

# The Lazarette Gazette

NEWS FROM

The University of Texas at Austin  
**MARINE SCIENCE INSTITUTE**  
Port Aransas, Texas 78373-1267

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## Personnel

***Congratulations to Dr. Joan Holt on her appointment to Associate Professor with tenure in the Department of Marine Science.*** Joan's interest in marine fish larvae has resulted in numerous publications on the early life stages and established her as one of the leading larval fish biologists at the national and international level. This is demonstrated by her many invitations to present papers, participate in workshops and give lectures. She is active in the American Fisheries Society, having served on several committees and as president of the Early Life Section. Joan is also active in the World Aquaculture Society and the Estuarine Research Society. She will be a welcome addition to the Department of Marine Science.  
—Connie Arnold

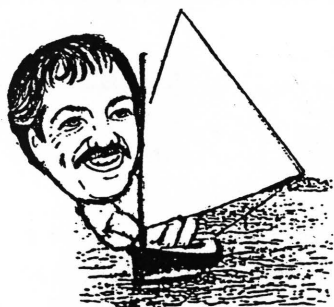
***Killian Hennes*** — You may have noticed a new face in the halls. Killian Hennes recently arrived from The University of Konstanz in Germany and is visiting Curtis Suttle's lab. He is planning to stay six months and will be working on developing methods to tag viruses with fluorescent labels.—Curtis Suttle

## P.A.I.S.D. — FIRST SIX WEEKS HONOR ROLLS

*MSI Employees Proud Parents of—*

- H.G. OLSEN ELEMENTARY A HONOR ROLL  
second grade: **Jack Montagna, Jennifer Seguin**  
fourth grade: **Nikki Buskey, Lindsay Moore, Alex Seguin, Stephanie Tinnin**  
fifth grade: **Sara Seguin**
- H.G. OLSEN ELEMENTARY A/B HONOR ROLL  
second grade: **Dani Buskey, James Cantu**  
third grade: **Lauren Kalke**  
fourth grade: **Karli Dunton, Tess Montagna, Brince Abel**  
fifth grade: **Sean Cantu**
- BRUNDRETT MIDDLE SCHOOL A HONOR ROLL  
sixth grade: **Nathan Dunton**
- BRUNDRETT MIDDLE SCHOOL A/B HONOR ROLL  
sixth grade: **Chris Kalke, Kate Montagna, Angela Piepmeier, Patricia Tinnin**
- HIGH SCHOOL A HONOR ROLL  
eleventh grade: **Jill Thompson**
- HIGH SCHOOL A/B HONOR ROLL  
tenth grade: **Chris Horn**

## Trip Reports & Travel



*Imagine a time with 30% per month inflation, lasting for years - and that during this time the MSI is level funded, or continues to take budget cuts. Imagine the MSI director, in desperation to keep the institute going and to keep people employed, using the *R/V LONGHORN* to carry paying passengers to Mexico to earn hard currency (pesos) to pay the crew's salary. . . . . Sounds outrageous, doesn't it? But this is similar to what is going on at major marine laboratories in the Former Soviet Union (FSU).*

*I recently spent a week in the Ukraine to attend a US-FSU meeting on the Arabian Sea. This meeting was sponsored by NSF to encourage data exchange and cooperation between the two countries in support of the future JGOFS, ONR and GLOBEC programs in the Arabian Sea. It was also motivated by a desire to help colleagues in the FSU who are facing very difficult economic times. Our group of US scientists arrived in Istanbul, Turkey at 4 pm on Friday, September 17 to meet the ship to take us to the Ukraine. A taxi driver named Kadir took us to the ship in his roomy 1961 Chevy Impala. I had forgotten how big American cars used to be, and several of us exchanged stories about how many friends we had smuggled into drive-in movies in the trunks of similar cars as teenagers.*

***When we arrived at our ship, the Mikail Lomonosov, we learned that 125 paying passengers would accompany us on our trip to Yalta.*** These passengers had assembled an impressive mountain of goods, ranging from Persian rugs and textiles to boxes of bubble gum, to load on the ship for the return trip. These people made their living by buying goods in Turkey and selling them in the FSU. Our voyage to Yalta took about 30 hours on our 300 foot long, steam powered former research vessel. The food on the Lomonosov was excellent, and wine, champagne and vodka were supplied at the evening meals. The former computer room on the Lomonosov had been converted into a disco, complete with a "mirrored ball" dangling from the ceiling, and a band with synthesizers and electric guitars playing an unusual array of Ukrainian disco tunes. At Yalta we were transported by bus to Sevastopol, following a scenic route along the rugged, mountainous coastline.

