

THE BATTALION

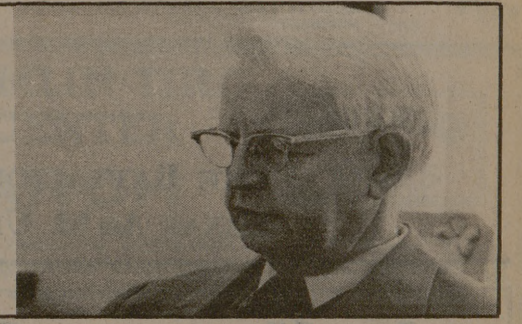
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Murderer in our midst

He may look harmless enough, but this man has "murdered" more than 50 people in his career. By the way, his career involves both teaching English at Texas A&M and writing mystery stories. See page 8.



6 join to support European currency

United Press International
BRUSSELS, Belgium — Hoping to shield themselves from the turmoil caused by the falling dollar, six nations have set up a European Monetary System to support their currencies against fluctuating exchange rates.

But the group that announced creation of the monetary system Tuesday failed to persuade England, Italy and Ireland to join. The members initially include West Germany, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxembourg and Denmark. "The fact that only six of us have agreed today should not hide the importance of the accord," said Belgian Premier Paul Vanden Boeynants, after the two-day Common Market summit. "This will create an important monetary zone which will play a role in relations with the dollar."

West German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt — who with French President Valery Giscard d'Estaing was one of the main architects of the new monetary alignment — said the scheme would help "stabilize exchange rates around the world" and would not threaten the dollar.

Roy Jenkins, president of the Common Market commission, will travel to Washington in two weeks to explain the system, which he also said "is in no way harmful to the dollar." Giscard said the new system will "create confidence, and with confidence there will be investments — this is a condition for increasing employment." Under the system, members will keep their currencies locked tightly together and pool part of their reserves to form a \$33 billion support fund, more than President

Carter earmarked last month to back the dollar.

The European Monetary System will replace the present European "snake," in which the linked currencies float jointly against the dollar. Other European countries, such as Norway, will be invited to become associated members of the system even though they do not belong to the Common Market.

Britain also said it would try to keep the pound within the 2.25 percent up-or-down margin for fluctuation allowed currencies within the new monetary system, even though it did not immediately intend to join.

Italian Premier Giulio Andreotti and Irish Prime Minister Jack Lynch said they will announce next week whether they will join.

1,800 diplomas ready

By CLAY WEBER
Battalion Reporter

Almost 1,800 Texas A&M University graduate students and graduating seniors will receive their diplomas in commencement exercises in G. Rollie White Coliseum. Ceremonies will begin at 7:30 p.m. Friday and 9 a.m. Saturday.

Commissioning ceremonies for the Corps of Cadet seniors entering the military service will be held Saturday at 1:30 p.m. in G. Rollie White.

Speakers for the two ceremonies will include University President Jarvis E. Miller and University Chancellor Jack K. Williams.

Guest speakers at the events will be Robert R. Herring, chief executive officer and chairman of the board of the Houston Natural Gas Corporation and Dr. Herbert H. Reynolds, executive vice-president and chief operating officer of Baylor University.

Lt. James V. Hartinger, commander of the 12th Air Force at Bergstrom Air Force Base in Austin, will address Corps seniors during the commissioning ceremonies Saturday.

Herring will address candidates for graduate degrees from all colleges and candidates for undergraduate degrees from the colleges of Architecture, Geosciences, Engineering, Science and Veterinary Medicine during the Friday evening ceremonies.

Herring, a 1941 graduate of Texas A&M in economics, served in the Air Force during World War II. He flew 60 combat missions and was awarded the Silver Star, the Legion of Merit and the Air Medal with clusters. He has held high level positions with the Houston Pipe Line Company and the Balley Gas Transmission, Inc.

Reynolds will address candidates for undergraduate degrees from the colleges of Agriculture, Business Administration, Education and Liberal Arts as well as for Moody College during the Saturday morning ceremonies.

Reynolds has degrees from Trinity and Baylor Universities. He was Chief of Psychology and Director of Research of the

Aeromedical Laboratory at Holloman Air Force Base in New Mexico and was also appointed First Commander and Director of the Air Force Human Resources Laboratory in San Antonio.

Hartinger has served in the armed forces since 1943 with service in both the Army and the Air Force. He was graduated from West Point in 1949 and received a masters degree in Business Administration from George Washington University in 1963. He served in Germany and Korea, and received the Distinguished Service Medal, the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Air Force Commendation Medal and the Air Force Medal with Oak Leaf Clusters. In 1966 and 1967, he served in Vietnam and was named to his present post this year.



The Unicorn — a unique ship and trip

Twenty-one Texas A&M University students have a chance to sail on the Unicorn during Spring Break. The sailing vessel was used in the television movie "Roots." The Memorial Student Center Travel Committee is sponsoring the seven-day Florida Keys

cruise. All interested students are asked to sign up after the Christmas holidays at the MSC Travel Committee booth. For a closer description of the vessel and the trip, please turn to page 3.

