

# PLAIN TALKS

April/May 1991 Volume 70 Number 3

## Salute to our 1991 Graduates





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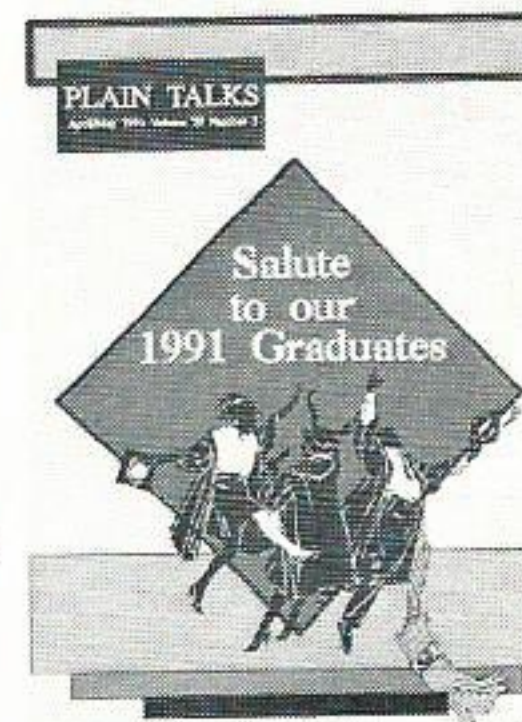
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Graduation is a special time for all family members. This month, **Plain Talks** recognizes graduating employees and family members with a photo feature. Cover designed by Linka Peveto. (Pages 10-13)



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## Operators solve terminal conditions



*Left to right, Julie Rozas; Nancy Boggan, computer operator; and (seated) Sue Poole, computer operator, help employees solve computer problems.*

story by Don Pumphrey  
photo by Scott Harper

Ever have your computer terminal or PC fail and call the network operator to have them restart it? Most computer customers have. You might view the network operators as mechanics providing road service to your computer terminal or system.

Most people never give a thought about what the network operators deal with on a daily basis, but each time the telephone rings, there's a computer customer on the other end with a problem that is keeping them from doing their job. You could call it crisis management.

Everyone marvels at the wonderful things computers allow us to do, but we don't always understand how complex the system really is. The network operators face a variety of customer problems each day and their job is to swiftly restore normal operations.

It's not always that easy since technology opened new frontiers that require greater knowledge and training. Network operators are meeting the challenges through additional training and automation.

Kathi Amerine, director of computer operations, says, two network operators and one operations analyst report to Rob Phelps, supervisor of the network center. These operators man the center from 5:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily. The shift supervisor in the computer room and other computer operators handle the problem solving chores after hours and on weekends.

With ten years of experience as computer network supervisor, Phelps says, "The number of people (customers) who call the network operators has grown from a mere 100 in the company to more than a 1,000." In that time, he notes,

there have been significant improvements in the reliability of equipment. Phelps adds, "Our operators are the first line of defense for customers experiencing a problem. They are the glue that salvages the user's day when problems are encountered."

"Keeping employees working is the biggest challenge we face," says Operations Analyst Julie Rozas. "Today everybody is dependent on their work station. At one time they could do things manually; however, with computerization, most of their work comes through their terminals."

Asked what the future holds for the network operator and computer operations in general, Amerine says, "The only limits to change are the depth of your pocket book and limits of man's imagination."

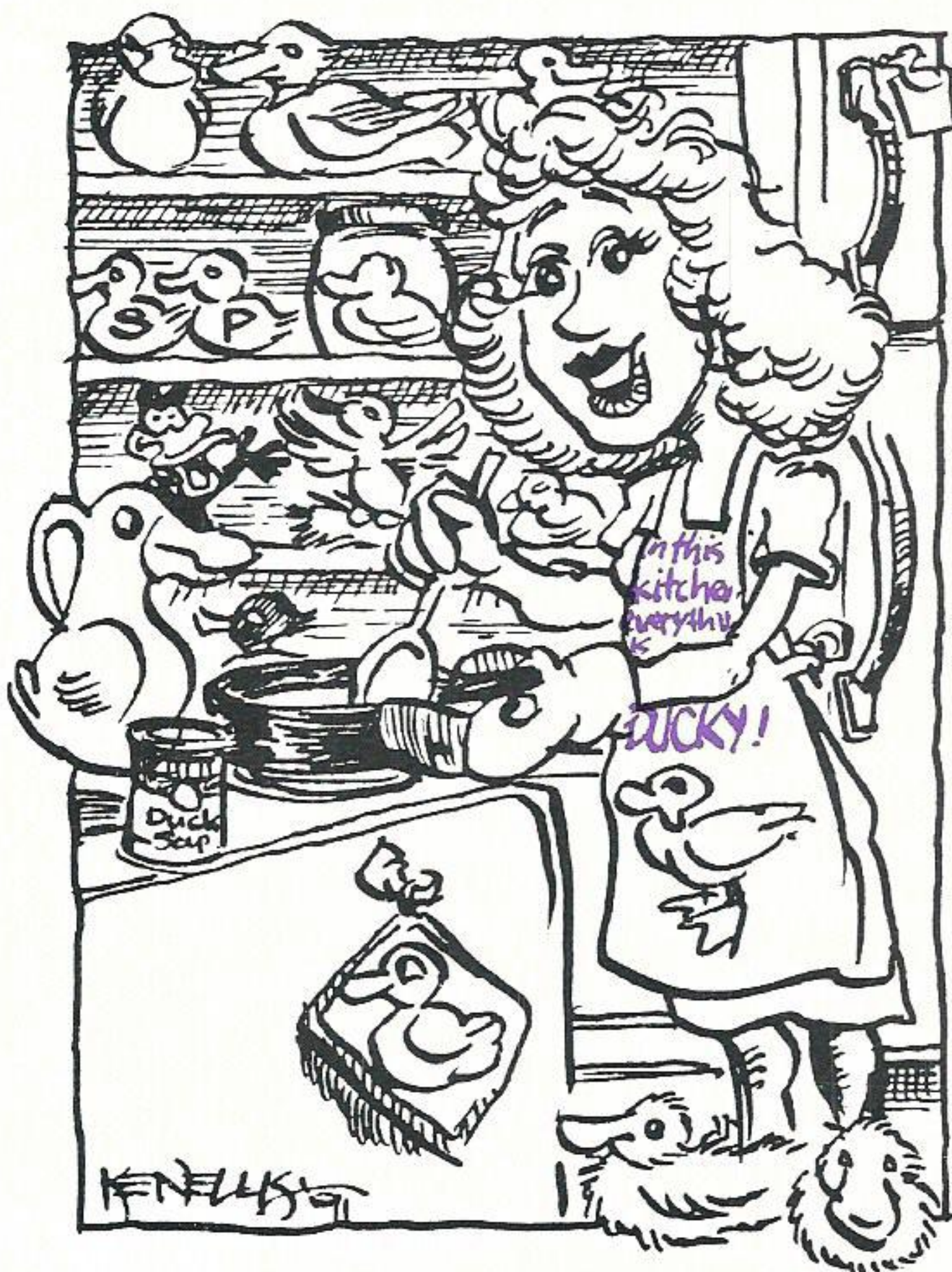


# GSU Book of World Records

In the 1990 August/September **Plain Talks**, we invited employees and retirees to enter the GSU Book of World Records. Several of you submitted some very interesting entries. Here are the winners.

## Most unusual collection

One thing is for sure. When GSU employees collect things, they do it in large quantities. **Frank Rozas**, communications foreman, Lafayette, has a collection of amateur radio cards from 308 different countries. **Gesele Norman**, computer operator, Beaumont, has over 200 ducks and geese in her kitchen (not alive, we hope!). If Africa is missing some giraffes, **Carolyn Motl**, economic development research analyst, Beaumont, could loan the jungle a few from her collection of over 150.



## Most countries traveled to

A couple of employees have well-used passports. **Betty Gavora**, supervisor-employee communications, Beaumont, has been to 22 different countries. **Doug McCormick**, coordinator-Texas communications, Beaumont, has visited 12 other countries. Some of the countries both employees have visited include France, England, Austria, Germany, Belgium and Switzerland. Gavora has also been to the Far East (Hong Kong, Malaysia, Thailand and Japan).

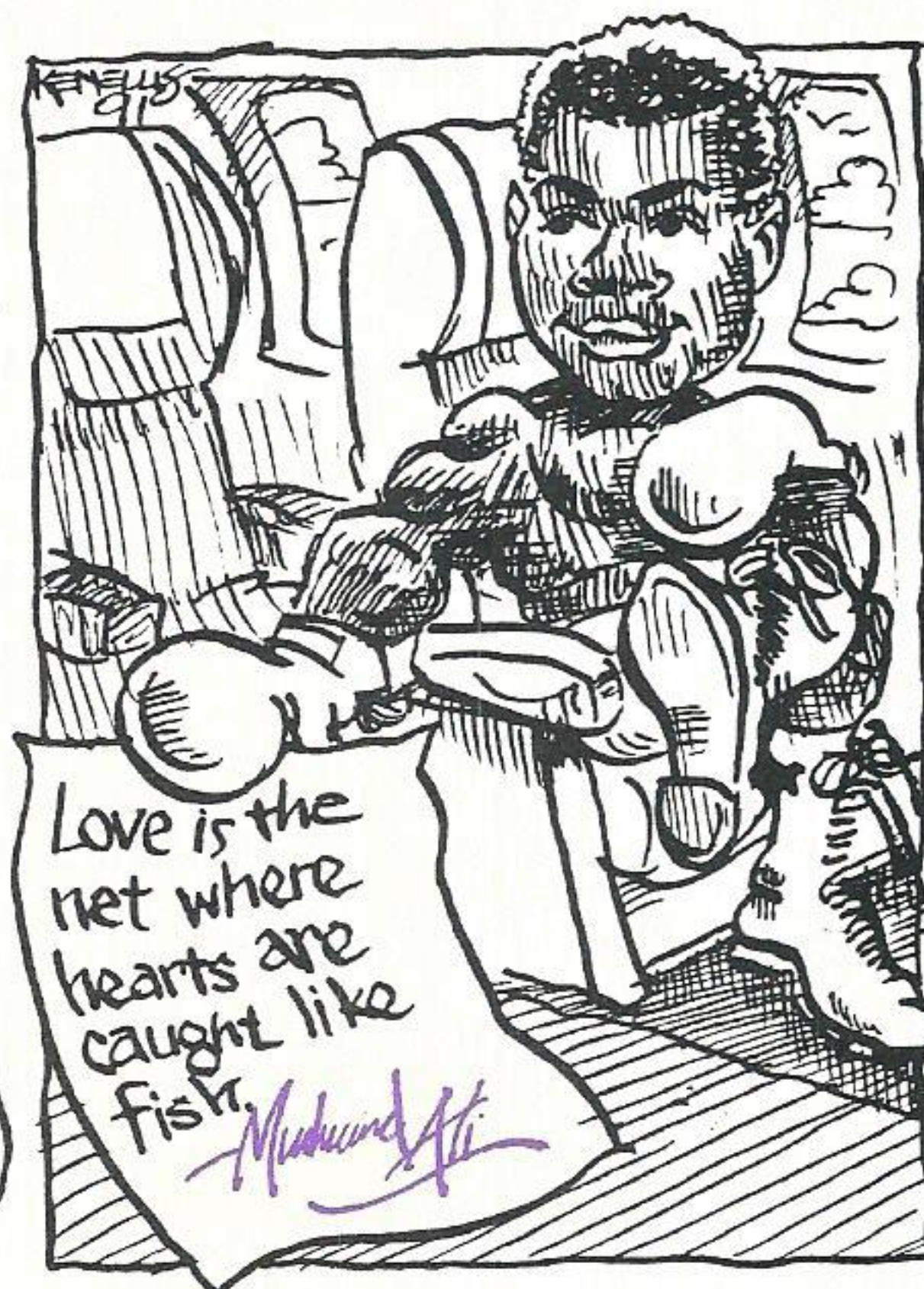


## Most embarrassing moment

One night while **Pat Hughes**, senior licensing engineer, River Bend, was fast asleep, his phone rang. He did what any person would do when the phone rings in the middle of the night. He answered the flashlight!

## Lived in the most places and most houses

Retiree **G.T. McCullough** of Cibolo, Texas, probably has a standing account with U-Haul. He has lived in 22 different places and 37 houses. States listing him as a former resident include Pennsylvania, Michigan, Florida, New York, New Jersey, Maryland and Louisiana.



## Most unusual celebrity encounter

Four employees have experienced "brushes with greatness" by meeting celebrities. **Benny Wilkinson**, director-accounting research, Beaumont, was on an airplane on his honeymoon when he noticed boxer **Muhammed Ali** on the plane. He wrote a note to Ali asking for his autograph and saying he was on his honeymoon. Ali sent his autograph back with a note saying, "Love is the net where hearts are caught like fish." **Ronnie Carlin**, supervisor-division accounting, Port Arthur, was 12 years old when he got an autograph and shook hands with boxing great **Jack Dempsey** in 1955. **Jeri Floyd**, clerk, Beaumont, was shopping at Wal-Mart in Nederland, Texas, when she saw, talked to and got the autograph of country singer **Dottie West**. West, who does numerous publicity shows at Wal-Marts around the country, was not there to sign autographs. She was shopping! **Gesele Norman**, computer operator, Beaumont, served as an usher for a Tom Jones concert at Lamar University. She and two of her friends were invited, by a band member, to meet his crew at the airport. At the airport, the band member got them past security and they saw Tom Jones arrive in his limousine. Jones visited with them about 30 minutes, gave them a tour of his plane and a departing kiss!





### Most U.S. Presidents seen

Two employees have heard "Hail To The Chief" 12 times collectively and not on recordings. **Betty Gavora**, supervisor-employee communications, Beaumont, has seen seven United States Presidents from President Eisenhower to President Reagan. She met President Kennedy in Houston on November 21, 1963, the night before he was assassinated in Dallas. **Mike Rodgers**, senior employee communications representative, has seen five U. S. Chief Executives: Presidents Kennedy, Nixon, Ford, Carter and Reagan.

### Most positions held within the company

**Jimmy Grimes**, Beaumont, has been with the company for 38 years. In that time, he has held 13 different positions ranging from engineering helper to his current title, manager-power supply.

### Most simultaneous magazine subscriptions

If you're ever at **Carolyn Motl's** house, you might think you're waiting in a doctor's office. Motl, economic development research analyst, Beaumont, at one time had 20 concurrent magazines arriving at her home.

### Most states traveled to

Except for eating pineapples in the Aloha State, **Karen McConnell**, system analyst, Beaumont, has been to all 49 mainland states. **Jimmy Grimes**, manager-power supply, Beaumont, was driving right behind her and visited 48 states.

### Highest bowling score

**Harley Erickson**, division engineer, Conroe, was in full swing when he rolled a 255 bowling score. Could the Pro Bowler's Tour be next?

### Largest movie collection and movie seen the most times

**Mike Rodgers**, senior employee communications representative, Beaumont, has his own theater at home with a collection of 100 movies. One of those movies must be "Star Trek IV" because he's seen it eight times.

### Married the longest

Need advice on marriage? Give **Harley Erickson**, division engineer, Conroe, a call. With 40 years of experience, he's sure to have some helpful hints.

### Longest telephone conversation

Ask **Gesele Norman**, computer operator, Beaumont, to give you a call and you might be tied up for awhile. She rang in with the longest phone conversation at four hours. We tried to call her and tell her she won but her line was busy!

### Most pets at one time

**Karen McConnell**, system analyst, Beaumont, at one time had over 50 pets. McConnell was master to cows, bulls, dogs, zebras and lots of fish.