***While in Sevastopol, we stayed on board the Russian cruise ship Estonia,*** which used to be in service in the Baltic. The rooms were more spacious than on the Lomonosov, but we had to share that space with numerous six-legged friends! The meetings were held at the Marine Hydrophysical Institute but scientists from the Institute of Biology of the Southern Seas also attended. Some talks were translated from English to Russian and vice versa, so communication was sometimes slow. Most FSU scientists had some understanding of English, but only two of the 23 US scientists knew any Russian. Translators accompanied us on most our travels.

***We learned that the FSU had done an impressive amount of work in the Arabian Sea in the past,*** but we had been largely unaware of this work because most was only published in Russian. We hope to begin having the titles and abstracts from these works translated, and eventually get most of the important papers translated. The FSU scientists were very eager to make contacts and plan future collaborations with US scientists. There is little money for research in the Ukraine, and most scientists there make the equivalent of about \$15 - \$20 a month. This doesn't go too far, as apartments typically cost \$25 a month and meat is about \$2 a lb. A dollar has a lot of spending power in the Ukraine, however; vodka costs \$1 per liter and \$1 buys 15 1-liter bottles of beer at the waterfront kiosks. However, these are luxuries that few scientists can afford on a regular basis. Hopefully things will improve for our FSU colleagues soon, but few of them there seem optimistic.  
—Ed Buskey

#### ***Travel ending between September 24 and October 8—***

→ ***Tony Amos***, September 20—22, Washington D.C., attend committee meeting of the National Research Council/National Marine Board on shipboard waste.

→ ***Allen Davis***, September 27—29, Ensenada, Mexico, invited speaker at Centro de Investigacion Cientifica y de Educacion Superior de Ensenada.

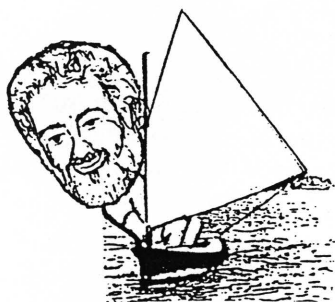
→ ***Terry Whittedge***, September 28, Houston, attend Houston Ship Channel Oversight committee meeting.

→ ***Scott Holt, Jim Tolan, Kathy Binney***, September 28—29, Port Mansfield, collect ichthyoplankton and browntide samples for research on larval fish populations in the Laguna Madre and work on settlement patterns of larvae within an estuary.

→ ***Peter Thomas***, September 28—30, Houston/Clear Lake, to collect samples in Galveston Bay and present talk.

→ ***Rick Kalke, Robert Burgess, Chris Martin***, October 4—6, Galveston, to collect sediment cores for Texas Water Development Board sponsored research.

→ ***Bill Beasley***, October 6—9, Clearlake, to conduct field sampling.