Testimony restricted on Davis's wife

United Press International
HOUSTON — Defense attorney Richard "Racehorse" Haynes and the presiding judge in the T. Cullen Davis trial disagree about whether the defendant's estranged wife, Priscilla, should be required to tell jurors about her extramarital affairs.

District Judge Wallace Moore curtailed questioning on the topic during Mrs. Davis' testimony Monday and Tuesday before the jury, then stopped Haynes from renewing the interrogation late Tuesday after jurors had been excused.

Haynes had begun a series of questions probing her travels with former boyfriend T. Rufner when prosecutor Tolly Wilson protested the interrogation was irrelevant and unfair, even with jurors absent.

"If I understand you correctly you think you can (also) ask these questions of this witness before this jury," Moore said. "Yes I do, your honor," Haynes replied. "Well, you can't. You're just trying to show specific acts of misconduct," Moore said, adjourning court until today when opposing attorneys may continue their arguments.

Haynes' strategy was to persuade jurors to consider Mrs. Davis' testimony in terms

of her lifestyle and sexual escapades during the six years she lived with Davis, who is on trial for conspiring to have their divorce judge slain.

Mrs. Davis was prohibited from testifying for the prosecution and was subpoenaed as a defense witness because Davis' attorneys consider her vulnerable and integral to their counter-conspiracy theory.

Tuesday she heard the tape of an Aug. 18 conversation in which her husband and FBI informant David McCrory discussed a fee to have her killed.

McCrory: There's something I need to ask you. How much money is he going to get if he gets Priscilla? I mean you got, man, I've got to tell him something. If you want the b — dead then, uh, you got to tell me how much it, you, you know. I can't, uh, I mean he says he can do 'em all, you know.

Davis: One at a time.

McCrory: I know, but tell me something.

Davis: Uh, I'll have to think on that one. Mrs. Davis' eyes darted and rolled as the tape played and sometimes glanced at her husband who returned her stare. After-

wards she told reporters: "Cullen has first hand knowledge of how hard I am to kill."

Mrs. Davis, estranged from the millionaire since 1974, previously has identified him as the attacker who shot and wounded her in their 19,000 square foot home in August 1976. He has not been tried on that charge. Mrs. Davis' daughter and boyfriend were killed in that shooting outbreak.

Mrs. Davis, 37, testified she neither conspired nor forced Davis, 45, to say anything heard by jurors on the secretly recorded tape.

Haynes has suggested through questioning that the couple's bitter, unresolved divorce suit was the foundation for a conspiracy among Priscilla and her friends to

entrap Davis into appearing to participate in a plot to have her killed.

Mrs. Davis said she was sympathetic to the persons suggested by Haynes as her coconspirators because of the stigma placed on them and the pressure forced into their lives.

One of those persons, Fort Worth karate school owner Pat Bursleson, followed her to the witness stand and corroborated statements made by McCrory and Mrs. Davis about their relationships, both personal and business.

McCrory identified Bursleson as the man he contacted when he wanted to relate his allegations of a Davis-originated murder-for-hire plot and said Bursleson directed him to a meeting with an FBI agent.

Somerville park closed for face lift

By CHARLES HARPER
Battalion Reporter

For folks who enjoy visiting Welch Park at Lake Somerville, there's some good news and some bad news. The bad news is that the park, located on a peninsula near the dam, will be closed until about the middle of May. The good news is that the park will be a nicer place to visit, after reopening.

All traffic to the park has been restricted to construction vehicles. Repairs and modifications to road surfaces in the park will make the facility inaccessible to would-be visitors.

According to Guy Hopson, reservoir manager at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers office at Lake Somerville, the roads have been damaged by unusually high water at peak levels of the lake.

"Most of the damage is due to the four to six weeks when the lake was about nine feet above normal last winter," Hopson said. "Then the people who drove around our barricades on the roads didn't help the condition of the surface, either."

Although roads have been in poor, and even hazardous conditions, Hopson says that so far, no accidents have taken place

due to the poor conditions.

"We've had a number of accidents out there," said Hopson. "I don't think that the road condition has caused any, however."

According to the administrator, now is a good time for the work being done, since visitation to the park is at its lowest point. Hopson said most of the work should be completed during the current off-season, and the park opened again before summer.

"It's hoped that completion of the project will be much sooner than scheduled," Hopson said. "We should be finished before the contract specifies, although the weather has a lot to do with it. So far, we've had no work stoppage due to the weather, even with the rain we've had."

