

Mallouf retires after thirteen years of service



Robert J. Mallouf
Archaeologist, CBBS

Retirement for Robert J. Mallouf merely means shifting priorities. Mallouf, director of the Center for Big Bend Studies at Sul Ross State University since 1995, stepped down from his position Aug. 31. He plans to spend more time with his

son, Parker, and publish his past research.

A reception for Mallouf was held Friday, Aug. 29, at 2 p.m. in the University Center's second floor foyer.

Mallouf has spent over 36 years in the archaeological field with the State of Texas, including nearly a quarter-century with the Office of the State Archaeologist, Texas Historical Commission.

Prior to coming to Sul Ross and the CBBS, he worked progressively as field archeologist, survey archaeologist, director of the Department of Archaeological Surveys and Research, assistant State Archaeologist and State Archaeologist.

At Sul Ross, he succeeded Dr. Earl Elam as director of the CBBS. In 13 years, he built a program with a \$15,000 budget and a part-time secretary to 17 staff and a \$600,000 budget (including a \$200,000 state budget and additional private grant funding).

"What I set out to do was to build an archaeology program and to preserve the history portion of the Center that Earl had started," he said.

"This region is a major natural laboratory and it was one of my favorite areas to research."

"When I applied for this position (after Elam's retirement), I felt that Sul Ross was the perfect place.

A native of Brownwood, Mallouf attended Howard Payne University, then transferred to the University of Texas at Austin, where he received a B.A. in Anthropology in 1970. He also studied at the University of California at Berkeley and the American University of Cairo, Egypt, as a scholarship recipient, and received an M.A. in anthropology from UT-Austin in 1985.

Mallouf has divided his time teaching, excavating, administrating and fund-raising since coming to

Sul Ross.

He helped establish the Friends of the Center for Big Bend Studies, which has attracted several million dollars in grants and private donations.

The CBBS expansion has allowed them to do contractual archaeology as well, including a major project in Big Bend National Park.

The Center is a pure research organization, able to select what it wants to research, Mallouf says.

He praised his staff, both for their field work and published research, as well as strong support from the Sul Ross administration.

"It's a good time for me to pass this (directorship) on to someone younger," said Mallouf, noting that long-time associate W.A. "Andy" Cloud is now his successor.

"We are four years into a five-year research program (the Trans Pecos Archaeological Program) and I am confident we will be able to

obtain another five years."

"This university is perfectly situated for an archaeological research program, and it offers potential in other areas as well."

Upon retirement, Mallouf plans to write at least two books on his past research.

"Getting to work in an area that I love and building a program at a small university has been fun, I have enjoyed it," he said. "I think the program has a future and I think we have the people to make it happen."

He hopes that Sul Ross will eventually offer a bachelor's degree program in anthropology (a minor is presently available).

"One of the big things about archaeology is that most people are interested in it for one reason or another," Mallouf said.

"We try to appeal to that basic interest in fund-raising and building a program."

Weather breaks for balloon bash

Madeleine Cantu
Skyline Editor

This past weekend marked the annual Big Bend Balloon Bash. Pilots of the large propane-fueled balloons gathered on the property of Sierra La Rana, the Balloon Bash's event sponsor for the second year running.

Fifteen pilots were registered this year, half of the maximum number of pilots able to fly from the area, and only three less than last year's number. Pilots were concerned over the weather, but with no small amount of patience and hope, were still able to take flight.

The Big Bend Balloon Bash was first introduced to the area in 1987, but hasn't been consistent over the years until recently. This will be the 13th Balloon Bash to occur in a row.

Ben Stringer, current Sul Ross Student, was the DJ for the event. "I've been [DJing] for this event for a few years now," he said. "It's fun."

A balloon modeler—a person that makes shapes such as animals, hats, and even a horse—was present this year, entertaining the children as the parents appreciated the

elegant, drifting hot air balloons.

Bill Fitzgerald, a pilot from Lubbock, Texas, commandeered the balloon "America."