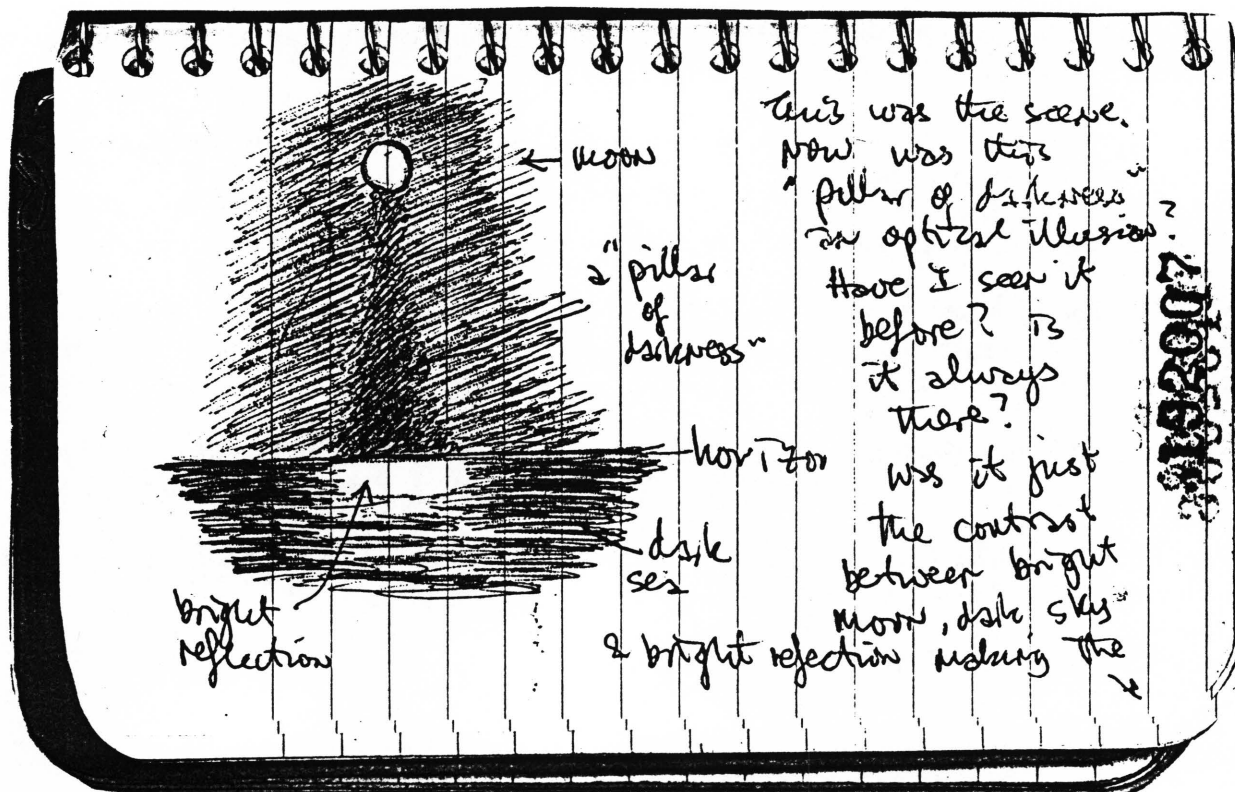
## MORE FROM AMOS' NOTEBOOK WRITTEN ABOARD THE R/V OKEAH IN THE ARCTIC

**30 August 1993:** It is a beautiful calm evening with Siberia on the horizon. The sea is glassy and undulating. A constant stream of short-tailed shearwaters is flying towards the Bering Strait. They breed in New Zealand. Earlier, as we approached station #36, I stood on the bow and watched them fly past the ship. So low to the sea surface but never touching, a perfectly mirrored, upside-down bird would come up to meet its master as the smooth waves went by and then recede again almost out of sight when the bird flew over the next trough. When two or three would come by together, it was like a beautiful dance with birds and reflections ever trying to meet but never doing so. I have it on video. Siberia looks barren and uninhabited. We are in the Anadyr Strait between St. Lawrence Island and the Chubotskiy Peninsula. Occasionally the land is broken by a thin ribbon of a glacier coming down to the sea.

As I sleep during supper, my supper is tea, and breakfast comes after 12 hours of fasting (with the occasional piece of bread and cups of coffee or hot chocolate). For tea yesterday we had seaweed (*Laminaria*). I can only eat about three forksful of this stuff along with a cup of tea and bread. Along came breakfast which was a cup of sour cream, tea and bread. I can only eat about five teaspoonsful of the sour cream. I was pleased to get to the noon lunch which was beetroot soup and a plate with pasta (overcooked noodles) and a small piece of meat (quite tasty), tea and bread. For tea we had mashed potatoes and a very salty anchovy-like fish with many bones in it, tea and bread. It is not "sitting well" in my stomach as I close this book and try to go to sleep.

**31 August 1993:** Last night the moon was full and the sky clear. The sea was calm and I stood on the deck and pondered. Because the moon never gets very high above the horizon now, the stars were still quite visible and as the first light of dawn showed around 0400, Venus was bright, low on the eastern horizon.

