



Danny Gertson of East Bernard, center, was selected for the 2001 Rice Leadership Development Program in the producer category. Pictured with him are Bob Malcolm of John Deere Company, a sponsor, and Doug Anderson of Syngenta, also a sponsor. Photo Courtesy of Rice Federation

## Gertson selected for 2001 Rice Leadership

Danny Gertson of East Bernard was selected for the 2001 Rice Leadership Development Program. The announcement was made earlier this month at the USA Rice Outlook Conference in Las Vegas.

In making the announcement, Rice Foundation Chairman John R. Denison commended Syngenta and

John Deere Company for sponsoring the program. The investment in leadership development of young men and women is an invaluable contribution to the future of the entire U.S. rice industry, according to Denison. The USA Rice Federation manages the leadership program.

Additional members of the class

are, in the producer category: Monty Bohanan of Stuttgart, Arkansas; Dane Hebert, Maurice, Louisiana; Bert Manuel, Yuba City, California; and Kyle Sonnier, Kinder, Louisiana.

In the industry-related category, new class members are: Vicky Boyd, Modesto, California, with *Rice*

*Farming* magazine; and Paul Combs, Kennett, Missouri, with Baker Implement Company.

Applications for the next leadership class will be available in the spring of 2001.

For more information, call 1-800-888-7423 or 713-270-6699.

## Living Hope Church to hold special Christmas services

Living Hope Church in Eagle Lake welcomes the public to all of its Christmas season services. This Christmas, Christians around the world will be observing the 2000th celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ. Pastors Joe and Mercy Fling invite you to participate in the celebration with Living Hope.

Throughout this week, teams from Living Hope will be out in the community distributing food and necessities to the needy and singing Christmas carols around town.

The Church will also hold its annual candlelight service at 6 p.m. Christmas Eve, Sunday, Dec. 24. The Lord's Supper will be observed.

Christmas is a celebration of Christ's birth. Pastor Fling has been teaching the many aspects of "Making room for Christ" this Dec.

On Christmas Eve, the pastor will be teaching on the response of the city of Bethlehem to Christ during the 10 a.m. service.

The 6 p.m. message will revolve around the visit of the Shepherds to the Christ child.

Living Hope invites the public to attend these services of worship and devotion at the observance of Christ's birth 2000 years ago.

## Ashby to direct Nature Club in coming year

The Tom Waddell Outdoor Nature Club (TWONC) held its annual Pot Luck Christmas Social Dec. 15 with Mae Ashby, Dorothy Cassidy and Jean Thomson as hostesses.

The event included a salute to the excellent leadership of retiring President Alice Sunderman, the introduction of new members, collection of dues and a report on the status of our local flock of Attwater prairie chickens by Federal Refuge Manager Terry Rossignol, plus a silent auction netting the treasury about \$400.

Those elected to TWONC leadership positions for 2001 are Ashby, president; Doris Laughlin, vice-president; Anna Lee Higgins, secretary; Helen Craig, treasurer; and Rollin Baker, reporter.

Other members of the Executive Committee are T Lang, Fannie Merle Welch and Rossignol, the latter two will also serve as field guides and trip coordinators along with Vice Presi-

dent Laughlin.

The coming year's activities will include outings to Bayou Bend State Park, along the Wintermann Nature Trail at Eagle Lake Municipal Park, Attwater Prairie Chicken Refuge, Thomas' Duck House, Laughlin-Baker oak-hickory woodlands, and along the canal at the LCRA Pumping Plant.

Persons wishing more information about TWONC activities or membership may call Welch in Wharton, 979-532-3195; Susan Tomchesson, East Bernard, 979-335-4883; Ashby, Eagle Lake, 979-234-2019; or Laughlin in Columbus, 979-732-8875.

## Gertson is A&M grad

Sunny Marie Gertson of Eagle Lake was among those graduating from Texas A&M University in College Station during commencement ceremonies Friday evening, Dec. 15, in Reed Arena.

She received a Bachelor of Business Administration degree in Accounting from TAMU's Lowry Mays College and Graduate School of Business.

Sunny, a 1997 graduate of Rice High School, will return to Eagle Lake to commute to Houston where she has accepted an accounting position with Halliburton.

Among those attending were her parents and grandmothers, Ralph and Connie Gertson, Dorothy Breithaupt and Jo Ann Gertson of Eagle Lake; aunts, uncles and cousins including Gus and Shirley Seaholm of Eagle Lake; Linda Henske of Banquete; Tanya Stivors of Castroville; and Billy, Becky, Mindy and Rusty Moulder of Columbus.

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## A Letter to Santa

Snowflakes softly falling  
Upon your window they play  
Your blankets snug around you,  
Into sleep you drift away.

I bend to gently kiss you,  
when I see that on the floor  
there's a letter, neatly written  
I wonder who it's for.

I quietly unfold it  
making sure you're still asleep,  
It's a Christmas list for Santa  
one my heart will always keep.

It started just as always  
with the toys seen on TV,  
A new watch for your father  
and a winter coat for me.

But as my eyes read on  
I could see that deep inside  
there were many things you wished  
for that your loving heart would hide.

You asked if your friend Molly  
could have another Dad;  
It seems her father hits her  
and it makes you very sad.

Then you asked dear Santa  
if the neighbors down the street  
Could find a job, that he might have  
some food, and clothes, and heat.

You saw a family on the news  
whose house had blown away,  
"Dear Santa, send them just one thing,  
a place where they can stay."

"And Santa, those four cookies that  
I left you for a treat,  
Could you take them to the children  
who have nothing else to eat."

"Do you know that little bear I have  
the one I love so dear?  
I'm leaving it for you to take  
to Africa this year."

"And as you fly your reindeer  
on this night of Jesus' birth,  
Could your magic bring to everyone  
goodwill and peace on earth."

"There's one last thing before you go,  
so grateful I would be,  
If you'd smile at Baby Jesus  
in the manger by our tree."

I pulled the letter close to me  
I felt it melt my heart.  
Those tiny hands had written  
what no other could impart.

"And a little child shall lead them,"  
was whispered in my ear  
As I watched you sleep on Christmas Eve  
while Santa Claus was here.

*If this warms your heart,  
then send it to anyone else  
you know that might need  
a little "melting".*

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