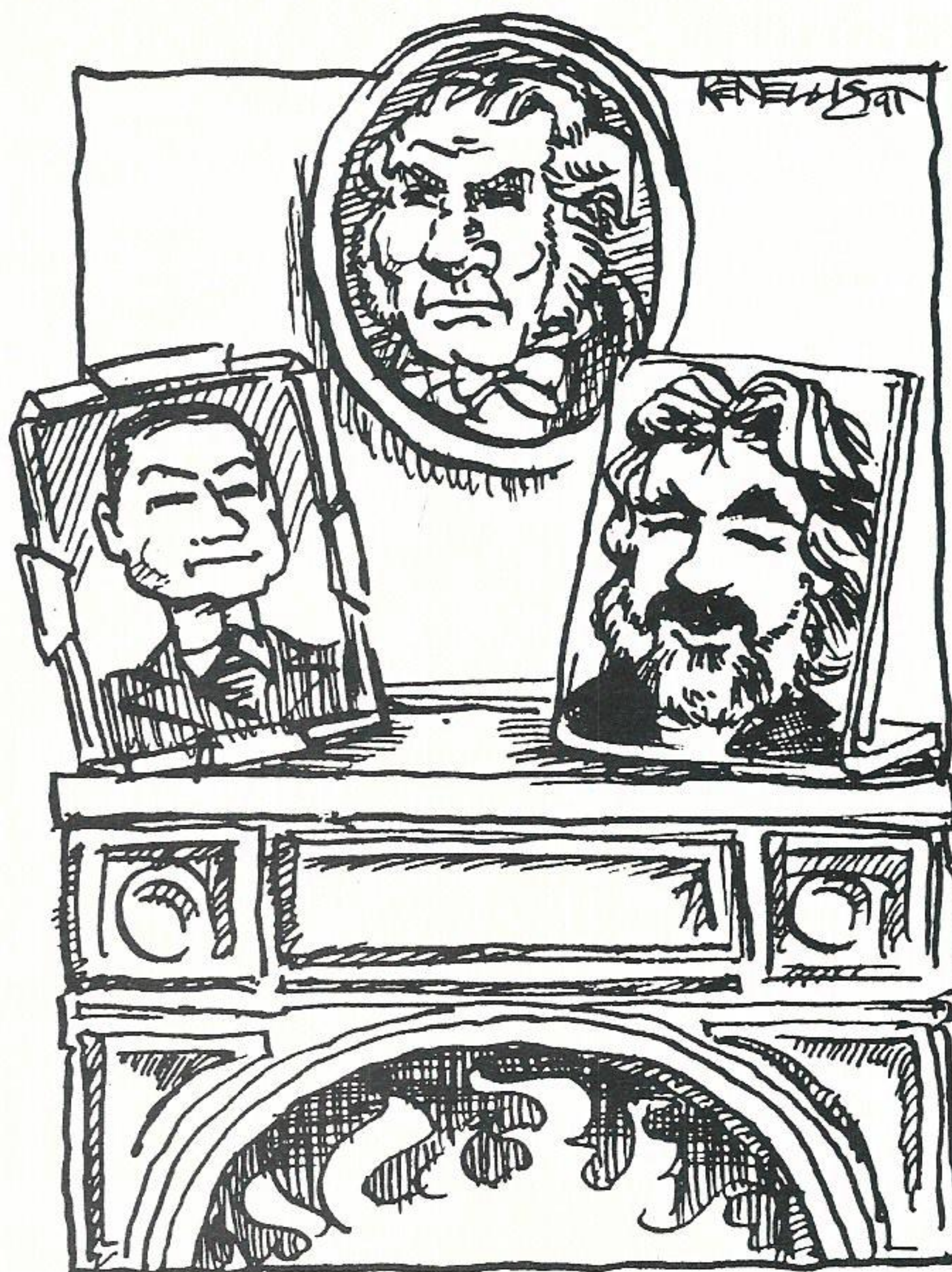


### Most famous relative

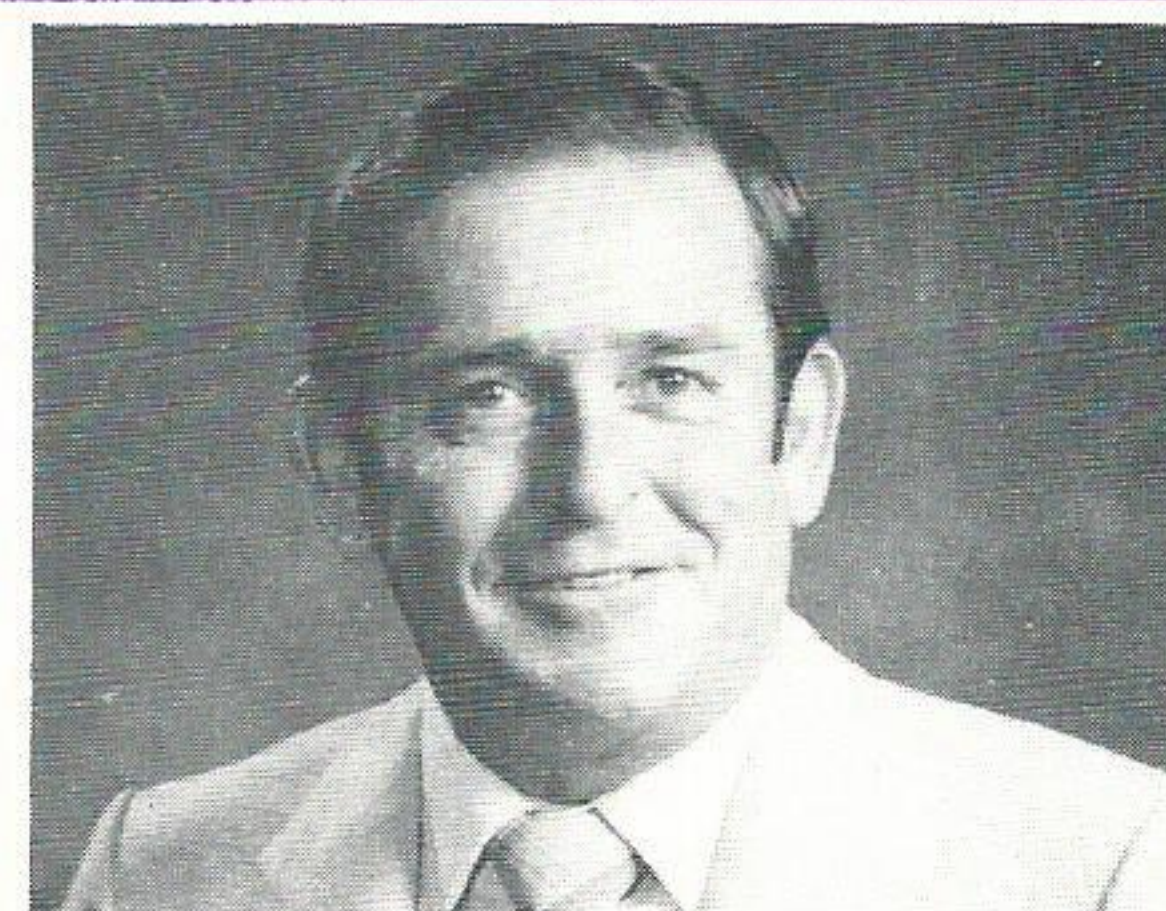
Harley Erickson, division engineer, Conroe, traces his family genealogy back to the White House. Erickson might not have had a place in President Calvin Coolidge's Cabinet, but he does on his family tree as third cousin three times removed. Kelley Carson, marketing agent, Orange, gets a tug in the heart everytime he drives by the San Jacinto Monument remembering his cousin, Sam Houston. Finally, Mike Rodgers, senior employee communications representative, Beaumont, and Kenny Rogers have something in common and it's not singing with Dolly Parton! They're distant cousins.

### Most trophies

Lots of running paid off for Gesele Norman, computer operator, Beaumont, who received 10 trophies in various races. She is proudest of the one she won in the Pleasure Island Marathon in Port Arthur.



## Derouen goes the extra mile at work and in the community



Derouen

by Mike Rodgers

If you ask Jeffrey Derouen his job title, be prepared to listen closely. Derouen holds the dual title of district accounting and meter supervisor. A 34-year GSU veteran, Derouen started out reading meters and, as the years passed, rose steadily until he accumulated supervisory responsibility for both departments. It is possible that no one else in the company can lay claim to that particular achievement.

In addition to his responsibilities for GSU, Derouen has another interest - education. He

recently retired from the Vermillion Parish School Board after 22 years of service.

"People asked me to run when I was 30," he says, adding with a touch of humor, "and I just kept getting re-elected." During that period, he served as school board president twice and found time to coach 7th and 8th grade basketball.

Derouen looks back on his years on the school board with a sense of satisfaction. "We took a group of small, independent school districts and combined them into one taxing

district. It put the money where it was needed the most," One of the trends which displeased him was the experiment with the so-called "new math" several decades ago. "We raised a generation of kids who couldn't do fractions," he says.

Overall, he believes there are a number of strong points for the educational system today. "Our children are more advanced now, learning things about science, biology and English at a much earlier age than when we were in school."



## Employee interpreters break through communication barriers



*Left to right, Delores Dugas, Kami Wright, Andres Prichard and (seated) Audrey McDonald came together as a result of the Language Assistance List to help Spanish-speaking customers in Orange.*

story and photo by Scott Harper

Imagine you work in the lobby of a GSU office and a customer comes in waving a piece of paper and says, "Porque es mi cuenta electrica tan alta?" or "Làm thế nào tôi có thể bật điện ở trong nhà tôi?" After a few seconds of unsuccessful message sending, you realize there is a communication problem. What do you do?

If you don't speak Spanish or Vietnamese, you could refer to a Language Assistance List supplied to each customer service location by Customer Accounting Services. The list was compiled to assist employees with foreign language barriers. Butch Franklin, director-division accounting services, Beaumont, explains, "We sent out a request in **Newsbreaker** last year asking employees who spoke other

languages if they would consider serving as an interpreter. Anyone running into a language problem can call someone on this list."

For example, by hooking up on a conference call, someone in Lake Charles could assist a customer in Navasota by translating the customer's needs to the GSU employee and vice versa. This type of scenario has already taken place.

One day in Orange last year, it didn't take Customer Contact Clerk Kami Wright long to figure out the two customers she was attending to spoke Spanish only. "You speak loud and slow and use your hands," she says about trying to communicate through a language barrier. "You try to think of ways to get them to understand. It's frustrating because you've

done all you can do and the customer is still not happy."

Co-worker Delores Dugas, customer contact clerk, remembered the Language Assistance List and gave it to Audrey McDonald, PBX operator, to set up a conference call. "I got in touch with Andres Prichard and he was just great. The customers were so relieved to have someone to talk to," recalls McDonald. Wright adds, "They were quite happy after talking with Andres."

Prichard, principal engineer, Beaumont, is a native of Argentina. "I really enjoy using my native language, especially if I can assist someone in the company. I try to make the customer feel comfortable and trust me. They usually give me a lot of details."

Prichard also interpreted when utility executives from



Guatemala visited Gulf States a few years ago.

In Port Arthur, Bertha Rosas, customer contact clerk, and Sarah Hernandez, customer contact clerk, are known as "the Spanish ladies." "The word gets around that we have someone who can speak the customer's native language," says Rosas. "We have a lot of Spanish-speaking customers and they come in and ask for one of the Spanish ladies!"

Rosas is pleased to be able to offer this service. "It makes me feel great that I can help the customer this way."

Over in Lafayette, Harrison Carlin, T&D supervisor, is called on frequently to translate Cajun French. "Whenever they have a problem in the front

office, they give me a call," says Carlin. "Just recently, I had to explain the new \$6 discount to an elderly couple."

Carlin says there are numerous Lafayette elderly customers who speak Cajun French. "They can explain their problems better in French. They can't do it in English."

Like other interpreters, Carlin agrees customers are happy to hear their language. "You can see it in their eyes. They feel more at home."

"I love being able to do this," says Carlin. "I see a satisfied customer and that's part of the job."

Some of the languages represented on the list include French, Russian, Spanish, German, Pakistani, Turkish and

Vietnamese. According to Kit Evans, coordinator-system customer accounting, Beaumont, the list is updated on an annual basis, but employees who want to be included can be added at anytime. "If there are employees who speak other languages and can contribute, all they have to do is let us know and we'll add them," says Evans. "It's a help to our folks and our customers."

Wright agrees, "It's good we're able to take the time to get what the customer needs. They're happy and we're happy."

Additional copies of the list can be obtained by contacting Kit Evans at 733-3087.

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## "Charge it!" at Gulf States

story by Sharon Englade  
artwork by Linka Peveto

During its first month, not quite 100 Gulf States Utilities customers took advantage of what some consider America's national pasttime—charging their purchases. In the company's case, that means customers use a MasterCard or Visa to pay their GSU bill or deposit or, more likely, make a late payment in order to avert a cutoff.

As Butch Franklin, director of division accounting services, strongly puts it, "This program

isn't for everybody." He hopes people will use their credit cards for emergencies and not as a substitute for their check books.

The reason is that customers

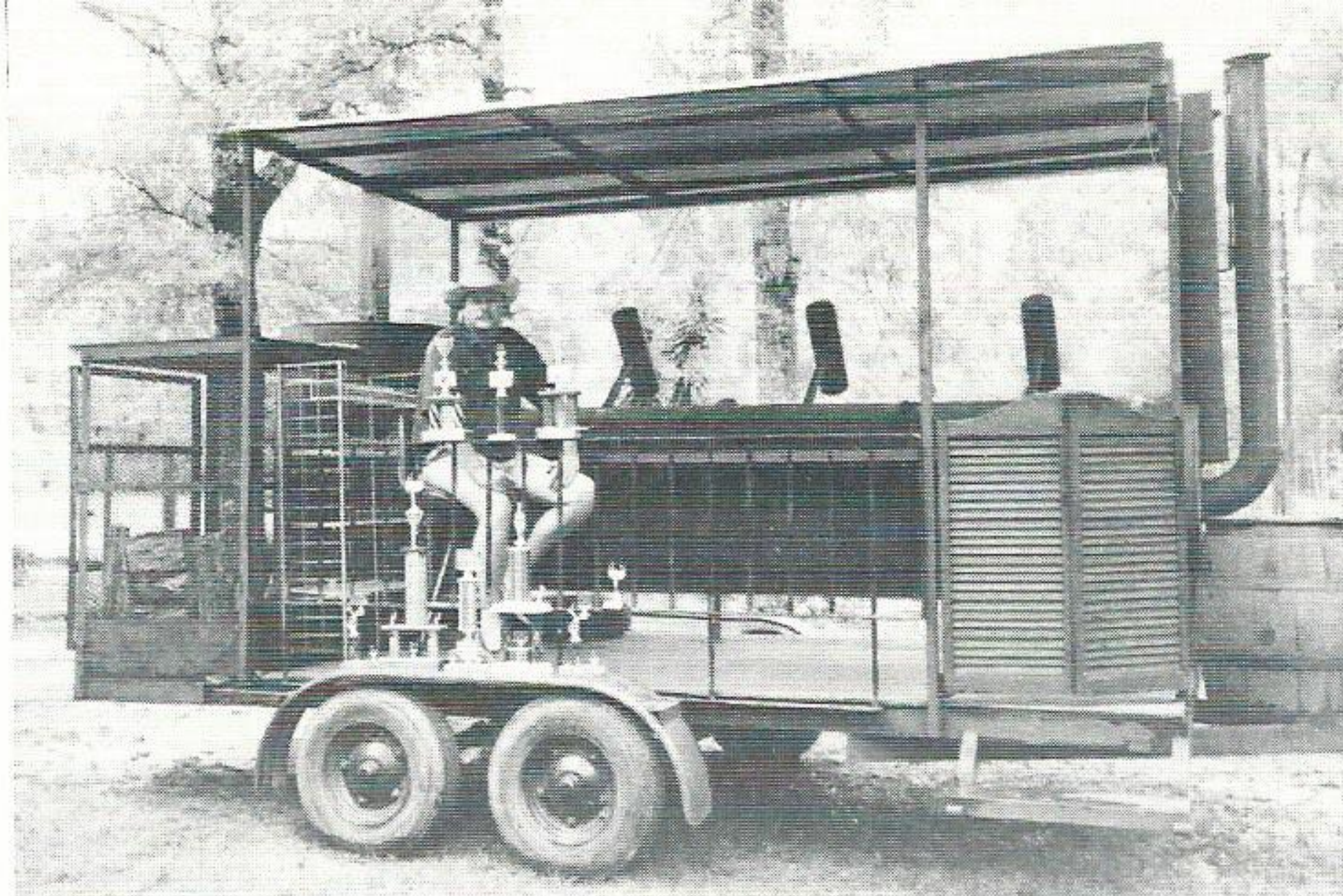
who use credit cards to pay a GSU bill will be charged a processing fee by the credit card company, Franklin says. In addition, he notes, some banks consider this type of bill payment arrangement as a cash advance and charge the customer an extra fee.

"This credit card arrangement is another example of how GSU is trying to help customers," says Franklin. "We just want them to use it responsibly."





## Langston pits skill against competition



*Langston at home in Mauriceville, Texas, with his trophies and the barbecue rig he designed and built himself.*

by Scott Harper

"When I drive up with my barbecue rig, people think, 'This guy has got to be serious,'" laughs Brian Langston, Silsbee senior district service representative. When it comes to barbecuing, he is. Langston has competed in brisket and rib cook-offs for several years. In 1986, he was Orange County grand champion and placed in the top 20 of the World Cook-off in Houston. He is currently the 1989 and 1990 South Texas Rib Champion.

"I enjoy it," says Langston. "It's recreation to me." He has cooked on pits ever since he was 12 years old.