*I noticed an interesting effect which I called the "pillar of darkness", and made this sketch.*

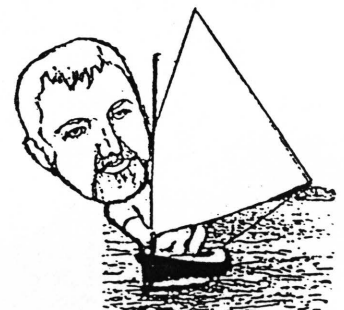




## Egabrag Wocs

*Our four old frame buildings* will soon receive new roofs—the cafeteria and dorms A, B, and C. They should then match up nicely with the new pier instrument building and pier laboratory. Along with the old pier laboratory—wiped out by the errant barge three years ago—these buildings were the original physical facilities of MSI. Most readers of the *Lazarette Gazette* are probably not fellow subscribers to *Old House Journal*, but you may find a little building history interesting anyway. The smallest and *newest*, **Dorm C**, was built as a laboratory in 1948. Dr. Bill McFarland (who recently returned for a visit and seminar) worked there with his Post Doc Peter Pickens in the late fifties and early sixties. After Hurricane Carla, the official height for the storm in Port Aransas was determined (at least in part) by measurements taken inside the closets of this building. Dorm C is one strong building—in Carla most of the siding was stripped off the jetty side by wave action and the window airconditioner knocked out the window and clear across to the other side of the room, but the building remained intact and only required a cleanup and new siding to be as good as new. The **Cafeteria** was built as a combination residence/classroom/laboratory in 1946. By 1959 it housed Marine Chemistry (P. L. Parker), Marine Geology (L. Kornicker) and Bacteriology (C. Oppenheimer) as well as the MSI classroom and the animal collection. Rather than back steps, a sand dune came right up to the back porch. Two old bathtubs there were once used for experiments and then left to accumulate green slime. A refrigerator was installed on the back porch for the benefit of Sam and Joe Gampert, who lived in a tent nearby for nearly thirty years. Pat Parker tells of seeing Joe eat his breakfast there—gumming down raw bacon followed by an RC Cola. In Hurricanes Carla, Beulah, and Celia, this building sustained virtually no damage (although we couldn't get in at first following Carla because of all the debris washed up on the front steps). **Dorm A** started life as the foundation for a water tank, which explains why there are so many pilings and the strange shape. We think this foundation dates back to 1890. The building was constructed by UT in 1946 as another combination laboratory/residence. By 1960 it was the Ecology Laboratory, Director's Office (H. T. Odum), business office, and library, with six people working full time there (without benefit of air conditioning). Then for a short while it was a dormitory, only to be converted back to a laboratory for Dr. J.A.C. Nicol for several years. Finally it was converted back again to its present configuration as a dormitory. **Dorm B** was built by the Army Corps of Engineers in 1890. If you stand on the jetty where the iron sticks up next to the old MSI pier, you will see that an old *old* pier once lined up with the porch of Dorm B. In 1960 there was still a framework hanging off the side of the building which gave evidence of a hoist system for lifting heavy items off wagons and onto the porch for transfer to boats alongside the pier. Abandoned for many years, Dorm B housed several families of squatters (who made a living fishing with cane poles off that old old pier) before UT received possession. In the late 50's and early 60's Dorm B was the dormitory, but it was also the cafeteria, shop, and garage. During each summer, and without air conditioning, Dorm B housed sixteen persons, including the cook. The far South room was the kitchen and the narrow East room was the dining hall. What is now just an entrance hallway had two bunks in it. There were no closets anywhere, and those sixteen persons shared a single toilet and one shower. It was not the Taj Mahal! Dorm B survived Hurricane Carla but had a rough time when a huge tree trunk was caught underneath and battered out several pilings. An aluminum skiff was found jammed in the back doorway—bent completely double so that the transom was touched by the tip of the bow. The net skiff had been chained to a piling which ate its way, due to wave action, over half way through the boat. But it was the winds of Hurricane Celia that really hit Dorm B. After Celia there were only small amounts of roof left over the central part of the building. The roof (including the rafters) had sailed off in huge pieces.