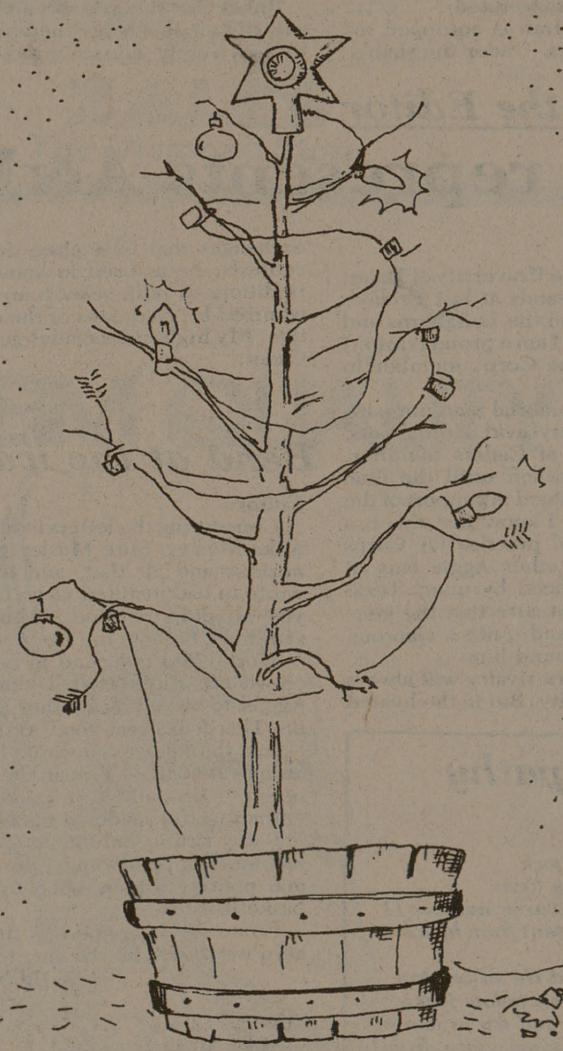
Plans for the project include raising a one-half-mile section of the existing road about two feet, constructing new roads to the restrooms in the park, and enlarging the parking area at the boat ramp.

Cost of the project is an estimated \$350,000. Construction of the project is being done by Young Brothers Construction Company, based in Waco.

This winter's move by the park administration has been in the works for about a year, Hopson said.

Advice from expert

Tips to keep tree trim



A droopy Christmas tree is no fun.

The color, smell and beauty of a traditional tree can add to the enjoyment of Yuletide.

Everett Janne, landscape horticulturist with the Texas Agricultural Extension Service, offers some tips on selecting a tree and keeping it in the best possible condition:

— Choose the tree early. Most Christmas trees are cut four or five weeks before they arrive on the lot. The sooner the tree is in water at home, the better.

— Select a full, dense tree that is evenly branched. The branches should be firm and flexible. Shake the branches before buying to see if needles fall. Fresh, healthy Yule trees do not drop their needles.

— Select a tree with good green color. This indicates that the choice is fresh, has good needle retention, fragrance, fire resistance and longer holiday beauty.

— After selecting the tree, saw off the lower two inches of the trunk. This will help the tree absorb water, which will insure freshness and lasting qualities.

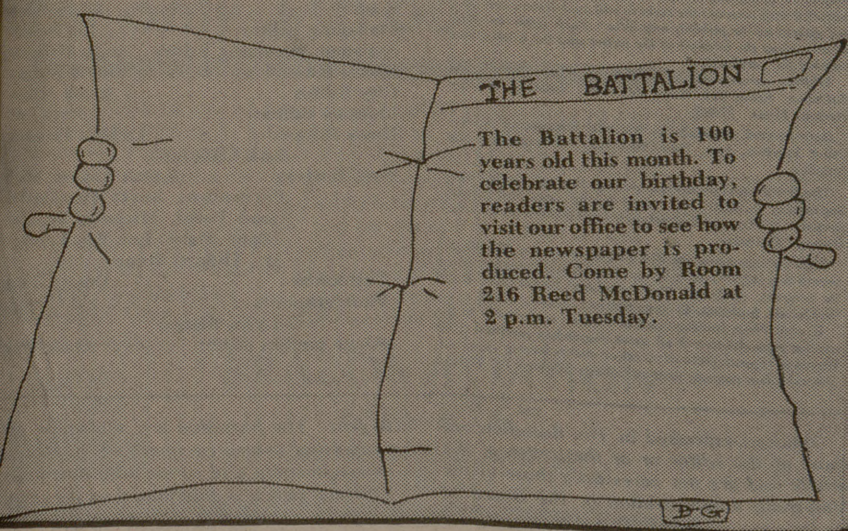
— Stand the tree in water in a cool location outside until trimming. Then, place it in a tree stand that holds water and keep it filled during the holiday season.

— Place the tree in the coolest location in the house, away from an open fireplace, radiators or heaters.

"While it might seem a great waste to cut down thousands of trees every year just to have something to hand ornaments on at Christmas, we really should not criticize this practice," says Janne.

"The majority of trees cut for Christmas are grown specifically for that purpose on commercial Christmas tree farms. They are just as much a crop as fruits and vegetables. In addition, we can be sure that, like fruits and vegetables, these trees are carefully replanted for future harvests."

The Battalion Centennial



The Battalion is 100 years old this month. To celebrate our birthday, readers are invited to visit our office to see how the newspaper is produced. Come by Room 216 Reed McDonald at 2 p.m. Tuesday.