What got him interested in competition? "The desire to cook larger pieces of meat," says Langston. "One time at my previous job, they wanted to cook 80 chickens for a barbecue. Everyone brought their pits and then left! I ended up cooking it all. That's when I really got hooked."

Langston says cooking competition is very formal. "People who compete are serious," he says. "It's more than any weekend barbecuer would dream of doing."

Competitors are judged on showmanship (the way you set up your camp) as well as the meat. Meat is judged on more than taste. Other criteria include aroma, flavor and texture. No sauce is allowed in competition.

His competition team, The Texas Brisketeers, using a rig he designed and built himself, have been in competition twice this year and placed first and third. "We're cooking better than ever. This is the year I'm trophy hunting," says Langston.

Langston cooks for other occasions, too. "We do several catered jobs and grand openings. However, we really turn down more than we actually do because we just don't have the time."

Since he is a champion barbecuer, one would think brisket and ribs would be a common meal for the Langstons.

"You'd be surprised how little barbecue we eat. About three days after a cook-off, we'll heat up some. When you're in competition, you're around it so much you can't even smell it."

"It's a hobby I can't get away

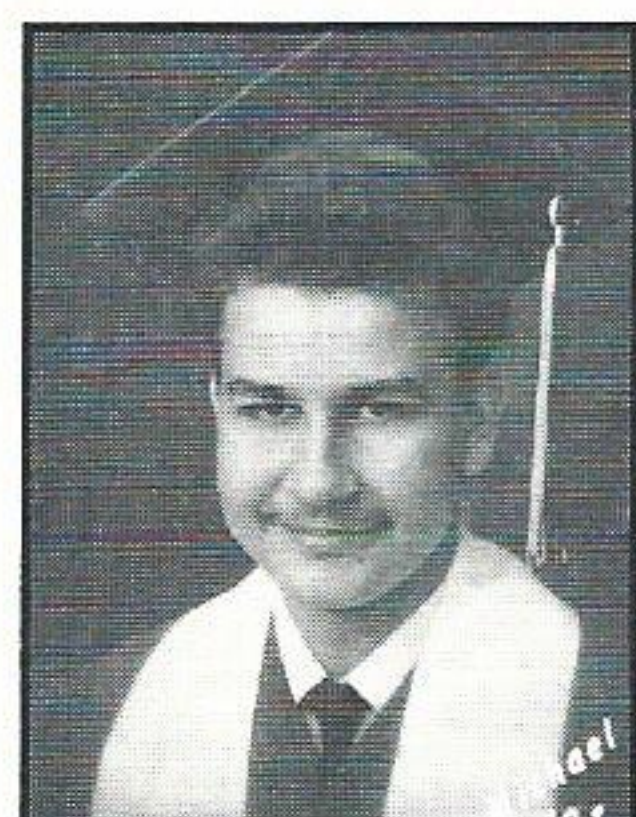
from," concludes Langston.

"I've tried to quit a few times but I can't. I guess I'll do this forever."

Obviously, Langston couldn't give away his award-winning secrets, but he did offer employees some tips on selecting briskets:

- (1) Pick up the brisket and make sure fat covers one side completely.
- (2) Squeeze the brisket to find hard tallow (the hard substance you find on the fat side of a brisket). The less tallow the better.
- (3) Look for the most evenly distributed thickness. If the brisket is 2 inches on one end and 8 inches on the other, it's like cooking two different pieces of meat at one time.
- (4) The lean side should be just that, lean. Too much fat running through the meat indicates the entire beef is too fat and your seasoning will be washed away while cooking.
- (5) Avoid frozen briskets because you can't tell what's a hard tallow or how far into the meat it goes. Shop at a market where the meat is chilled and easy to inspect.

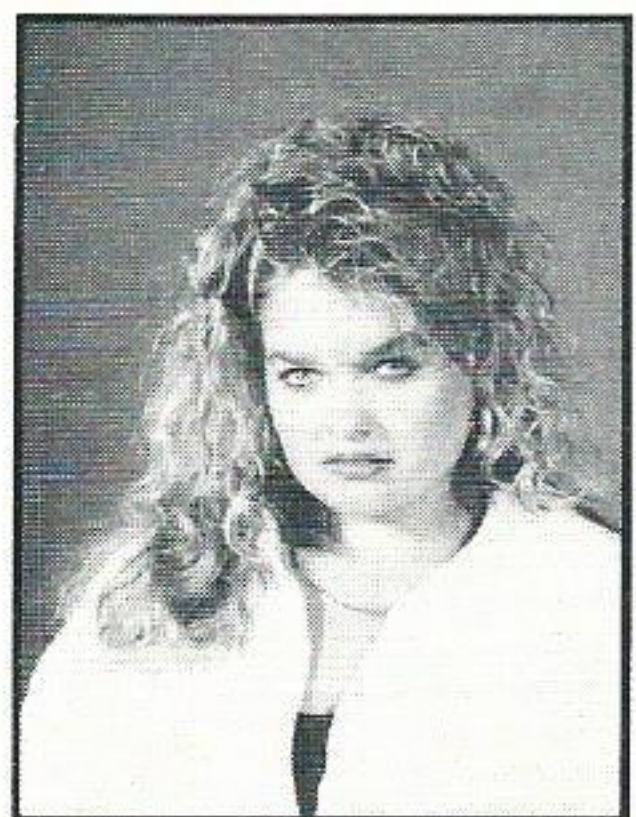




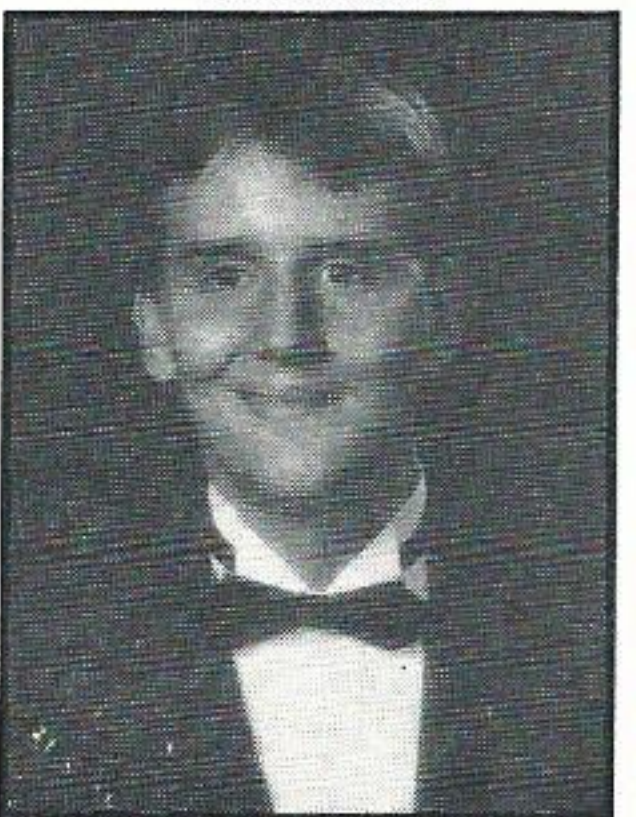
**Michael T. Blanchard**  
Port Allen High School  
Son of Joseph Graves  
Unit Supervisor  
Willow Glen



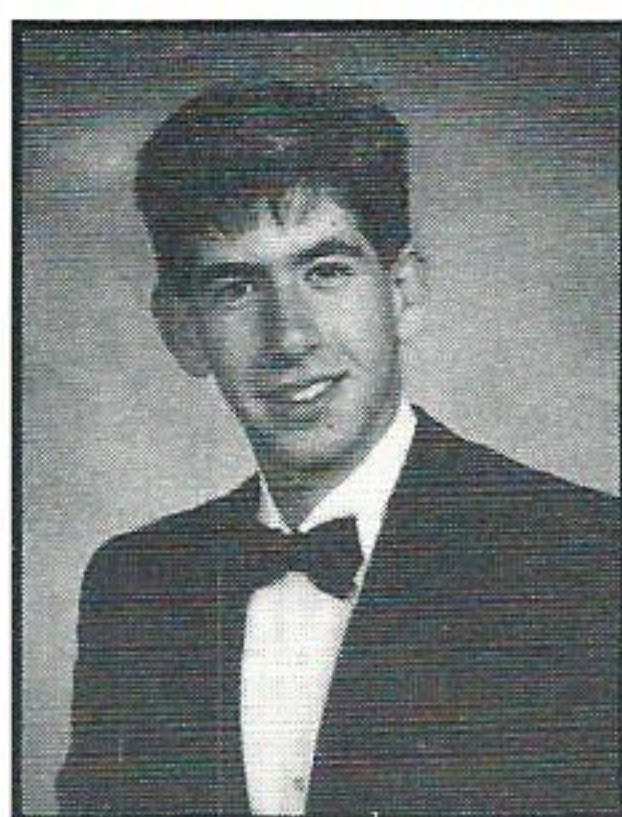
**Roopali Desai**  
Baton Rouge High School  
Daughter of Shyam Desai  
Senior ISEG Engineer  
River Bend



**Misty Harrington**  
Bridge City High School  
Niece of Alice Simon  
Secretary-Administration  
Beaumont



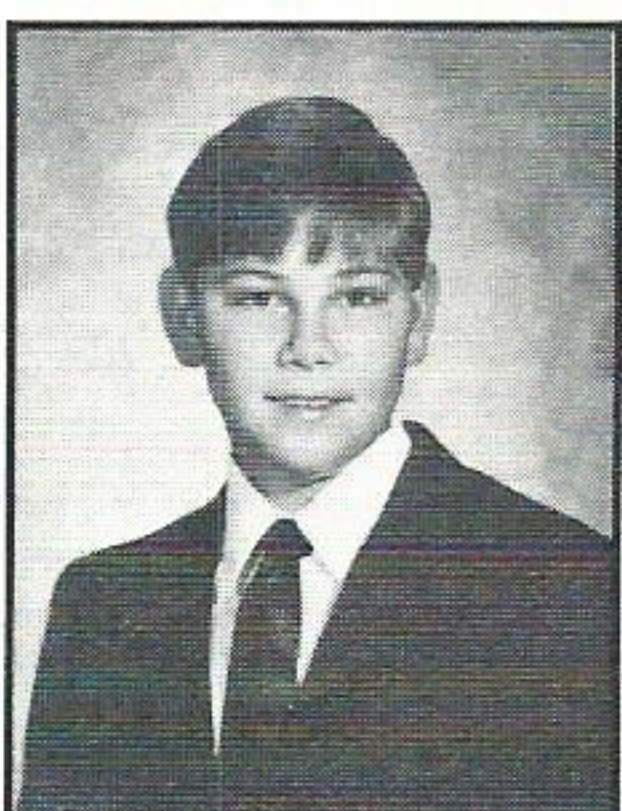
**Andy Hoffart**  
Willis High School  
Son of Willie Hoffart  
Line Supervisor  
Conroe



**Kurt T. Allen**  
Catholic High School  
Son of Tommy Allen  
District Service Representative  
Gonzales



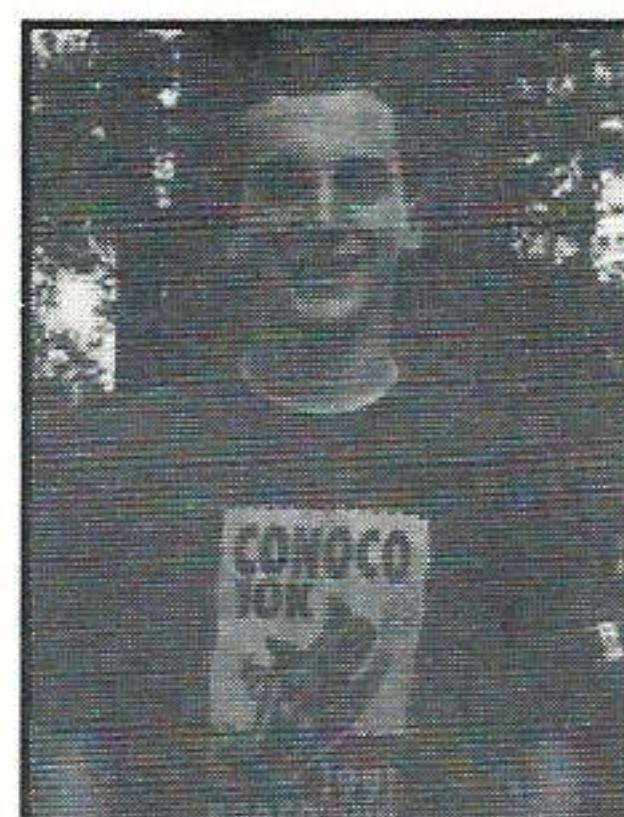
**Amy Boenker**  
Willis High School  
Daughter of Robert Boenker  
Inspector-Contract Crews  
The Woodlands



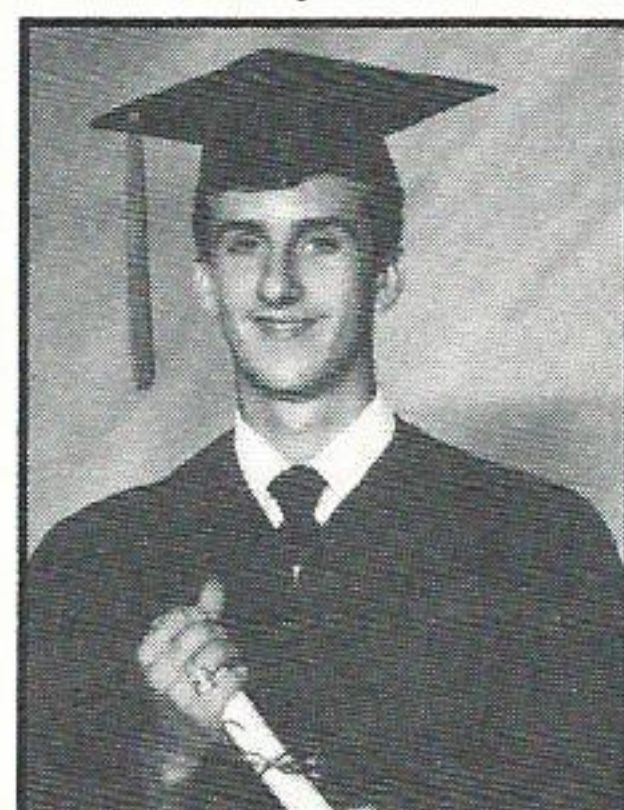
**Richard J. Ducote**  
West Brook Senior High School  
Son of Michael E. Ducote  
Supervisor-Industrial Services  
Beaumont



**Tonya L. Hilliard**  
West Feliciana High School  
Daughter of Amelia A. Hilliard  
Department Clerk  
River Bend



**Kevin Aucoin**  
Dayton High School  
Son of Jackie Aucoin  
Lineman-1st class  
Dayton



**Corey Briscoe**  
Westlake High School  
Son of Kerney Briscoe  
Production Training Representative  
Nelson Station



**Sharon Fenner**  
Conroe High School  
Daughter of Edgar Fenner  
Utility Foreman  
Conroe



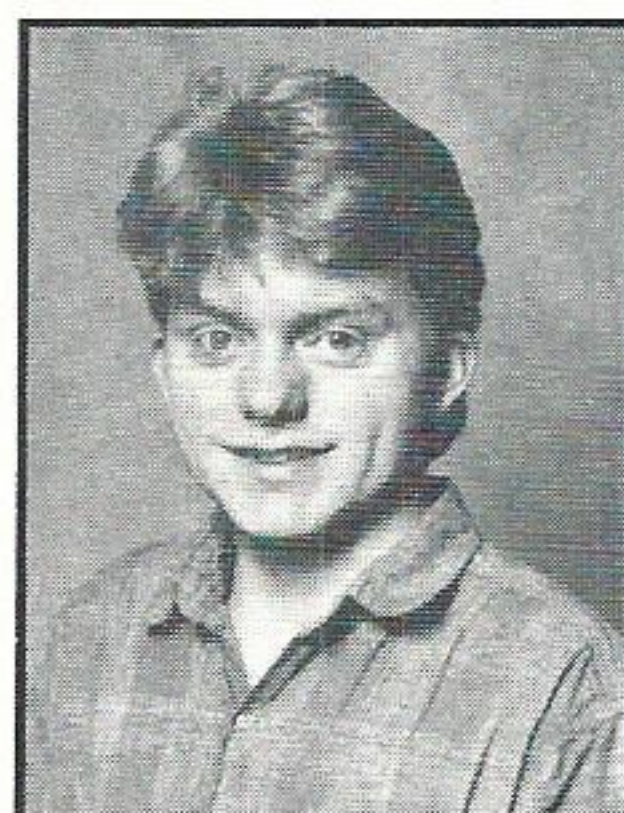
**Christopher Trey Hinson**  
Basic Training, U.S. Navy  
Son of Gail Hinson  
Customer Contact Clerk  
Port Arthur