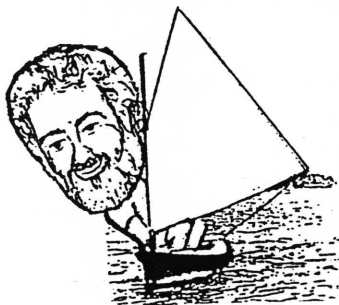
—John Thompson



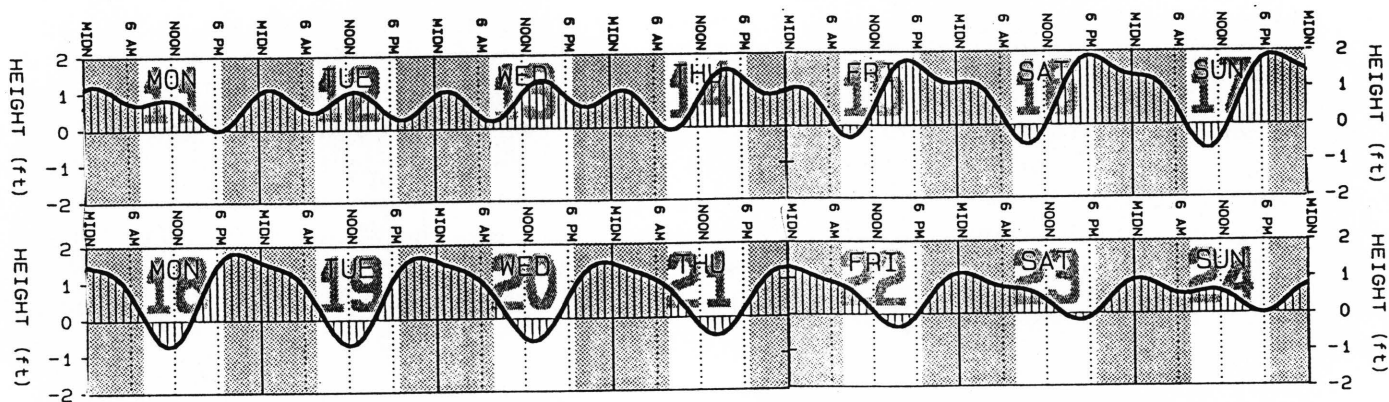
# Marine Education Services

**Oceanography Day** — Mark your calendars for April 23, 1994. We will have another *Oceanography Day* (thanks to the support of the MSI Advisory Council). The first *Oceanography Day* was held in 1975, and it has now been held a total of nine times. The records show that 1,494 boys have attended *Oceanography Day*. In 1991, 350 boys representing 100 different Scout Troops participated. Statistics are one way to describe *Oceanography Day*, but a better way is in the words of the Scouts. For example, Brian Pavlas of Troop 40 in Houston wrote: *Oceanography was superb! I especially liked the marine chemistry class. All the films I watched were terrific! I thought Mr. Tony Amos was a very good scientist. I learned so much during the classes. Now that I went I'm so happy I did...I had a wonderful time and I learned so much...I want to thank you for accepting me. It was great!* Or Shannon Henrichs, Troop 117 in Victoria: *After I finished my written requirements I was so excited to mail it off. When I got the letter back saying I could go I was so happy. When I got there, I knew it was going to be fun...I really enjoyed and learned a lot at this Oceanography Day...The patch was the most and I put it on my shirt.* *Boy's Life*, July, 1987, had a picture of Scouts aboard the R/V LONGHORN and an excellent article on MSI's *Oceanography Day*. So...take out your pen and write a check and/or volunteer to help next April 23. Also, if you would like to have information on *Oceanography Day* sent to anyone (Scoutmasters, Scouts, others?), please furnish names and addresses to John Thompson (*Oceanography Day* Chairman).

## Tony's Tidings...



**Tide Predictions—October 11—24** (For tidal heights at the tide tower, South Jetty, the Aransas Pass. Heights are in feet above or below mean sea level. The shaded area is nighttime. Remember, this is tidal height, not tidal current. Slack water is when the wiggly line crosses the MSL line, not at peaks and valleys, where the tidal current will be a full flood or ebb.)



