

Six Flags Over Texas Scores A World First

The world's first total freefall ride, the Texas Cliffhanger, has begun operation at Six Flags Over Texas.

The opening of the 2.1 million dollar ride coincided with the beginning of daily operation of the Arlington theme park for the

summer months.

The Cliffhanger will carry Six Flags visitors 128 feet into the sky and then drop them.

Six Flags' General Manager Ray Williams compared the Cliffhanger experience to "the feeling you'd get if you stepped off the top of a ten-story building."

The Cliffhanger's superstructure is a 110-ton, L-shaped tower.

Passengers, seated four abreast in padded gondolas, are carried to the top of the tower at three times normal elevator speed. The fronts of the gondolas are open, providing an unobstructed view of the surrounding area. Riders are protected by over-the-shoulder lap bars which adjust to fit the individual.

Once at the top, the gondolas are moved to the front edge of the tower and locked into "drop position."

After a five-second pause, the

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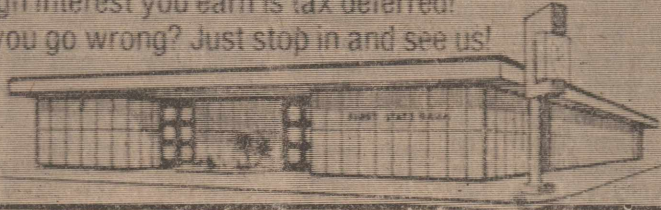
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RICK MULLIN

PATTI RAMSEY



Couple To Marry In Quitaque July 10

Mr. and Mrs. Paul A. Ramsey of Quitaque, former residents of Silverton, announce the engagement of their daughter, Patti, to Rick Mullin, son of Mr. and Mrs. Dean Mullin of Huffman.

The bride-elect is employed by

the First National Bank in Quitaque, and her fiance is engaged in farming in the Quitaque - Turkey area.

The wedding is being planned for July 10 at the First Baptist Church in Quitaque.

gondolas drop, reaching a speed of 55 mph in less than three seconds.

Near the base of the tower, the track curves and runs horizontally along the foot of the "L".

Riders are flat on their backs as the ride's electronic braking system brings the gondolas to a halt.

The gondolas are then lowered to the underside of the structure and turned upright for unloading.

Williams described the Cliffhanger's safety system as "the most sophisticated devices ever built into a ride."

He said the ride is constantly monitored by two computers which are fed information by 103 electronic sensors.

"The computers talk to one another," he said, "and both must agree on all safety factors before they will permit the ride to be operated. If the computers detect a potential problem, they will temporarily stop the ride and give our technicians the information they need to make the proper adjustments."

Each gondola, unloaded, weighs 1,500 pounds. With four passengers the weight will be approximately one ton.

Williams said the computers cause the braking systems to make individual adjustments for each gondola. The speed of each dropping gondola is precisely measured, and information is fed to the braking controls to assure correct brake pressures.

Williams said the computer systems also measure the exact

thickness of each gondola's brake shoes before every drop and during each braking maneuver. "There is no doubt," he said, "that this is the 'smartest' thrill ride ever built."

Williams said Hollywood stuntman Dar Robinson was brought to the park to ride the Cliffhanger during initial testing.

"Frankly," said Williams, "we wanted to confirm that riding the Cliffhanger is like stepping off the top of a tall building, and Dar is the recognized expert in high falls."

Robinson's most recent movie stunt was a backward plunge through a 14th floor window for the motion picture "Sharkey's Machine."

Williams said Robinson's comment after the first of eight rides was, "The most exciting kind of fall is feet first, and this is definitely it."

Robinson said he had come to Six Flags expecting a relatively mild experience, but, he commented, "What you've got here is a totally free fall, complete with zero gravity."

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(SECD-045280)

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Bagworms are one of the major pests of junipers and other trees and shrubs in the South Plains. Insecticide control is most

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We take this means of thanking our friends for their prayers and many kindnesses shown to our family during the illness and home going of our loved one. The remembrances, cards, calls and food sent to our home is gratefully acknowledged and appreciated. We love you and may God bless you.

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effective in late May and early June when the bagworms are small.