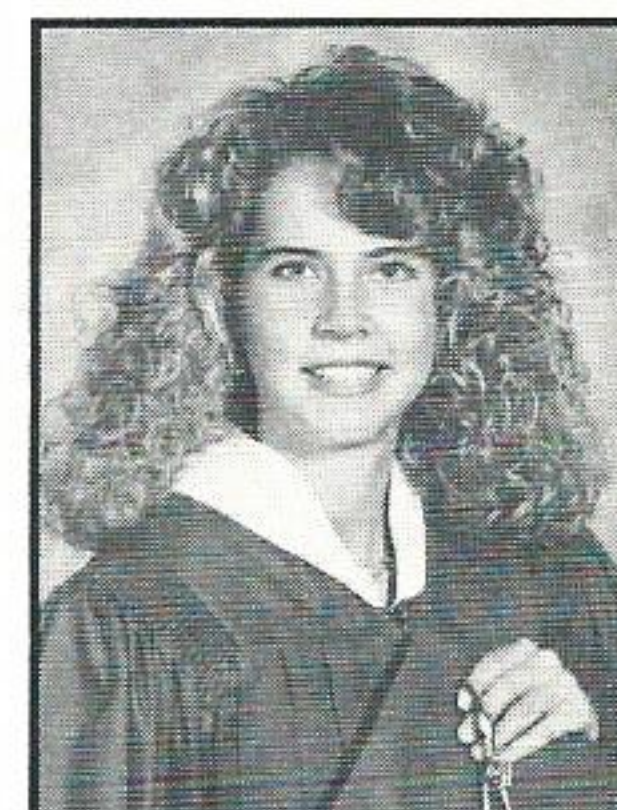
**Stephanie Ann Aultman**  
St. Amant High School  
Daughter of Wallace J. Aultman  
District Line Supervisor  
Gonzales



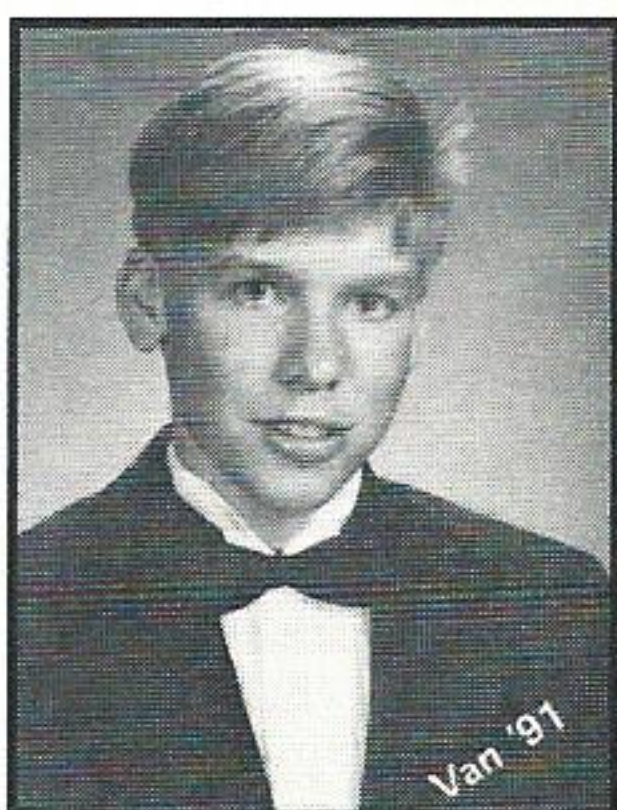
**Cynthia L. Bryant**  
Beaumont Christian High School  
Daughter of Johnny L. Bryant  
Utility Worker II  
Beaumont



**George T. Gilbert Jr.**  
Willis High School  
Son of G.T. Gilbert Sr.  
Equipment Operator  
Lewis Creek



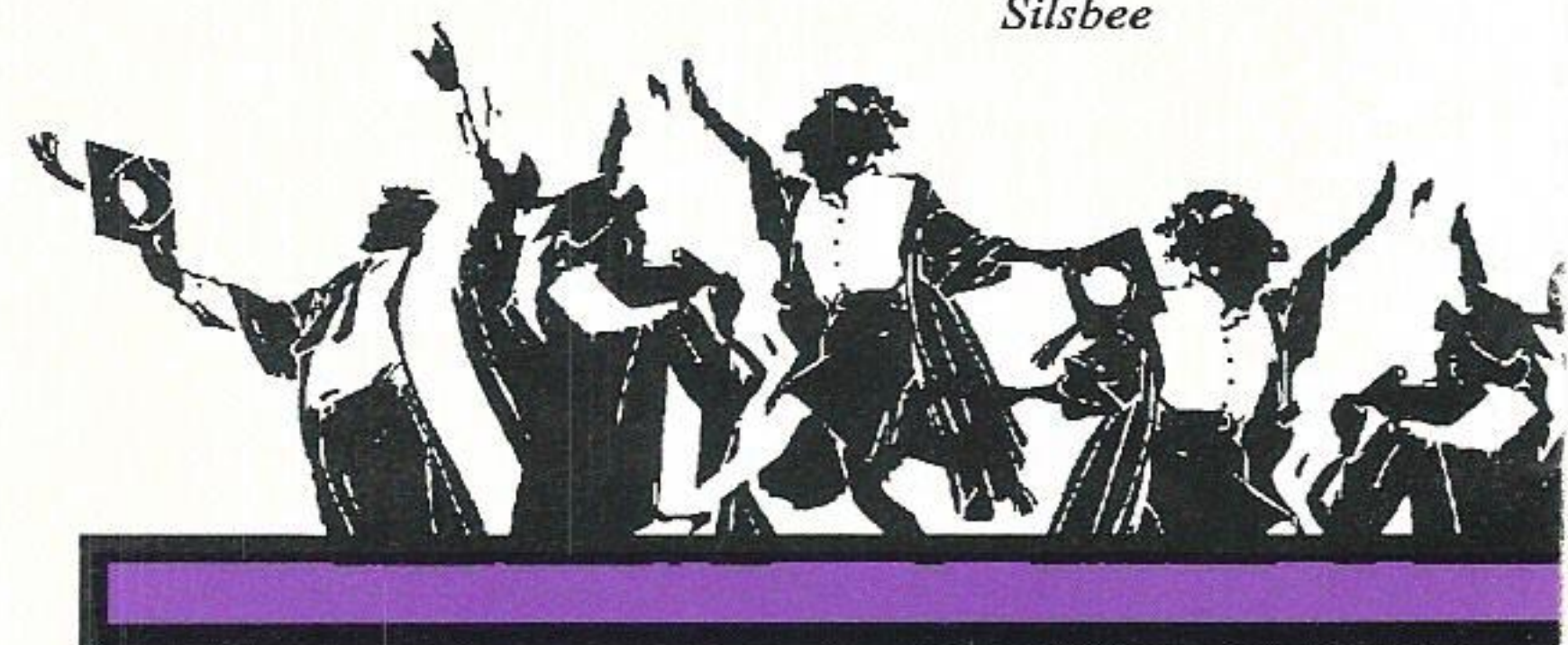
**Christy Berard**  
West Brook Senior High School  
Daughter of  
Ricks & Cheryl Bryant  
Section Head/Departmental Clerk  
Beaumont



**Van Alan Bushnell Jr.**  
LaGrange High School  
Son of Van Alan Bushnell Sr.  
Control Operations Foreman  
Nelson Station

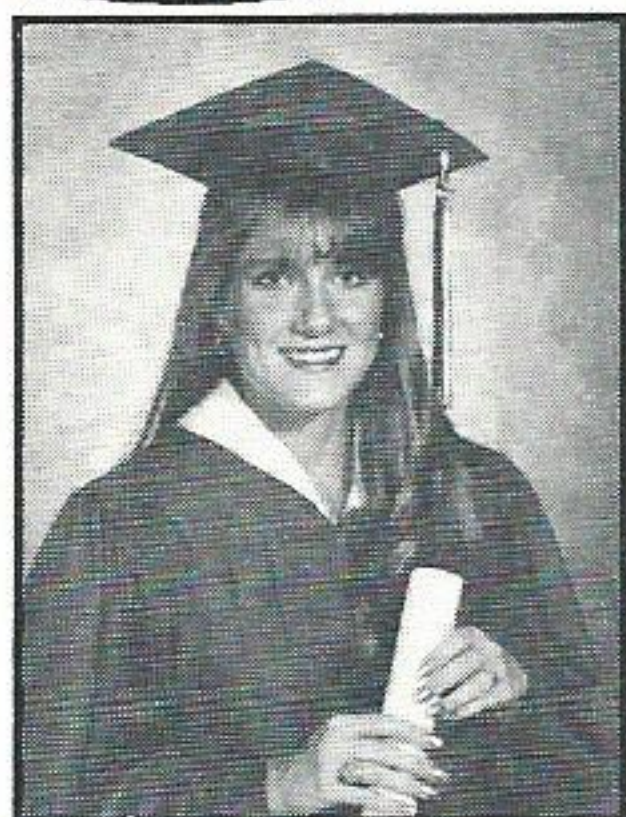


**Christy Goff**  
Silsbee High School  
Daughter of Wayne Goff  
Line Foreman  
Silsbee

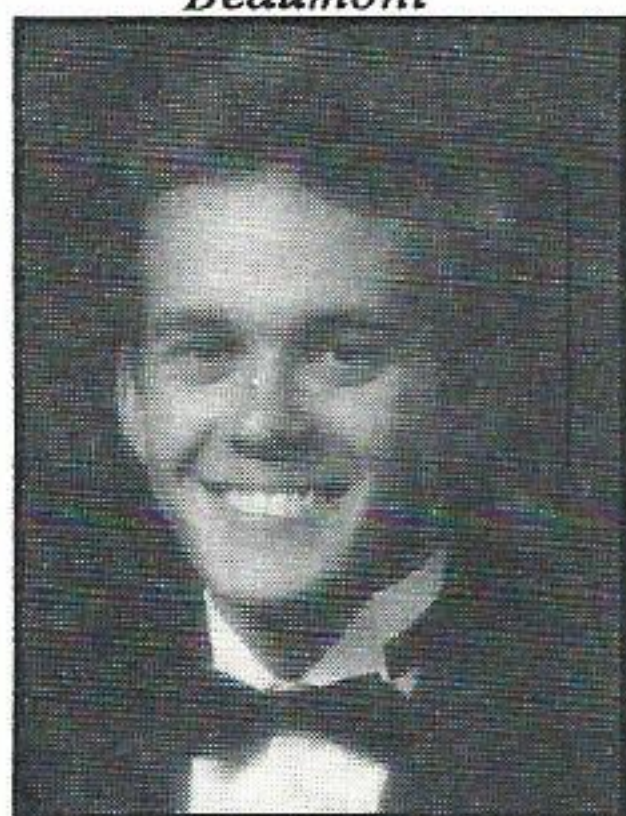




# 1991 Graduates



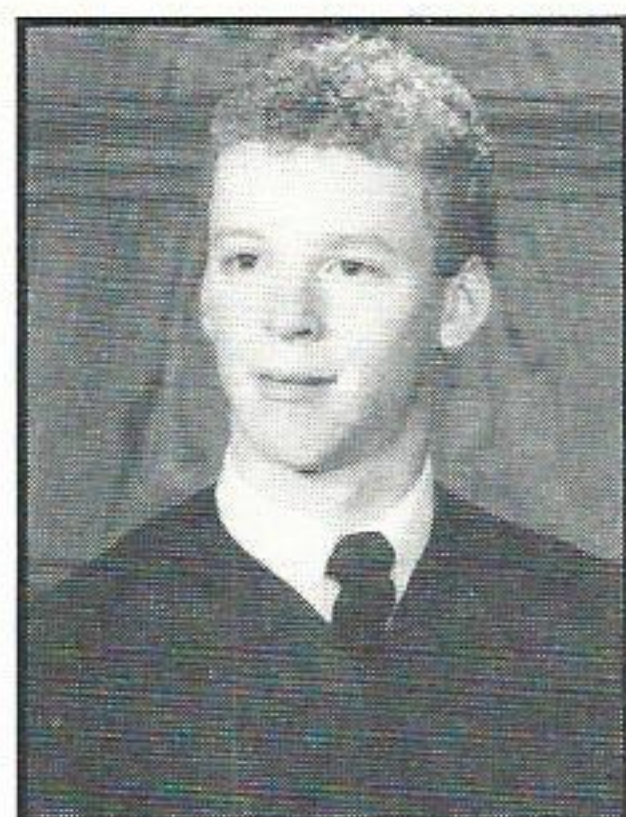
**Elizabeth Hollingsworth**  
West Brook Senior High School  
Daughter of  
Dewitt Hollingsworth  
Marketing Agent  
Beaumont



**Billy Jordan**  
Willis High School  
Son of Norma Jordan  
Customer Contact Clerk  
Conroe



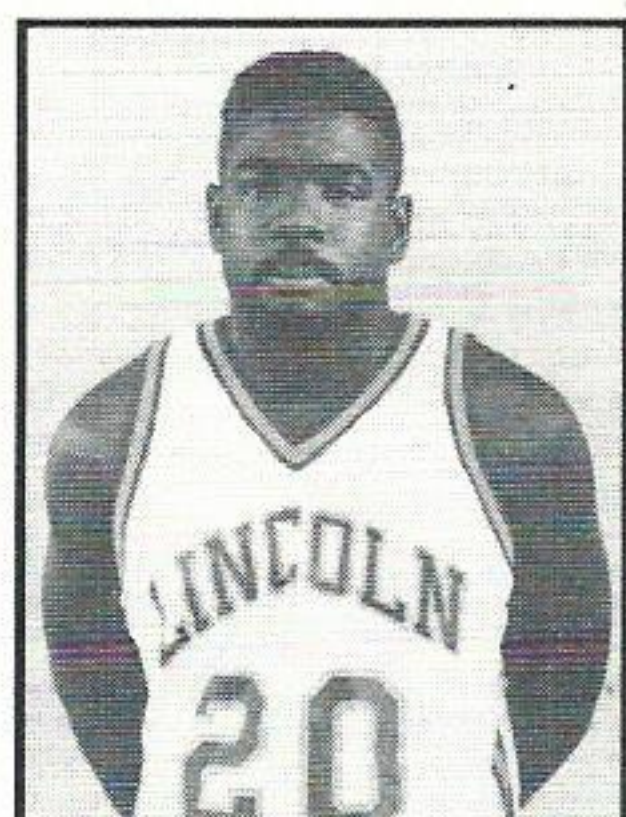
**Angela Lindow**  
Central High School  
Daughter of Glenda Lindow  
Departmental Clerk  
Beaumont



**W. Timothy Irwin**  
Home Schooled  
Son of Walter Irwin  
Director-Performance Engineering  
Beaumont



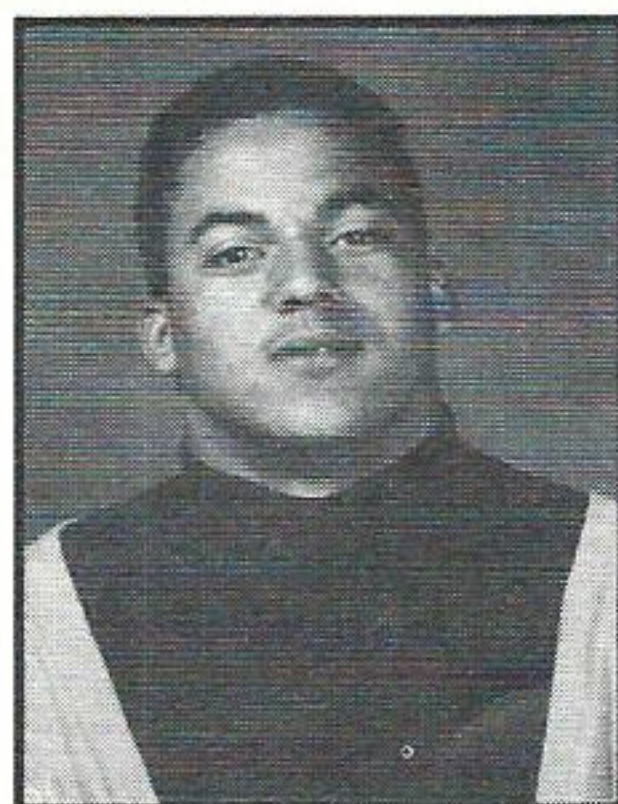
**Heather Kendrella**  
McCullough High School  
V.O.E. Student  
Accounting  
The Woodlands