## Weather Report—September 20—October 3

20 - 26 SEP 1993	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MEAN
DATE	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	
AIR TEMP HIGH	88.3	88.7	88.5	87.0	87.6	87.4	87.9	87.9
AIR TEMP LOW	80.2	80.4	79.3	79.5	81.1	80.9	75.8	79.6
SEA TEMP LOW	84.1				84.4		82.6	83.7
RAINFALL TOTAL	0	0	0.05	0.15	0	0.77	0.18	0.38
27 SEP - 3 OCT 1993	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MEAN
DATE	27	28	29	30	1	2	3	
AIR TEMP HIGH	80.7	81.8	83.4	87.4	85.6	85.2	85.8	84.3
AIR TEMP LOW	69.4	67.4	70.7	77.3	80.0	79.3	76.8	74.4
SEA TEMP LOW		78.0		79.5		79.3		78.9
RAINFALL TOTAL	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00

—Andi Wickham

## Attaboys

■ *Just a short note to thank you for all the help and cooperation you have given to me with regard to the Texas Shrimp Farming Short Course. It is really appreciated. Also, I would like to compliment your cook, Toni. She is always friendly to all of us and most cooperative and helpful. The participants this year have commented several times to me as well as Granvil on how pleasant she was to them and we are most grateful to have her cook for us during our stay in Port Aransas. Please pass on to her our thanks and appreciation of the kindness that she shows to our group. Looking forward to our return next year.*  
(To John Thompson and Toni Martinez from Lynn Propes)

■ *Thank you very much for the part which you played in making this year's shrimp farming course a successful one. According to the evaluations, most participants were pleased with the outcome. Enclosed for your information is a list of participants and the evaluations obtained at the end of the course. I certainly hope that you found it to be a positive experience, as I did, and that you will consider it again next year.*  
(To Rick Tinnin from Granvil Treece)

■ *I wish to thank you for your courtesy and hospitality during my visit to the Marine Science Institute last Thursday. The Institute's work is extremely interesting to me personally and much of it is, of course, very timely from the standpoint of the efforts of the Texas Water Development Board. Thanks again for such an interesting tour. Please call upon me if I may be of assistance to you or the Institute.*  
(To Terry Whittedge from Wesley E. Pittman, Vice Chairman of the TWDB)

**Notice to all field biologists:** It is with great dismay that I must report the closing of the Road Kill Cafe, Port Mansfield's most enjoyable dining establishment. Chef R.K. has apparently hopped on his hog and returned to La Feria, thus completing another chapter in our ongoing adventures on the Laguna Madre. Those of you fortunate enough to have been acquainted with the Road Kill know that there was no better way to prepare for 10 hours of chop on the boundless bay than with a big breakfast and a few rounds of pool at 5 a.m. and no nicer guy to prepare it. The ambiance alone was worth the price. Adios, Road Kill.

—Cameron Pratt



## Facilities & Equipment

**Beach Street Apartments** — Bids will be opened on October 20 for a project to increase the energy efficiency of the eight apartment units on Beach Street. The project will provide insulation underneath the concrete floor using 3 inch thickness styrofoam insulation board.

**Administration Building** — The first stage of renovation of the HVAC system in the North-East wing of the Administration Building has now been completed. This stage involved removal of all the ductwork, which was complicated by the presence of asbestos material, requiring a specially certified contractor to perform the removal work.

**Pier** — The new pier tide trap has now been completed by MSI personnel and is a success. Within the next few weeks final work should be completed on the Pier Laboratory Building.