In the spring, bagworm larvae emerge from hatching eggs inside last year's bags and begin feeding on leaves. Soon they begin to construct their own protective bag of silk, twigs and leaves, making them camouflaged and hard to see. As the larvae and their bags continue to grow, control becomes more difficult.

Bagworms feed throughout the summer months, building their bags until the bags are about 1 1/2 inches long. In the fall, the bagworms become adults, mate and the females lay eggs inside their bags. They then overwinter in these bags in trees and shrubs.

Since the bagworm only completes one generation a year and spreads very slowly from plant to plant, picking the bags off infested plants in the winter will help a lot toward controlling this pest. But if bagworms were present on the plant last year and control measures were not applied, chances are very good that an insecticide will be needed this spring.

Insecticides which can be used to control bagworms include se-

vin, dursban, diazinon, malathion, dylox and orthene. The biological insecticide Bacillus thuringiensis can also be used. To obtain effective control, thorough coverage of the foliage is important. Always read and follow label instructions when applying insecticides.

COTTON INJURY FROM HAIL

Large storms accompanied by heavy washing rains and hail hit large portions of the Southern High Plains causing moderate to heavy damage to the young cotton crops.

Where, how much and how badly was the crop damaged are the questions many producers are asking, and finally comes the big one, "Will I have to replant?"

You don't make snap decisions when it comes to hail damage. It often appears much worse than the actual damage immediately after the storm. In the case of cotton, the plants have a remarkable capacity to recover.

Already this year crops have been hit by hail, and no doubt more will be hit as the season progresses. If a producer's crops suffer hail damage, he will have

to consider several factors in determining whether to replant. Among these are growth stage, type and extent of injury and seasonal conditions.

A first point to consider is how much of the field was damaged. A hail storm can reduce the plant population to only two seedlings per row foot in 40-inch rows, or about 25,000 plants per acre, and the crop can still produce a normal yield, unless, of course the crop is poorly distributed or has long skips.

Another point in determining whether to replant is how much damage there was to plants. Plants having only traces of leaves will recover better than those with no leaves. But a seedling with no leaves can still make a crop.

If the stem is intact, free of breaks in the bark and the seedling has sound buds, recovery is still possible, although it will be slower than plants having at least some leaves.

However, if the stem is shattered and the bark loosened or broken at points below the leaf buds, then recovery is impossible.

After a hail storm, a sandfinger should be run as soon as possible to prevent sand injury to vital buds on stubs left in the field. Quite often sand and wind damage after a hail can do as much or more harm to young seedlings than the hail.

Any regrowth hinges either on the sound terminal bud (the growing point) or axillary bud located at the point of leaf attachment.

Because of the young seedling's ability to recover, hail injury in June will cause less yield loss than in July or August when the plants are more mature and replanting becomes impossible.

A crop can recover from damage in early to mid-June to the point that the injured plants are difficult to distinguish from undamaged plants. Young cotton that survives early hail damage is often more mature at first frost than a crop that has been replanted.

When a cotton field is destroyed, the producer has no choice but to replant. But in most hail storms, the crop is usually only partially injured, making the decision more difficult.

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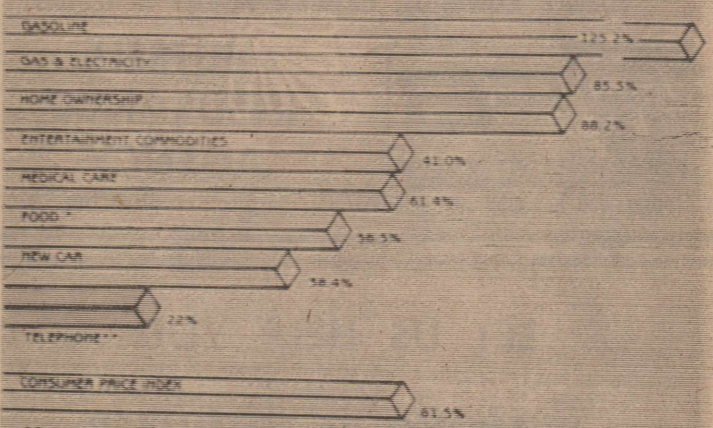
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CARD OF THANKS Thank you so much for the lovely flowers, cards, gifts and food while I was in the hospital and since I have been home. All

was so greatly appreciated by Love, Shirley Durham

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