**Tronell D. Louis**  
Lincoln High School  
Son of Beverly Louis  
Departmental Clerk  
Port Arthur



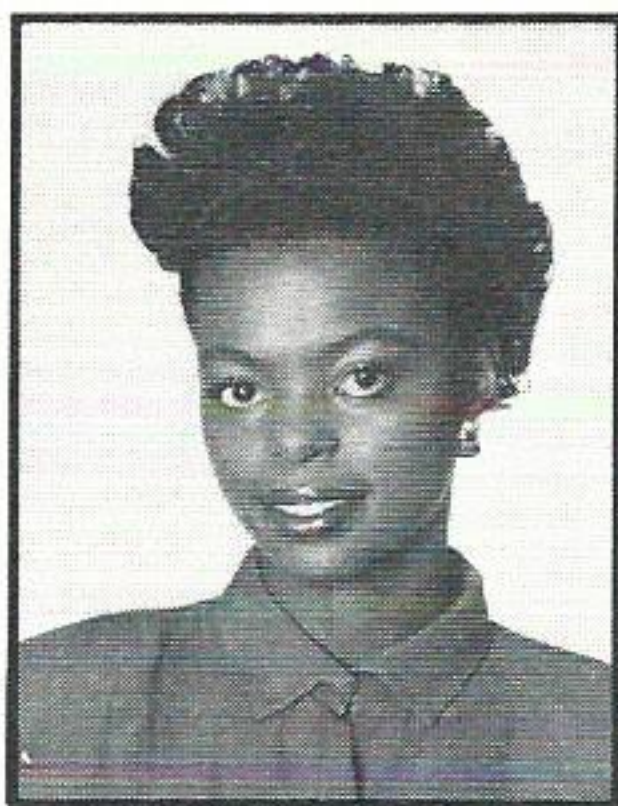
**Amber Jolly**  
Dayton High School  
Daughter of Sharon Davis  
Customer Contact Clerk  
Dayton



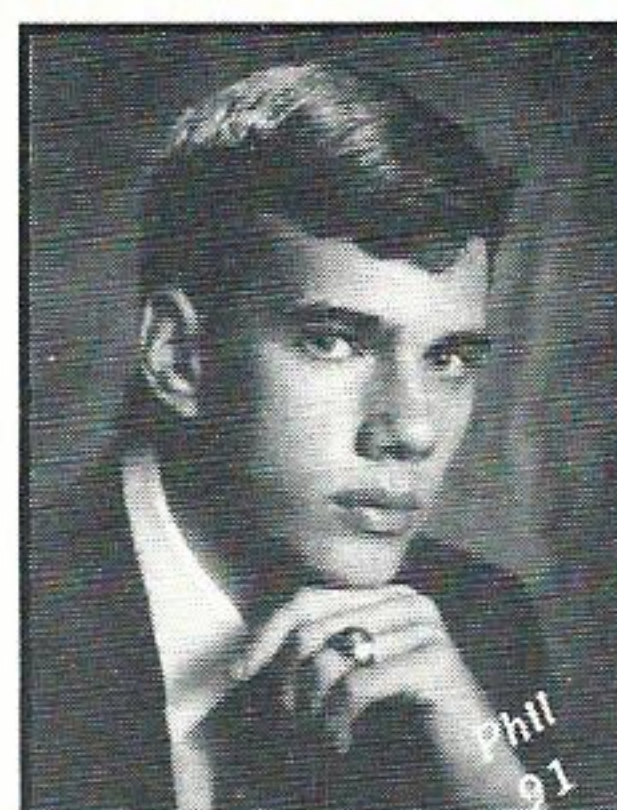
**Jeffrey Aaron La Chapelle**  
Hull-Daisetta High School  
Son of Carolyn La Chapelle  
Customer Contact Clerk  
Dayton



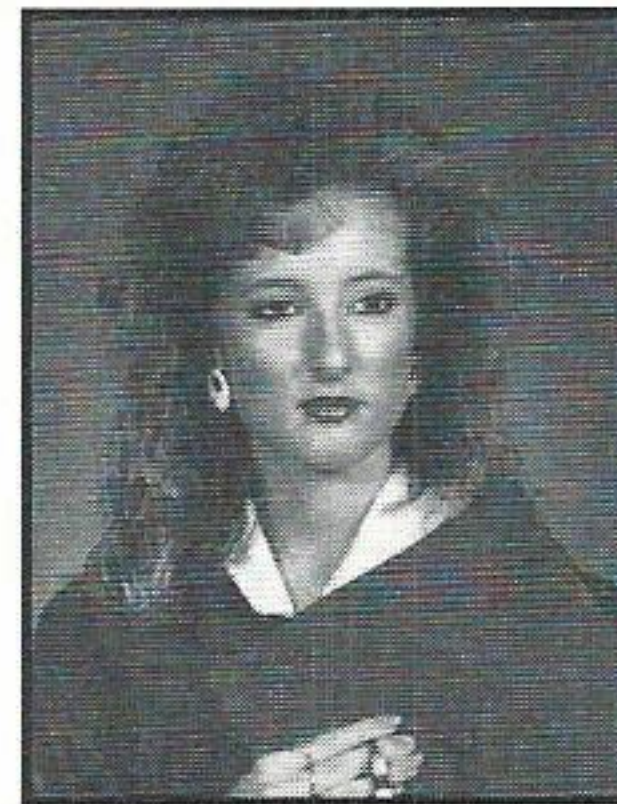
**Sheli Mancil**  
Willis High School  
Daughter of Cathy Roane  
Customer Contact Clerk  
Conroe



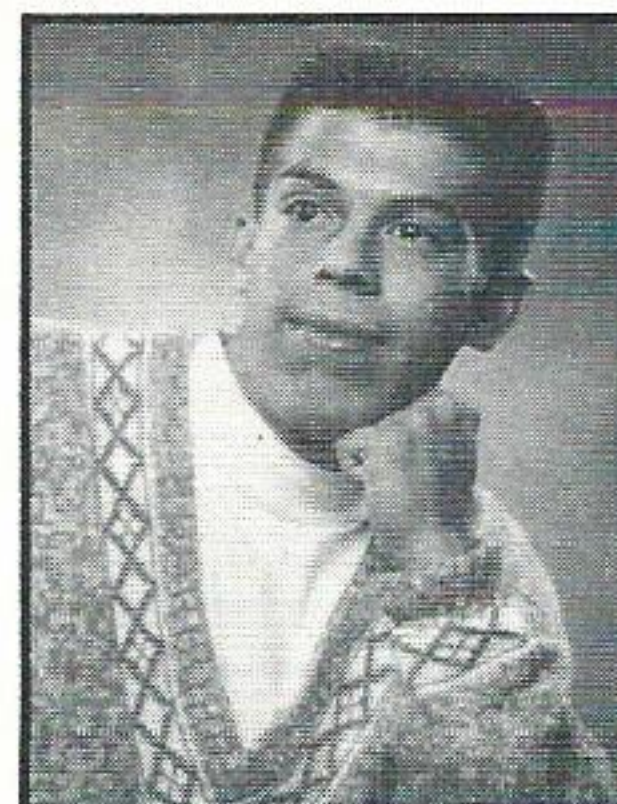
**Tonya Marie McPherson**  
Conroe High School  
Daughter of  
Margaret McPherson-Taylor  
Departmental Clerk  
Conroe



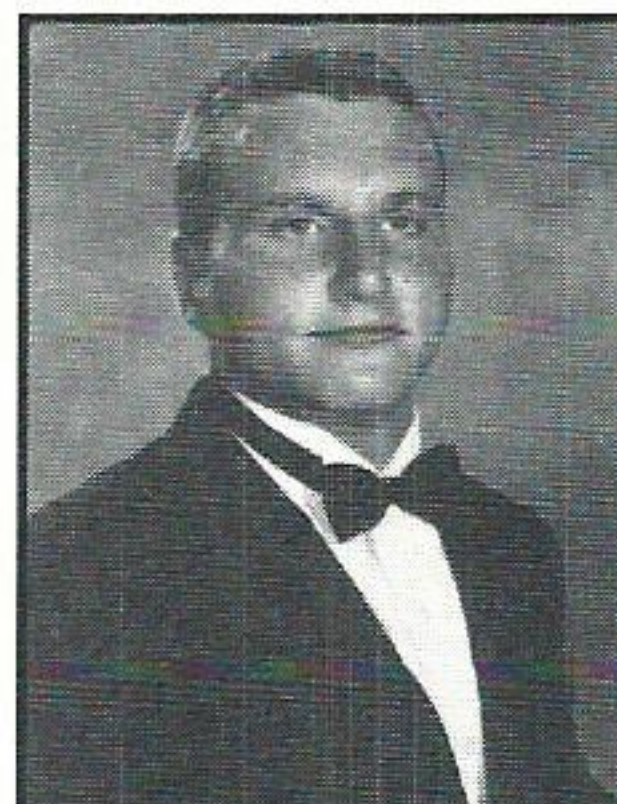
**Phil Jones Jr.**  
Willis High School  
Son of Phil Jones Sr.  
District Service Representative  
The Woodlands



**April Dawn Landry**  
LaGrange High School  
Daughter of R.M. Meche  
Coordinator-Accounting & Admin.  
Willow Glen



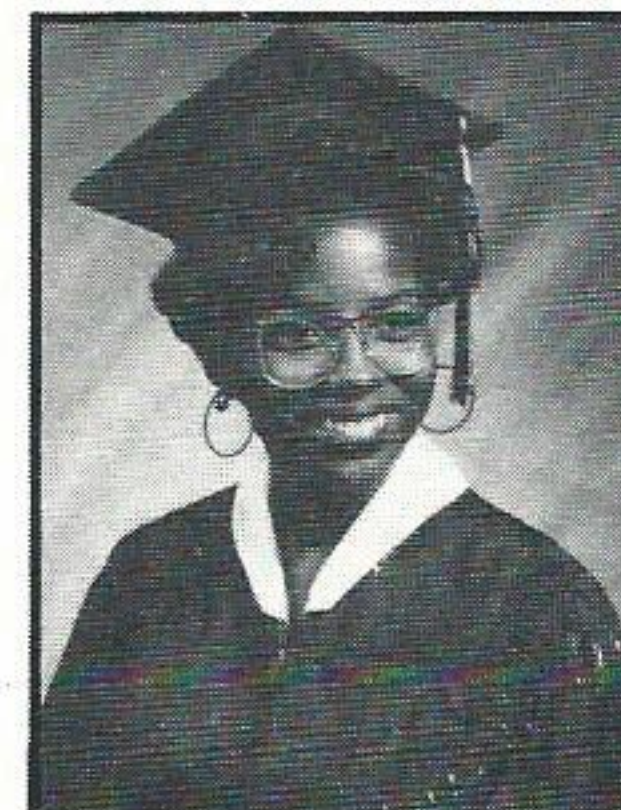
**Brandon Juan Martinez**  
Thomas Jefferson High School  
Son of Adela C. Martinez  
Departmental Clerk  
Port Arthur



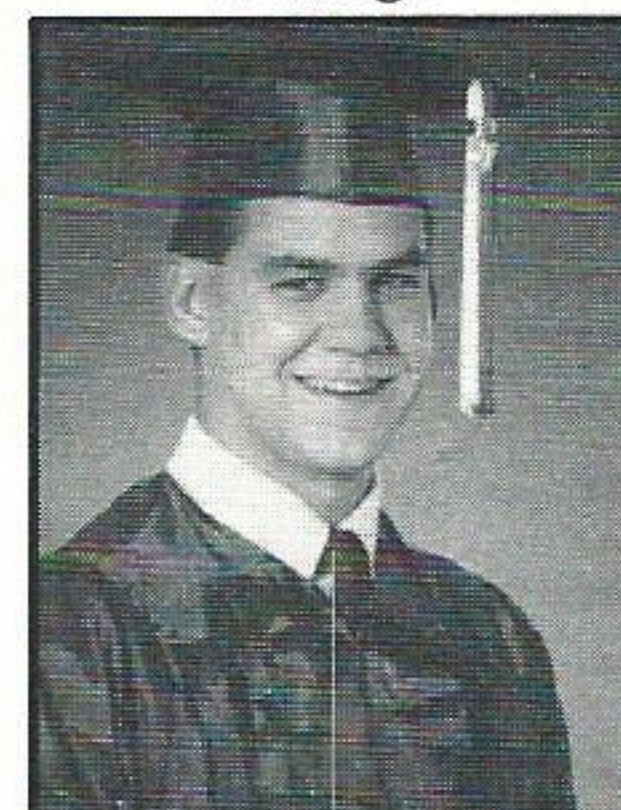
**Daniel B. McRae**  
Centreville Academy  
Son of L. Beth McRae  
Departmental Clerk  
River Bend



**Rachel Lebert**  
Hardin-Jefferson High School  
Daughter of Robert & Betty Lebert  
Serviceman-1st Class/Section  
Head-Accounting  
Sour Lake/Beaumont



**Shaunna J. McCrew**  
Elton High School  
Daughter of Wanda J. McCrew  
Customer Contact Clerk  
Jennings



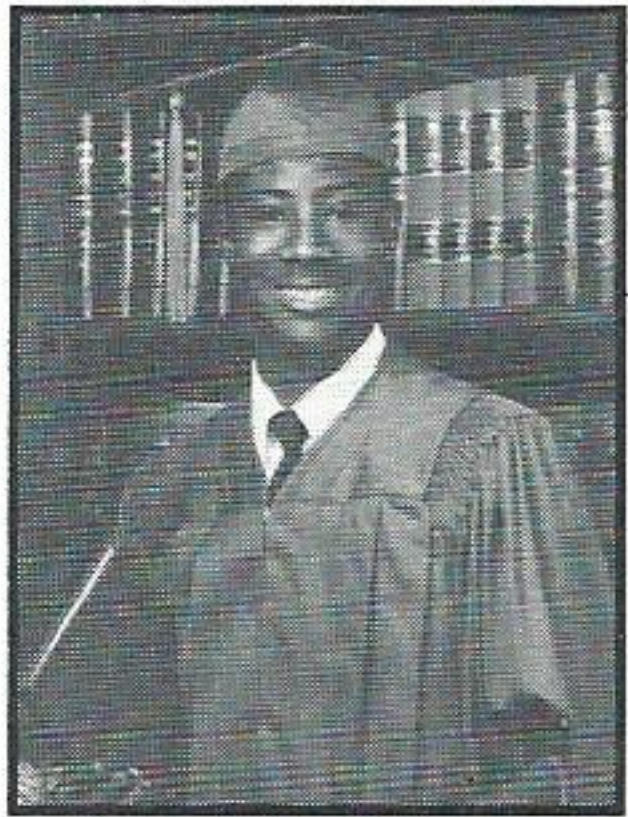
**Michael Scott Meche**  
McKinley High School  
Son of R.M. Meche  
Coordinator-Accounting & Admin.  
Willow Glen



**Bridget Melancon**  
Stephen F. Austin High School  
Daughter of Leon Romero  
Senior Engineering Assistant  
Port Arthur



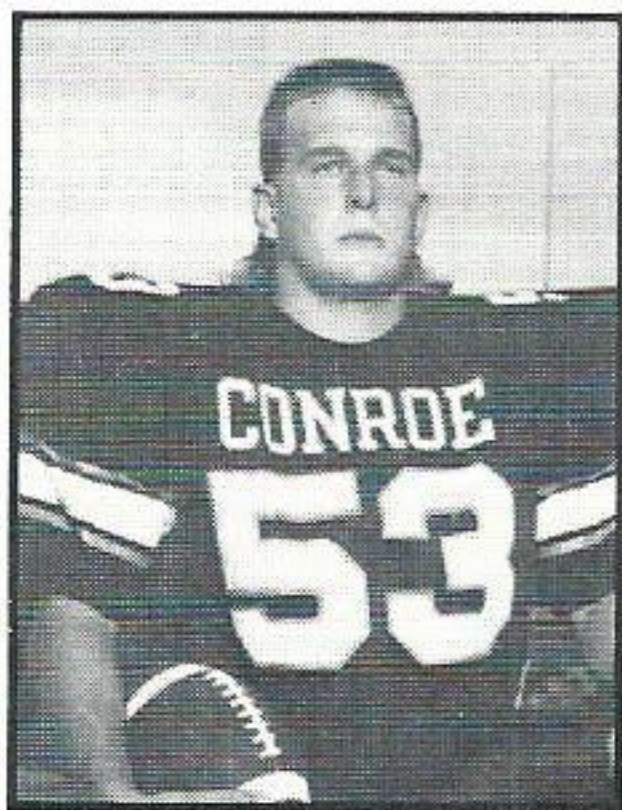




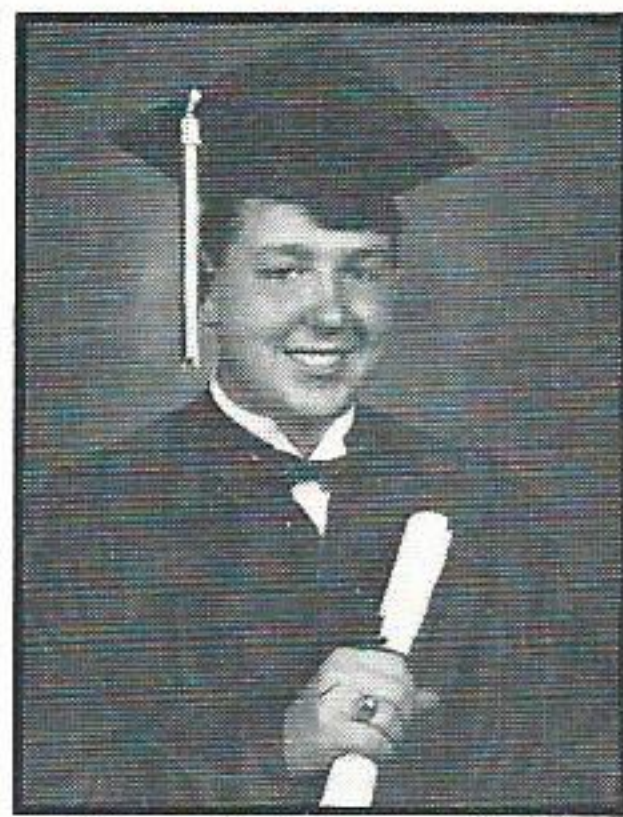
**Carlos D. Odell**  
*Belaire Medical Magnet High School*  
 Son of Janice G. Odell  
*Accounting Clerk*  
*Baton Rouge*