## THE GREAT EAST FLATS VEHICLE-STICKING EVENT OF 1993

***Driving vehicles off-road on Mustang Island can be a memorable experience.*** Although I've driven many thousands of miles on beaches and the backside of the Island, the reputation of getting stuck in the sand or the muck tends to "stick" to me. Charlie's Pasture seems to be my nemesis. On May 7, 1978, my notebook says that I had "a disastrous quick look for birds curtailed when I got car stuck in sand and had to walk 3 miles home past a riotous group of drunken worthies who were firing a machine gun into reeds, scrub, and bay". Another time I trekked across the marsh to get home at night after leaving the UT Suburban stuck in the algal flats. This adventure did not finish until Craig Griffin got his 4WD stuck pulling me out, and we had to make another midnight marsh walk to get Scott Holt, who finally got us both out with his trusty Bronco. The latest event was last week, when I got my 4 by 4 stuck in the area known as East Flats. We were there to release five raccoons into the wild. Andi Wickham had reared them from babies after they were brought here by Texas Parks and Wildlife Department several weeks ago. The release went wonderfully, and I was carefully turning the vehicle around when one slip of the wheel and we were stuck fast. Attempts to dig us out had to be stopped when first the battery failed, and then a huge squall-line loomed ominously close and we decided to get out of there before the lightning got us. The next morning a group of UTMSI maintenance people in the Chevy 4x4 came to the rescue. Unfortunately the rain had made conditions worse and Charlie Hutchins, in a valiant effort to reach the stranded truck, came to a slithering halt in the Chevy which would go neither forward nor back after that. Now we all had to hike out and phone for reinforcements. After lunch they arrived en masse. First the Port Aransas Fire Department got one of their vehicles stuck, but was able to free it. Next, by attaching hundreds of feet of nylon line to the Chevy, John Garlington was able to winch Charlie and the Chevy out of the mire. Now the scene looked like the filming of an epic (I have it on video), as still others arrived. In the meantime, with the help of John Shaw, Mark McGarity, and Veril Barr and two old bumper jacks I found on the beach (I knew that stuff would come in handy one day), we were able to jack up my truck, put boards underneath and serenely drive it out of there unassisted. Many thanks to all who helped. I hope that it will be at least another ten years before I need to be sucked out of the Charlie's Pasture quagmire again. The lesson is—don't ever try to drive across that innocent-looking algal mat—it'll get you! —Tony Amos



In *Egabrag Wocs* I mentioned a refrigerator MSI provided Sam and Joe Gampert. I should add that this was before my employment (after they are finished with Kay Bailey H., someone may be indicted for using the state's electricity to cool Joe's bacon). Thanks to Ed Buskey for his great story on his Ukraine adventures. We may not be taking passengers to Mexico on the *R/V LONGHORN* yet, but there was a time when few would have imagined peddling T-shirts at the Visitor's Center to become a revenue source of some importance. And thanks to Tony Amos for further interesting notes from his log. His *pillar of darkness* reminds me of an optical illusion I saw on our own Mustang Beach the other evening. I thought I saw two cars far away down the beach approaching rapidly side by side, and I was almost retreating into the surf to escape, but the cars turned into rectangular boxes a few feet off the ground and then disappeared. And the curious illusion was repeated three times. I would feel better about this if I could blame it on some of Tony's beetroot soup. Failing to have consumed beetroot soup, if only I could think of a descriptive name equal to *pillar of darkness*. Thanks to Kathy Quade, Patty Baker, Lynn Amos, Lynda Yates, Curtis Suttle, Cameron Pratt, and Connie Arnold for help with this issue of the *Lazarette Gazette*.

—John Thompson

## Gastronomic Gazette

\*all hamburger, sandwich, basket & lunch orders INCLUDE your choice (any or all--self service) of green salad, french fries, rice (cost for side bar without other order--\$2.00)

### \*HAMBURGERS & SANDWICHES

Hamburger .....	2.50
Cheeseburger .....	2.60
Ham and cheese sandwich .....	2.60
Grilled cheese sandwich .....	2.25
Grilled chicken breast sandwich .....	2.75

### \*BASKETS & LUNCHES

Shrimp basket .....	4.00
Chicken strip basket .....	3.00
Fried chicken .....	4.00
Chicken fried steak, gravy .....	3.50
Liver and onions with fries .....	3.50

### MEXICAN FOOD

Mexican dinner .....	4.00
Tacos (corn tortillas, soft or crisp) .....	each--1.00
Tacos (wheat flour tortillas) .....	each--1.00
Chalupas .....	each--1.00
Enchiladas .....	3.00

### SALADS

Chef salad .....	2.50
Greek salad .....	2.50
Southern salad .....	3.00

DRINKS ..... 0.40

Please phone Toni Martinez by 11:30 a.m. to place your order.