"A balloon such as this one, whose envelope alone weighs 290 pounds, burns about ten gallons of propane per hour," he said. "The cost of flying one of these balloons at an event such as this really depends on the crew. I prefer to have two chase vehicles, which have to be able to pull heavy equipment out of mud or go on terrain that wouldn't otherwise be accessible to low-clearance vehicles. So the fuel for that, as well as the propane, and even the cost of the balloon itself can get fairly expensive."

The "America" cost somewhere in the neighborhood of \$40,000 to \$60,000. This is an average price for a balloon, but they can go as high as \$150,000 to even several hundred thousand for the animal-

shaped types of envelopes.

Fitzgerald has been flying since 1992. "It's easy for me to remember that date simply because that's the year that the first hot air balloon crossed the Atlantic."

Pilots, just like airplane pilots, have to complete a flight review every two years. However, they are more sensitive to the weather than airplane pilots, and a typical year may only consist of 45 hours in flight.

Since hot air balloons have no ability to steer, the wind is carefully monitored and considered before balloons take flight.

"As a pilot, you have to be cautious about the wind," said Fitzgerald. "A strong prevailing wind can take you to an area that is not easily accessible by chase vehicles." On Monday, the wind was blowing toward Ft. Stockton. "That makes it a little tricky, because there's



Photo by Justin Ruhnstrom

only one main road in that direction." Once the weather seemed to stabilize, the "America" was inflated and off the

ground in roughly ten minutes, showing off its majestic stars and stripes—complete with an eagle—against the backdrop of Alpine's "mile-high" mountains.

Warm welcome from the city council

Apparently most of our thoughts, in any given day, are the exact same as in the previous day, or so I read. How boring! Go on, do something new, be uncomfortable and think differently.

This is West Texas and time is relative! Come on down, get off the mountain and explore Alpine. Let's have a marvelous time working and building together. How about a community? Challenge yourself, be brave and turn your cell phone off and go down to Terlingua and sit on the porch.

This is not Dallas, Austin or El Paso, so look up at the stars and contemplates our universe; meet the guys that hang out at the American Legion and play Bingo on Thursdays.

Check out the Alpine Public Library and go to the Farmer's Mar-

ket on Saturday and buy some fresh food. Grab your bike and enjoy a traffic light and smog free ride. Attend a City Council meeting.

You have time to think out here! See what's new with the Alpine Sustainability project.

Wave back to the guys in the pick up trucks.

Cross the tracks and check out the Centennial School building on the south side.

Learn something new about the area at the Museum of the Big Bend. Start a soccer team or an art gallery. Go fishing and rafting in the Rio Grande.

You and I are part of this new change everyone is talking about.

We won't change things by spending time updating profile pictures on MySpace.

We can change things by

listening and talking, learning and getting involved.

There is a spirit of great magnitude here which has attracted people for thousands of years to this area.

The space is wide open. There is more to Alpine than the beautiful view. You can become involved here and learn a great deal more than how to cram for a botany exam.

You can learn about compassion. There is this exciting under

current of energy that is waiting for an opportunity to burst through the earth like a geyser.

Sul Ross is a part of all this. While you are here, you have a chance to be a part of something that will make a difference.

You are a part of this community and we welcome you with open arms. Let's get to work and make Sul Ross and Alpine a better place. Have a great semester!

By Johanna Nelson

SR MASH

Please join us for our blood drive in the University Center on

Monday, September 8th from 12 noon to 6 pm
and Tuesday, September 9th from 10 am to 4 pm.

Online appointments are available by using the link at www.sulross.edu/health/oralhealthservices 837-8102
Receive a United Blood Services t-shirt while supplies last

Don't be a fool!

Get your pictures taken for The Brand.

WHEN: THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 4
WHERE: STUDENT ORG. & RECRUITMENT FAIR
WHO: JASON HENNINGTON
PHONE: 837-8720
EMAIL: JHENNINGTON@SULROSS.EDU

*Appointments for individual pictures should be made before the end of November.

Don't be left out!