify themselves with the Republican Party, the union has never endorsed a Republican for president and typically spends \$9 out of every \$10 it raises on Democrats. Its relationship with the Bush administration has been particularly prickly since his education secretary, Rod Paige, jokingly referred to the union as a "terrorist organization" and even annoyed members with how he apologized for the remark.

U.S. families in Bahrain receive orders to leave

By Adnan Malik
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MANAMA, Bahrain — U.S. military families will begin leaving Bahrain in the next few days in the wake of reports terrorists were planning attacks here, a spokesman for the U.S. Navy's 5th Fleet said Monday.

Cmdr. James Graybeal said the formal departure orders came late Sunday, two days after the Pentagon announced the first such mandatory evacuation from this longtime U.S. ally in the Gulf.

Graybeal said the orders affected 35 families, or about 650 people. They were relatives of service members or Defense Department staff, he said. He said earlier reports that nonessential staff also were being evacuated were incorrect.

"We are in the process of executing the departure, which will happen in the next few days," Graybeal said. Citing security, he refused to say how the families would travel or exactly where in the United States they were headed.

The U.S. 5th fleet is based in Bahrain, where the U.S. Navy has had a presence for more than 50 years.

Thursday, the State Department cautioned Americans against traveling to Bahrain and advised Americans who live there to leave because of information that extremists were planning attacks in Bahrain.

The Pentagon said Friday it was withdrawing service members' families from Bahrain for at least 30 days. The State Department added Saturday it had authorized the voluntary departure of family members and non-emergency employees of the U.S. Embassy in Bahrain.

The State Department has provided no details on the information it has about possible terror attacks on Americans in Bahrain.

Bahrain is linked by a 15-mile causeway to Saudi Arabia, which has seen a series of attacks on Americans and other Westerners living there. Some here have expressed fears that Saudi militants, under pressure from their security forces, might see Bahrain as an easier place to attack Westerners.

Bright idea



Evan O'Connell • THE BATTALION

BTU employee Mike Ferro and Bryan Texas Avenue Monday. A northbound Police officer Jeremy Elmore survey trailblazer struck a light pole after an accident scene near East 33 and being cut off by a semi truck.