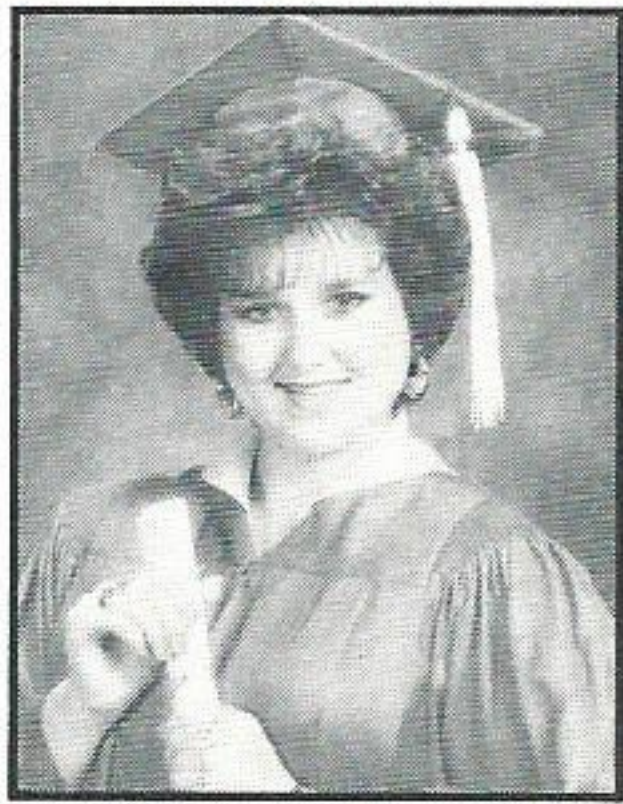
**Brandy Rowe**  
*Montgomery High School*  
 Daughter of Terry Rowe  
*Instrumental Technician-2nd Class*  
*Lewis Creek*



**Stephen Smith**  
*Conroe High School*  
 Son of A. Milton Smith  
*Manager-Power Interconnections*  
*Beaumont*



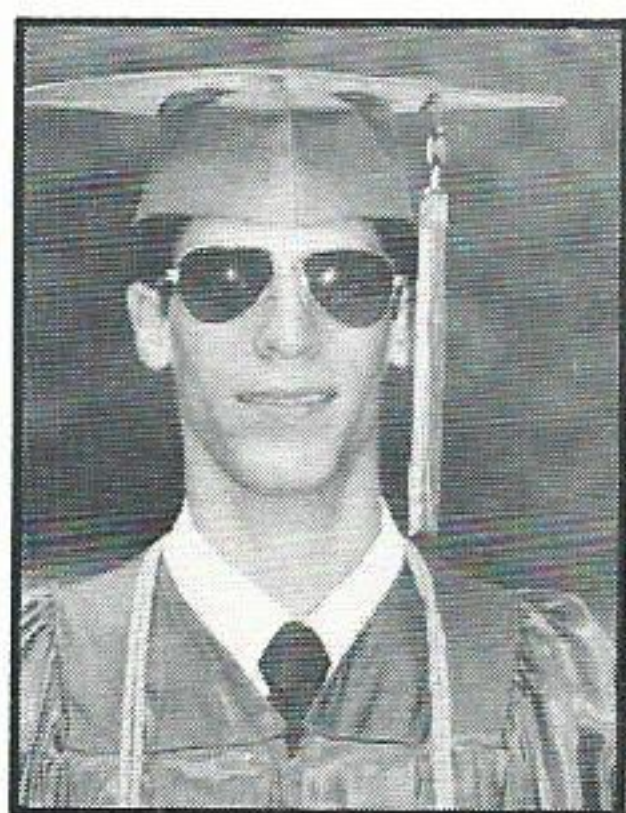
**Dax J. Menard**  
*Breaux Bridge High School*  
 Son of Maurita G. Menard  
*Departmental Clerk*  
*Lafayette*



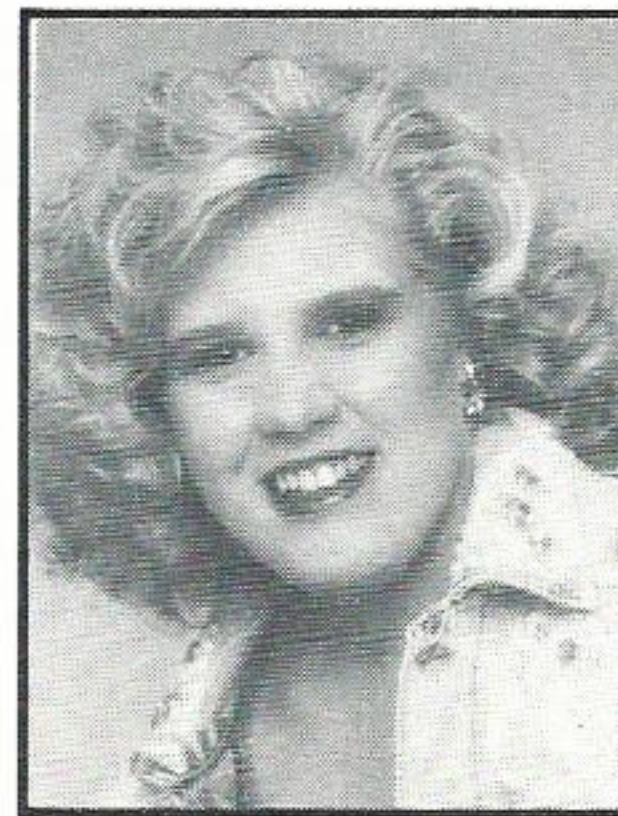
**Stacey Leanne Pearl**  
*Bridge City High School*  
 Daughter of Virgil Lee Pearl  
*Outage Coordinator*  
*Beaumont*



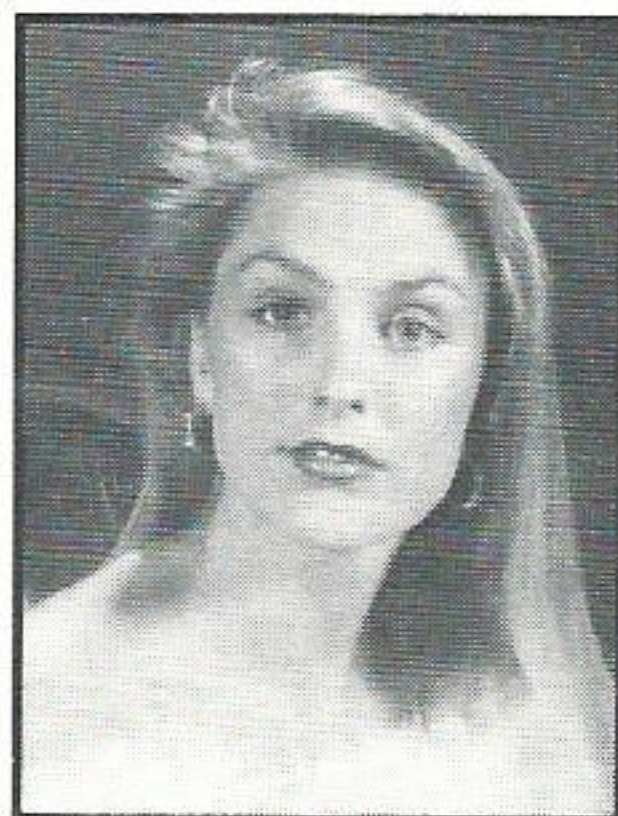
**John Rutherford**  
*Conroe High School*  
 Son of D.W. & Darlene Rutherford  
*Master Instrument Tech.*  
*/Departmental Clerk*  
*Lewis Creek/Conroe*



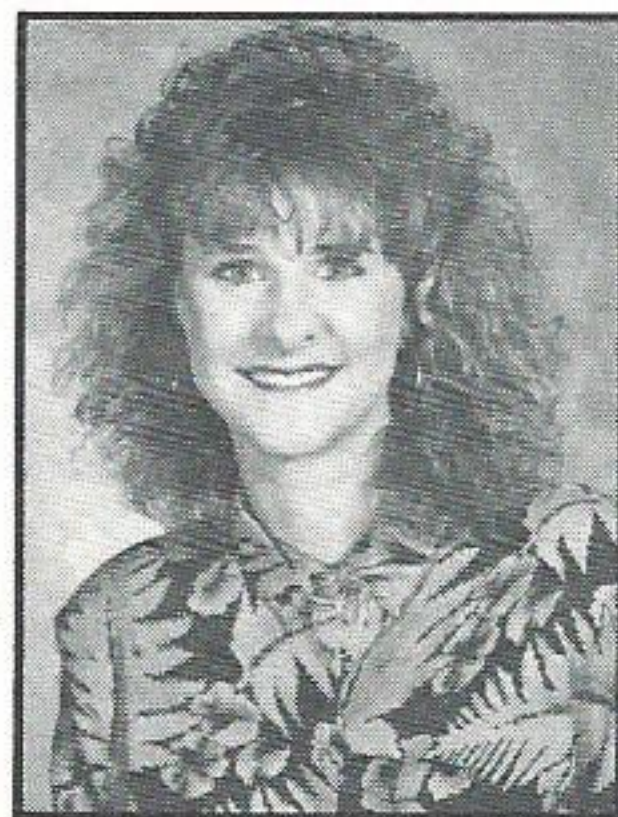
**Shawn Patrick Sparks**  
*Livonia High School*  
 Son of Sidney J. Sparks Jr.  
*Collector*  
*Baton Rouge*



**Angie Mercer**  
*James Bowie High School*  
 Daughter of Gerald Mercer  
*Utility Foreman*  
*Orange*



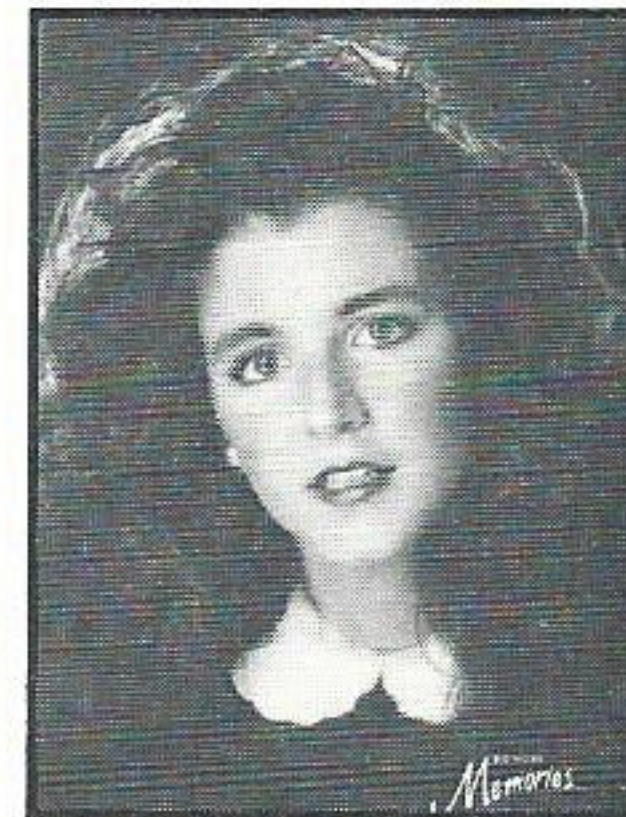
**Monica M. Perry**  
*Monsignor Kelly High School*  
 Daughter of Richard M. Perry  
*Cash Manager/Financial Analyst*  
*Beaumont*



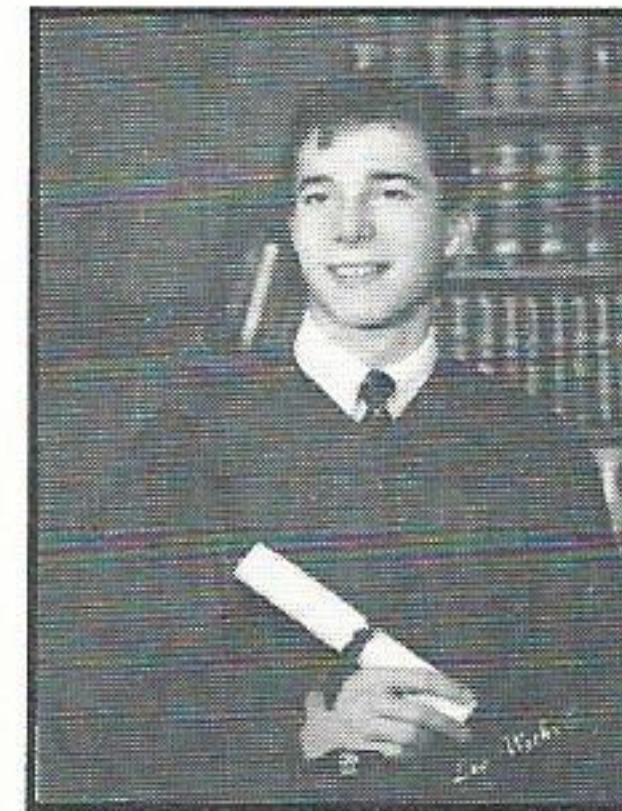
**Stephanie Shimeck**  
*West Brook Senior High School*  
 Daughter of Larry Shimeck  
*Senior Systems Analyst*  
*Beaumont*



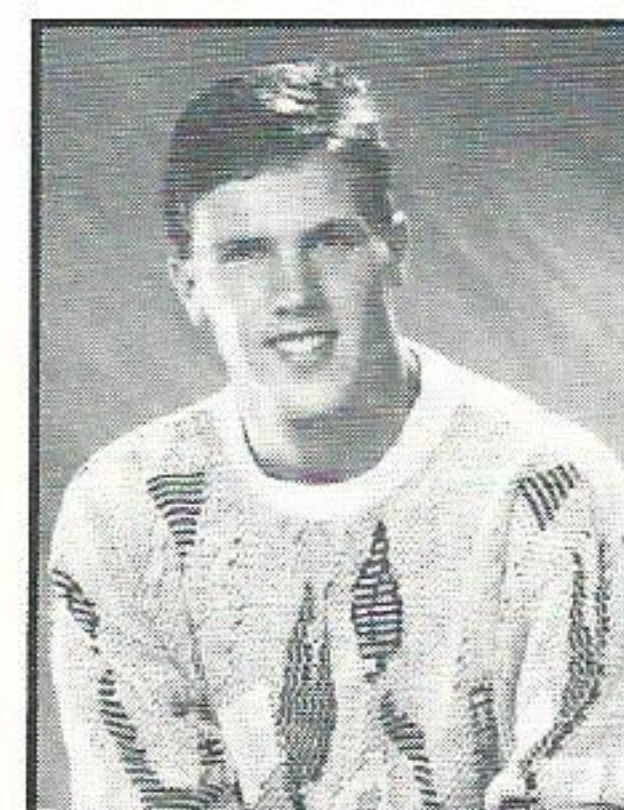
**Jason L. Sprately**  
*Mobile County High School*  
 Son of James F. Sprately  
*Radwaste Foreman*  
*River Bend*



**Carrie Michelle Newman**  
*Conroe High School*  
 Daughter of H.W. (Mike) Newman  
*Operations Supervisor*  
*Conroe*



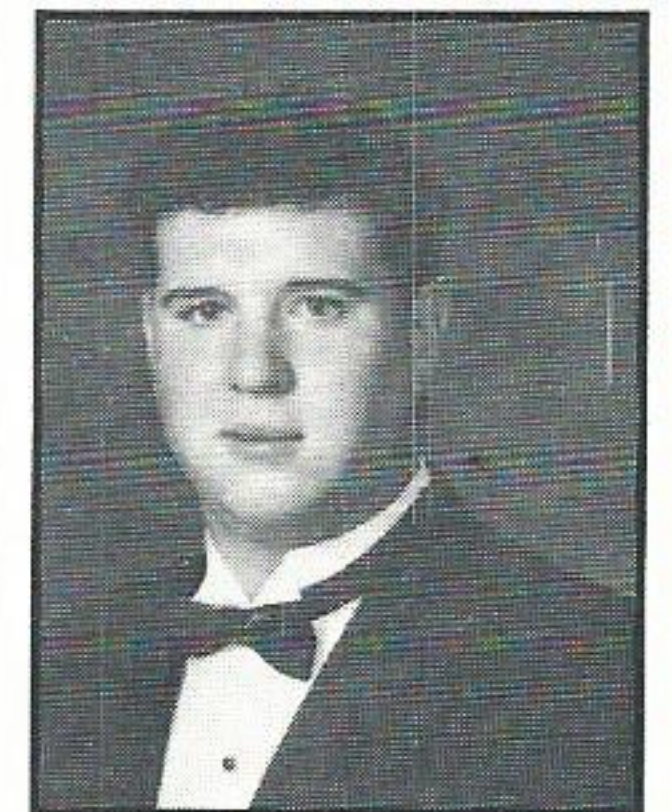
**Pablo A. Prichard**  
*Northwest Christian Academy*  
 Son of Andres L. Prichard  
*Principal Engineer*  
*Beaumont*



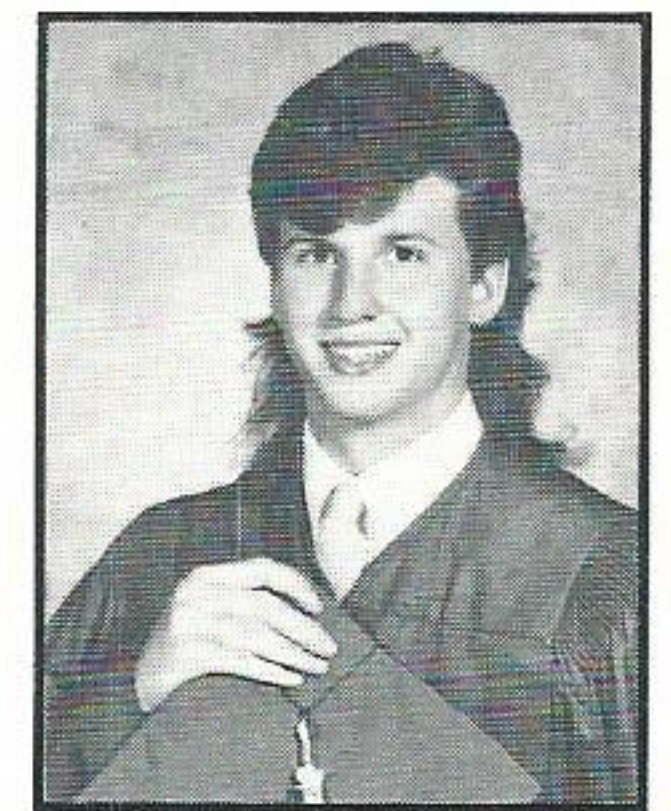
**Jason R. Smalley**  
*Bridge City High School*  
 Son of Bob Smalley  
*Equipment Operator*  
*Sabine Station*



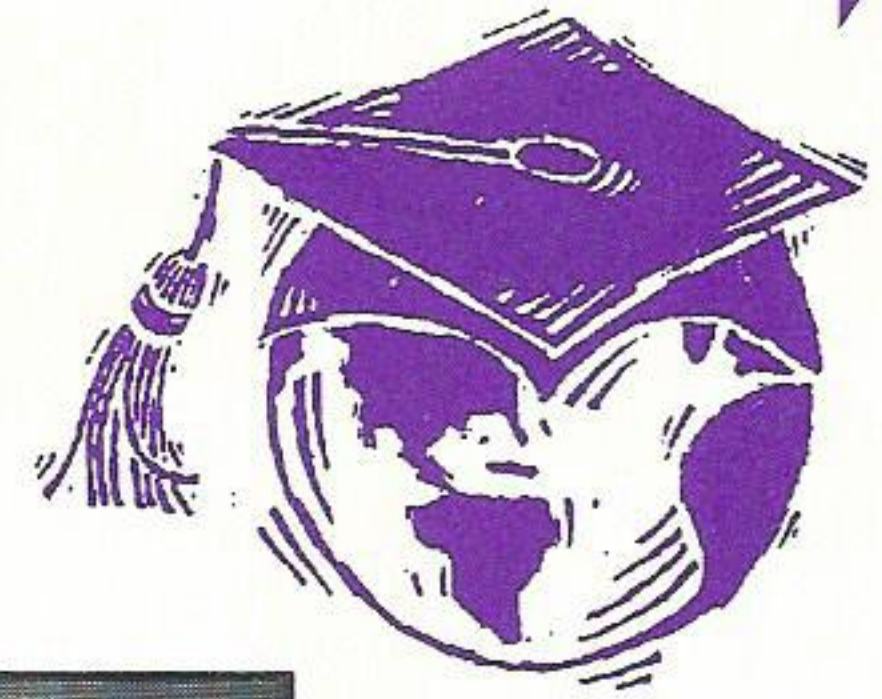
**Janna Kate Nunez**  
*Port Neches-Groves High School*  
 Daughter of Pamela M. Nunez  
*Benefits Associate*  
*Beaumont*



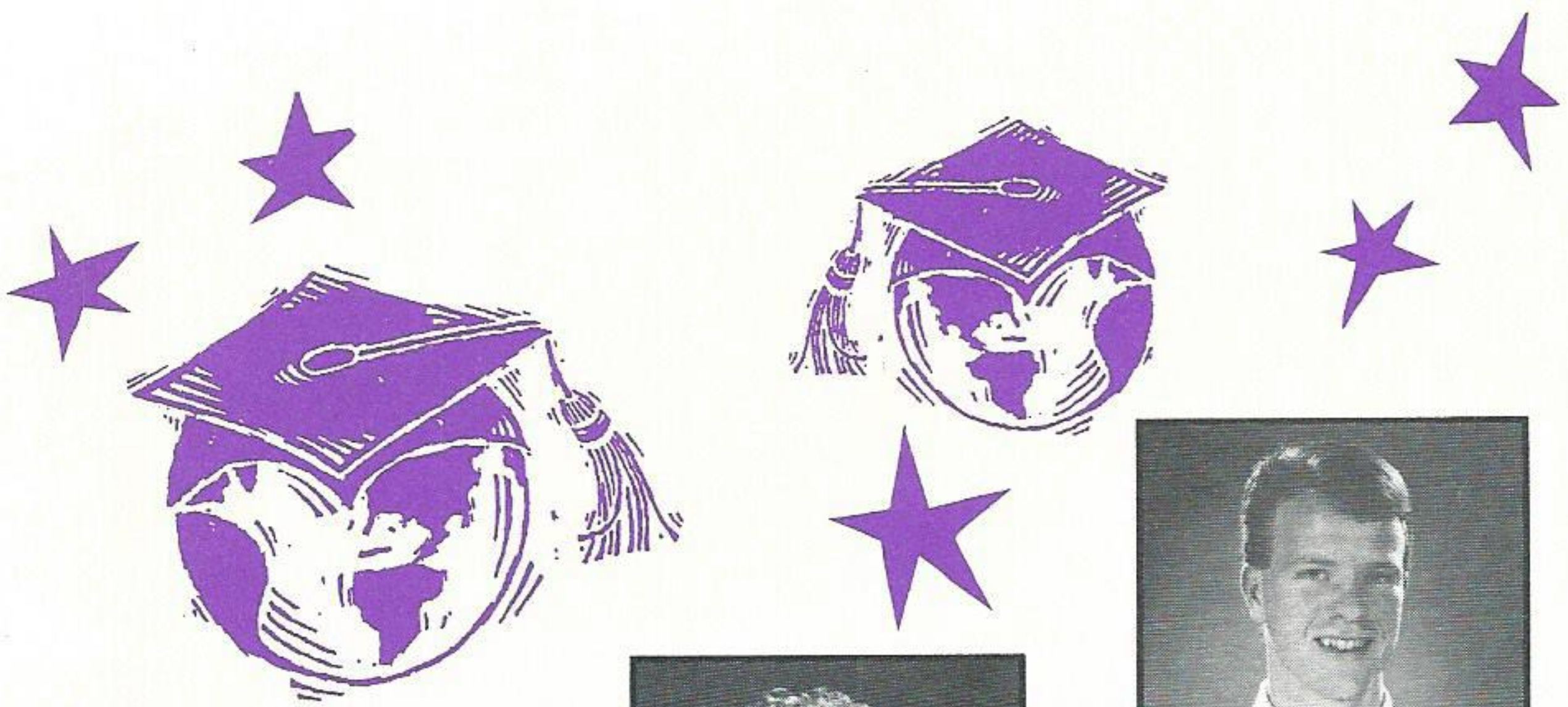
**B. Dylan Ross**  
*Cornerstone Academy*  
 Son of Terry C. Ross  
*Lineman-1st Class*  
*Baton Rouge*



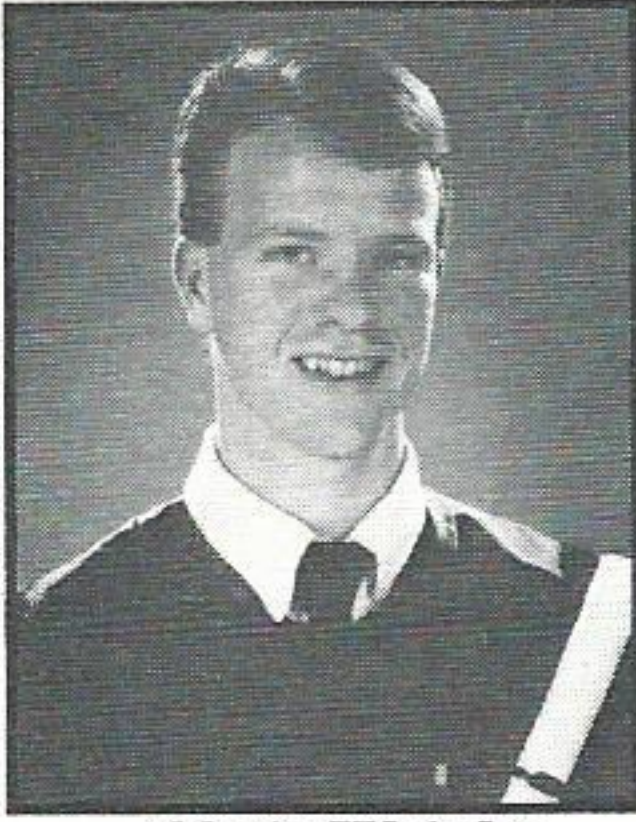
**Chip Smith**  
*West Brook Senior High School*  
 Son of Sue Smith  
*Departmental Clerk*  
*Beaumont*







**Kristina A. Zock**  
*Baton Rouge*  
*Magnet High School*  
 Daughter of Erwin J. Zoch  
*Senior Nuclear Engineer*  
*River Bend*



**Chris Wright**  
*Nederland High School*  
 Son of Kathleen Chelette  
*Secretary*  
*Orange*



**Brandy Williams**  
*Little Cypress-Mauriceville High School*  
 Daughter of Roy Lee Williams  
*Serviceman-1st class*  
*Orange*



**Teresa Ann Thornton**  
*Groveton High School*  
 Daughter of Linda Thornton  
*Customer Contact Clerk*  
*Trinity*

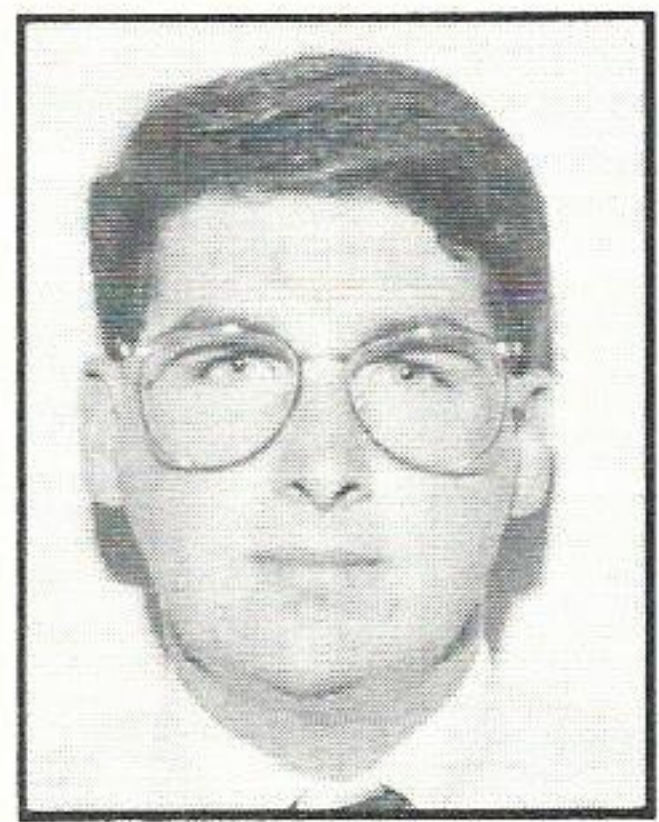
# 1991 College Graduates



**Lea Nora Bushnell**  
*McNeese State University*  
 Daughter of  
 Van Alan Bushnell Sr.  
*Control Operations Foreman*  
*Nelson Station*



**Cynthia Sojka**  
*Texas A&M University*  
 Daughter of Deborah Stagg  
*Senior System Analyst*  
*Beaumont*



**Jefferey W. Laird**  
*St. Mary University School of Law*  
 Son of Sandra W. Conn  
*Senior Information Analyst*  
*Beaumont*



**Gerald Kurten**  
*Southwest Texas State University*  
 Son of Curtis Kurten  
*Relay Foreman*  
*Conroe*



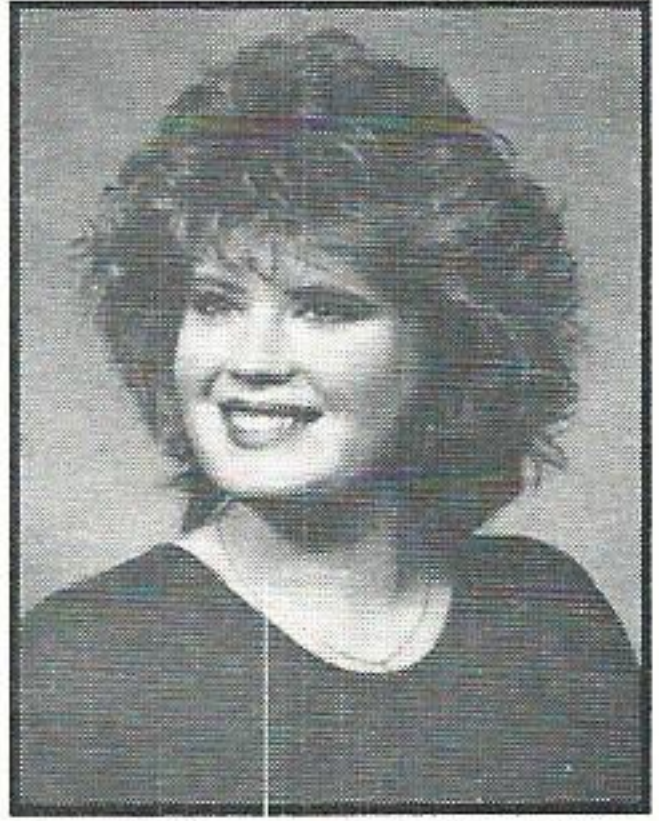
**Dana & Richard Kurten**  
*Baylor College of Medicine*  
 Daughter-in-law & son  
 of Curtis Kurten  
*Relay Foreman*  
*Conroe*



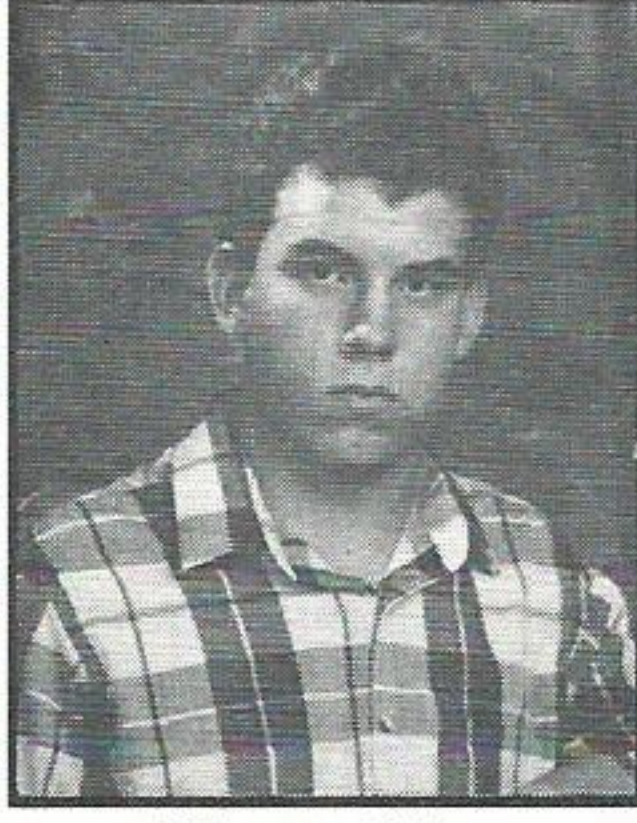
**Lawrence H. Dautel**  
*University of New York*  
*Radiation Protection Technician*  
*River Bend*



**Jeri Watson**  
*Lamar University*  
 Daughter of Carolyn Watson  
*Accounting Supervisor*  
*Orange*



**Paige Elizabeth Matthews**  
*Lamar University*  
 Daughter of Sue Martin  
*Laboratory Assistant*  
*Sabine Station*



**Bryan Wayne Thompson**  
*McNeese State University*  
 Son of Kermit Thompson  
*Senior Engineering Assistant*  
*Lake Charles*





## Waterfowl refuge safe haven for area wildlife



*The Waterfowl Management Area at Sabine Station now attracts approximately 150 ducks per day at each pond on the refuge.*

story by Susan Gilley

photos by Robert Adams and Scott Harper

In the late 1980s, some GSU employees dreamed of filling the skies near Sabine Station with ducks. At the time, the power plant was surrounded by a dead saltwater marsh.

The dream is now nearing reality, with GSU employees helping to provide additional Texas Gulf Coast roosting areas for migratory waterfowl near the plant. Since 1989, employees have upgraded two 45-acre ponds, transforming them into a freshwater marsh that supports fish, fowl and other creatures.

GSU's 90-acre Waterfowl Management Area joined the Gulf Coast Venture of the North American Waterfowl Management Plan in 1989,

becoming the first large corporate member, says John Bernard, the senior engineering assistant who spearheaded the waterfowl refuge effort.

The grassroots volunteer effort aims at giving ducks and geese a place to rest and feed so that when they fly back north in the spring, they'll be healthy and ready to breed.

As a participant in the Gulf Coast Venture, GSU has committed to a course of action to preserve waterfowl habitat areas to ensure the continued survival of ducks, geese and swans.

During the first year and a half, employee volunteers, following the technical advice

from the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and Texas Parks and Wildlife, repaired the levees surrounding the two impoundments. They also repaired drainage culverts and cleared out weeds, then flushed the field with fresh water to allow desirable vegetation to grow. Construction plans for 1991 include deepening the impoundments and constructing water control devices.

When Gulf States' waterfowl refuge was first established, the entire area was attracting about 100 to 150 ducks a day. Now, Bernard reports regularly seeing 150 ducks per day at each pond. Experts have predicted that the two ponds





will eventually provide refuge for up to 1,000 ducks a day.

Employees are now considering expanding the project to as much as 3,000 acres by including GSU wetlands that adjoin the original site.

Waterfowl are not the only beneficiaries of the project. A previously dead saltwater marsh will be replaced with a brackish freshwater marsh that is already attracting or will attract redfish, shrimp, crabs, otters, raccoons, nutria, muskrats and many other varieties of fish and fowl.



*Top, a river otter finds security in grassy waters. Above left, Sabine Station employees marked off the area, restricting hunting. Above center right, several rice birds have made their home in the refuge. Above right, numerous egrets can be seen surveying the terrain.*



# SERVICE ANNIVERSARIES

March

1991

Service  
Anniversaries

## 40 YEARS

**Fritz J. Duhon**  
Plant Production  
Neches Station

## 30 YEARS

**John R. Long**  
Internal Audits  
Beaumont  
**Marvin J. Schaefer**  
Electric T&D  
The Woodlands

## 20 YEARS

**Susan A. Holeman**  
Electric T&D  
Baton Rouge  
**E. H. Schneider Jr.**  
Plant Production  
Willow Glen  
**Nellie F. Bremer**  
Electric T&D  
Baton Rouge  
**D. W. Rutherford**  
Plant Production  
Lewis Creek  
**Bessie A. Esthay**  
Human Resources  
Lake Charles  
**Donald W. Barnett**  
Human Resources  
Port Arthur  
**Ann B. O'Neill**  
Human Resources  
Beaumont

## 10 YEARS

**Major C. Banks**  
Electric T&D  
Baton Rouge  
**Thomas E. Hargrove**  
System Operations  
Beaumont  
**Jimmie L. Mott**  
Power Supply  
Beaumont  
**Blain A. Bourque**  
Electric T&D  
Lake Charles  
**Dane A. James**  
Electric T&D  
Port Arthur  
**Marggie D. Jones**  
Electric T&D  
Beaumont  
**Joseph B. Soileau Jr.**  
Electric T&D  
Lake Charles  
**Barry J. Alleman**  
Plant Production  
Louisiana Station  
**Cynthia B. Fontenette**  
Division Accounting  
Baton Rouge

**Hurtis W. Stevenson**  
Electric T&D  
Baton Rouge  
**Beverly F. Caillier**  
Corporate Services  
Beaumont  
**Sam R. Bethea III**  
Customer Service  
Beaumont  
**Boyd J. Bills**  
Accounting Services  
Beaumont  
**Paul W. Greathouse**  
Plant Production  
Nelson Station  
**Samuel R. Larch**  
Plant Production  
Sabine Station  
**Mark A. Reddin**  
Electric T&D  
Beaumont  
**James E. Walker**  
Electric T&D  
Conroe  
**Eva C. Wilkinson**  
Plant Production  
Louisiana Station  
**Orvil J. Brouillette**  
RBNG Plant Operations  
River Bend  
**Laurel B. Clauer**  
Legal Services  
Baton Rouge  
**Linka B. Peveto**  
Public Affairs  
Beaumont  
**David E. Simmons**  
Plant Production  
Nelson Station  
**Samuel W. Bray**  
Electric T&D  
Jennings  
**Melvinice B. Broussard**  
Purchasing  
Beaumont  
**Cheryl M. Kirby**  
Division Accounting  
Baton Rouge  
**Paul J. Narcisse**  
Electric T&D  
Beaumont  
**Sherman R. Powell Jr.**  
Plant Production  
Nelson Coal  
**Sheila M. Stevens**  
Electric T&D  
Beaumont  
**Sidney A. Williams**  
Electric T&D  
Vidor  
**Lisa G. Woods**  
Electric T&D  
Beaumont



# NEWS BRIEFS



*Glass and Conley*

## Western Division wins safety awards

Charles Glass, vice president-operations, recently presented John Conley, vice president-Western Division, with a Million Mile Club award for Western Division.

Employees in Western Division have driven over one-million miles without a chargeable accident. If this accident-free driving streak continues, the two-million mile mark will be reached the middle of June.

Western Division also won the President's Safety Award for 1990. Employees out-paced all other divisions in preventing both vehicle accidents and injuries. Western Division experienced only two lost time accidents and had seven chargeable accidents in 1990.

"You're safety records are outstanding," said Dr. Linn Draper, president and CEO, at the awards presentation to Western Division employees. "You are to be congratulated."



*Floyd Fortenberry, section head-T&D engineering estimates and records, Beaumont, had a son serving in Operation Desert Storm in Saudia Arabia. The department decided to show its support of Fortenberry, his son and all the servicemen by going to his house and decorating his iron gate with U.S. flags and ribbons.*



*Lafayette District Marketing personnel participated in a recent Acadian Home Builder's Annual Blueprint Home Show. Good Cents information was featured in the GSU booth along with Reddy Kilowatt. Pat Cormier, consumer service representative, posed as Reddy, proved to be a huge success with the children. Over 5,500 people attended the show.*



# MAILBOX



Bell

## A helping hand

"I would first like to say that you have a kind man on your staff," writes Mrs. Loraine Martin, The Woodlands customer, about Ivy Bell, serviceman-1st class, The Woodlands. "My husband is not able to do any kind of work. We are up in age.

"I was standing in a wheel barrow trying to cut a limb from a tree...Mr. Bell stopped as he passed and helped me get the limb down. We both were so grateful of this man's kind deed.

"Not many people this day and time would stop to give you a helping hand. Just wanted to say you have a man on your staff that cares."

## Junior support

The Essen Lane office received this letter from Latanya Danielle Buckner, a school-aged child in Baton Rouge:

"On March 16, our lights cut off. These big trucks drove in the fields behind our house and hit the wires. I know that the utility company worries about this, too. I like Gulf States Utilities because they try very hard to get to your house as soon as they can.

"The man that came to check our lights was in danger. They have a forest with wild deers, bears and snakes back there. The mud gets real wet and he could have got stuck. The man who checked our lights waved and smiled at me while leaving.

"Please, next time whoever checks our lights, be careful. I love Gulf States Utilities. Please write back..."

## Rave reviews

"I am sure public utilities are a lot like newspapers in one aspect--you hear a lot of complaints, but seldom hear about the good things your employees have done," writes Dub Brown, editor, Port Arthur News, Port Arthur, to Ron McKenzie, division vice president-Port Arthur.

"Well, rest assured this is not a complaint. Quite the opposite. I can find plenty of good things to say about GSU and some of your employees following the annual Port Arthur News Recipe Contest Cookoff held at the GSU Auditorium.

"It was the best contest we've had in the five years I have been associated with them...We consider the 1991 cookoff a success and a lot of the credit for that goes to the help we received from GSU.

"Also, special mention needs to be made of Sue Williams and Sue Simon, and I also understand that Brenda Broussard helped a lot with the advance preparations...Simply put, the two Sues were great. They went far beyond the call of duty and did a terrific job in helping sort out the myriad of details and hard work involved in a contest of this sort. They certainly represent GSU well.

"I speak on behalf of myself, cookoff director Jill Goldsmith and the Port Arthur News when I offer a sincere 'thank you' for your help..."

Williams, customer service supervisor; Simon, energy auditor; and Broussard, customer information coordinator; are all located in Port Arthur.

## Courtesy appreciated

"Thank you for responding to my call for assistance..." writes Kathleen McMahon, Beaumont customer, to the Beaumont Service Department. "Your courtesy is deeply appreciated.

## Strong role model

Tony Gabrielle, vice president-computer applications, Beaumont, received this letter from Elizabeth Howze Hodge, coordinator-Minority Achievers program, The L.L. Melton Y.M.C.A., Beaumont:

"The Minority Achievers Program of the L.L. Melton Family Y.M.C.A. is now in its sixth month of operations. The activities/seminars provided to middle/junior high and senior high students have been varied...we now list 48 students as Minority Achievers Program participants.

"...Adolph Tingan has been an immeasurable asset to this program. Mr. Tingan has volunteered to provide tutorial assistance bi-monthly in Mathematics.

"...We wish to express our sincere appreciation to Gulf States Utilities Company for providing a strong role model and mentor for our youth."

Tingan is located in Beaumont.

## Safety partnership

Jacqueline C. Lewis, principal, Catholic Interparochial School of Pointe Coupee, New Roads, La., writes to thank Mike Durham, manager-safety, Beaumont, for some safety booklets:

"Catholic Elementary has received the neat 'Electric Safety from A to Zap' activity books and the 'Outdoor Electrical Safety & You' books. They are attractive, appealing and educationally appropriate... The teachers look forward to this opportunity to share these lessons on electric safety... We are excited you have included our school on your mail-out.

"A partnership between schools and businesses...sends a clear and united message to our students that everyone is very interested in their safety!"



## Satisfactory relationship

The Huntsville office received this letter from Mrs. Lindsey Clark, senior Huntsville customer:

"It is hard for me to realize this is my final bill. I have been a customer since 1924.

"I bought my first electric stove from you in 1928 when I lived on 19th Street. Then in about 1943 when we moved to 1622 15th Street, Raymond Wright told me I was a very modern woman but I had the oldest electric stove in Walker County, so I bought a new Hot Point from Gulf States. I was still using this stove when I sold my home in 1984.

"I have enjoyed the years of service with you and I think my record shows we always paid on time and had a satisfactory relationship for 66 years. Thank you."

## Credible actions

G.T. Diehl, customer, Kosse, Texas, sent this thank you letter to John Adams, superintendent, Calvert:

"Thank you for responding to my recent request to clean up dead trees and limbs that had fallen into and along my fence line preventing me from mowing. These trees were just below your power line and obviously had been poisoned.

"I wanted to thank you in writing to let you know how much I appreciate your response...Your actions make me proud to have GSU serving our community."

## Kind encouragement

The Denham Springs office received this note from Senior Customer Thelma McMurphy:

"I want everyone to know it is your kindness that gives me courage to try to go on."

## Sharing expertise

Donna Roberts, teacher, Dutchtown Primary School, Geismar, La., writes to thank Don Panepinto and Cliff Johnson for a recent safety presentation:

"Thank you both for your excellent presentation on safety with electricity. The children were thrilled by your demonstrations and certainly learned a lot from this experience.

"Thanks again for your expertise with the children of the area."

Panepinto is merit roll craftsman, Baton Rouge, and Johnson is lineman-1st class, Gonzales.

## Successful host

"Thank you for arranging for the use of GSU's facility for our Economics Tournament," writes Billy C. Pruett, executive director, Junior Achievement, Beaumont, to Les Jones, customer information coordinator, Beaumont.

"The facility and GSU employees made our tournament the successful event it was. Many participants expressed...a very positive attitude toward GSU for hosting the event.

"Thanks again, Les, for all your work."

## Positive feedback

Debbie Hudgins, cash management assistant, Beaumont, sent this note to Mike Rodgers, senior employee communications representative, Beaumont:

"...Thanks for the article in 'Newsbreaker' about our efforts to assist the Home Sweet Home Military Support Group. We received a lot of positive feedback and donations as a result of the article."



*Sabine Station employees with the Wildlife Management exhibit at Parkdale Mall*

## Earth Day impact

John Bernard, engineering analyst, Beaumont, received this letter from Terri Thompson, manager, Parkdale Mall, Beaumont, regarding GSU's Wildlife Management Area group participating in an Earth Day exhibition:

"I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your participation in Parkdale Mall's Earth Day 1991. We felt it was a tremendous success.

"I hope your organization received the public awareness and felt you were able to provide a valuable service to the consumer as well. We received many favorable comments from store owners, managers, the public and the news media.

"...Thank you for your concern in the environment and we hope to see you next year."

## Pleasant people

"I would like to compliment Gulf States Utilities for hiring such pleasant people, in particular, Harry Latiolais," writes Denham Springs customer Rosemary Sharpe to the Denham Springs office.

"Mr. Latiolais has always been so courteous and kind. He has been on my route for years and he goes the extra mile to do his job.

"Employees like Mr. Latiolais are rare and Gulf States is indeed lucky to have such a man."

Latiolais is a collector located in Denham Springs.



# PLAIN TALKS

P. O. Box 2951  
Beaumont, Texas 77704

Address Correction Requested

BULK RATE  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
Beaumont, Texas  
Permit No. 11



"We thought life  
was a losing battle.  
But we found  
help to beat our  
personal problem.

**We Won!"**

*Whatever the problem  
there is a solution...*

**Employee  
Advisory  
Committee**

**Dudley Clarke**, Lake Charles Division, (318) 433-8965  
**Debbie Gaiser**, Western Division, (409) 756-5712  
**Sue Simon**, Port Arthur Division, (318) 983-6651, x-2291  
**Charlie Naguin**, Baton Rouge Division, (504) 379-5279  
**Tommy Weeks**, Beaumont Division, (409) 296-9826  
**Henry Welch**, Sabine, (409) 735-7191, x-2264  
**Sondra Yowman**, Edison Plaza, (409) 838-6631, x-4313  
**Kerry Zimmerman**, River Bend Station, (504) 379-5279